# The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

Dhaka, Saturday, November 15, 1997

# Madaripur Mayhem

The union could be famous only for its name, Dvitiyo Khanda - or Second Part. It will be, from now onwards, infamous for the bloody pre-election clash on Wednesday in which five died on the spot and of the 40 hospitalised some more are sure to follow.

Supporters of two chairmanship candidates of this Madaripur union brought out processions and neither of these tried to avoid taking a route other than the other's. Collision occurred as a matter of course. And both the parties had come prepared. Lathi and ram-dao went into action and firearms used. A medieval battle ensued and ended shortly after to stigmatise the extraordinary name of the union.

Election violence is not unknown in this country. Rather election itself had become a rare thing in Bangladesh. And it is futile asking what-level election draws the most money or the most blood. For it is the same power equation at the village or union level that asserts itself whatever the level of the occasion. And this is what negates our graduation into democracy at the basics. These peculiar gramya-moroli tensions, a powerful residue from our long and fruitful feudal days, would die hard in a nation that hadn't had the chance of consolidating its long experience of striving for an egalitarian and just society, or democracy in short, into enduring institutions in the years after independence.

Why do they make it a life and death question in the villages — this matter of capturing the union parishad? To the old compulsions of greed and power-hunger has been added this new promise of the base levels going to have more power than ever. The whole internecine fight is for preventing power. the new powers specially, from passing to the people and keeping these chained to the traditional bullyboys of the villages.

Can Dvitiyo Khanda be enacted in Dhaka on the national scale? Why not, if Chittagong could be blooded that way on Tuesday? Nature has offered Bangladesh an inconceivable break. It will need vision and broadness of mind as well as a businessman's circumspection and a professional's efficiency and dedication to avail this chance to break out of poverty and backwardness. Actions that may jeopardise this appointment with destiny must be guarded against at all cost.

# Let it be a True Start

One of the savoury memories of the week just gone by is the beginning of what seemed to be a serious and purposeful police offensive against terrorists camping in different Dhaka University dormitories

It is a very welcome reflection of the ruling Awami League's will to free the educational institutions from the armed goons. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has reportedly taken a stern stance against the unending and escalating factional feud in her party's student front, Bangladesh Chhatra League, and asked the administration to deal with campus violence severely.

We urge her to transform this resentment against terrorism in campus into an iron resolve for completely dissociating her party from its student front. Because only then this heightened police action would lead to any effective contribution in the war we are all caught in against terrorism. It is evident and we, in tandem with our tirelessly persistent President Shahabuddin Ahmed, have always maintained that any effort to stamp out violence and terrorism in Dhaka University, for that matter any educational institution, essentially boils down to sinecure political will. Police action can only take care of the effect but it is up to the political parties who have to recognise and 'own' their responsibilities and really mean to uproot the cause of the trouble.

To a great extent the onus to take this recent police drive to a successful conclusion lies on Awami League for both practical and theoretical reasons. Not only that the majority in the police list of 50 terrorists belongs to BCL, Al's student front but as a party in power it has to gain the moral right of urging BNP, its rival and the other major stakeholder in the damned culture of realpolitik in the universities, to sever links with its students front JCD and its armed cadres.

The war against campus violence has begun truly. We only hope it's a true beginning with a view to ending the problem once for all.

# **Bumper Crop and Forebodings**

Char islands in Bhola and nearby Bauphal are going to harvest a bumper rice crop in less than a month's time. Peasants are waving dreams looking at the green expanse of paddy fields in all direction. But their happiness has been greatly tempered by forebodings of bad and violent attacks on their crop. There are in the area also those who are dated at the approach of December or, precisely, Agrahayan, and unmixed with any unease over what may the month bring. They are the lathials or mercenaries wielding the special long stick called

This is an annual event. Lathials hired by jotedars and other moneyed ruffians in the chars fall upon the paddy fields of the peasants and carry away the crop. The peasants try to offer resistance and are beaten by the professional goons. This is the season of the peasants being killed and maimed and robbed. It is a strange mix that agitates the mind of the peasant for a month - a sense of fulfilment from the crops in the field and another of fear and resolution to face violence and thwart loot.

Bankim Chandra had eulogised the lathi of the Bengalees in his inimitable style. Why did our forebears shine with the stick rather than with weapons having steel blades? Perhaps this development had much to do with the phenomenon of the Buddhist martial arts — bare-handed and used only in defence. Times have changed and, with so many other things, the lathi has come to be abused.

In the chars of Bhola and Bauphal the administration makes a list of all lathials in the area and restrain them effectively for this crucial month so as to prevent crop clashes. This year no list was made and the lathials are going to have a field day. Other years police camps are set on the chars to stop crop-related eruptions. This year the policemen are busy minding UP elections.

The peasant down there has reason to be apprehensive. Bangladesh is yet to get to a stage where law would rule all collective life.

# Rural Household Budget: Rich vs Poor

The over-emphasis on cereal production that sounded lucrative a decade back might not sound so now because

with rise in per capita income, there occurs a transition in consumption preference. If supply is not then

augmented to match demand, the "price effect" might thwart any attempt to raise people's real income.

E all know that the households (HHs) or families living in rural areas of Bangladesh can be grouped into three main categories viz, (a) landless and near landless; (b) marginal and small; and (c) medium and large HHs. Category (a) is dubbed as the poorest of all "very poor" while category (b) is called as "moderately poor" and (c) as solvent or "rich" HHs. The differentiation is based on landownership. Not surprisingly, availability of land or a lack of it is all important source of richness or poverty in rural Bangladesh. Available evidence suggests that 45 per cent of all rural HHs are absolutely poor followed by 38 per cent moderately poor. The solvent and rich HHs constitute 17 per cent. In terms of ownership of total land in villages the shares are, respectively, about 5, 25 and 71 per cent. In other words, 17 per cent of rural HHs own about 71 per cent of rural land while the bottom 45 per cent own only about 5 per cent of total land. The inequality in land ownership is thus widely exposed. According to a survey carried out by the centre for **Human Resources Development** (CHRD) of Jahangirnagar University, the per capita incomes (1995) were Tk 6,914. Tk 11,166 and Tk 19,594 for categories (a). (b) and (c) respectively.

People earn income to spend on goods and services. There are investment expenditures also. In a closed economy, without government expenditure in the equation, income comprises

consumption and investment expenditures. The present note attempts to highlight some of the aspects of consumption expenditures among the three types of HHs mentioned above. We consider three things: Average Budget Share (ABS), Marginal Budget Share (MBS) and Expenditure Elasticity of Demand (EED). Data were collected from 425 HHs lying over ment. 22 districts of Bangladesh. The sample size is small though, the

The very poor tend to spend more than half of their budget on crop-products (e.g. rice, wheat, vegetables, fruits etc.). The ABS for moderately poor and rich HHs are 46 and 38, respectively. It implies, perhaps, that with graduation from very poor to richness, HHs spend less and less on those commodities. The rich appear to spend more on commodities like eggs. meats and milk. For example, the ABS of this class on this account is 8 per cent compared to a feeble 3 per cent of the HHs at the lower strata. Rich or poor, all HHs spend, on average, 18-19 per cent of their consumption budget on industrial products. Substantial difference, between the rich and the poor could be evidenced in the case of spendings on service sector items (e.g. education, health and transport). For example,

implications could be quite in-

dicative.

the ABS of the "very poor" HHs is only 11 per cent on service items compared to 17 per cent by the "moderately poor" and 22 per cent by the "rich". This, perhaps, leads to the conclusion that the poverty forces a larger portion of the budget to be spent on basic food items and leaves less room for spending on education and health improve-

The ABS on "essential or ba-

example, for each Tk 100, the

Beneath the Surface

sic" items like kerosene oil, salt, soap are more or less same across different types of HHs. Yes, it is quite obvious. We do not eat more of salt or use more kerosene when income goes up. Interestingly, the ABS of HHs without electricity tend to be more on kerosene oil than those spending on electricity. Thus the "very poor" with access to electricity appears richer than the "very poor" without having access to electricity.

There are some differences in the budget share of "luxury" items (e.g. cosmetics, ghee, mill cloth, imported cloth etc.). For

"very poor" HHs spend 16 paisa on the purchases of cosmetics. The "moderately poor" spend more than two times — 36 paisa and the rich more than for times — 66 paisa. All poor HHs spend only four paisa (per Tk 100) on the purchase of ghee while the rich spend 86 paisa The findings tend to conform economic laws: luxury com-

modities are income-elastic. by Abdul Bayes Earlier, we mentioned that

the "very poor" HHs spend only 11 per cent of their total consumption budget on service items. The rich spends almost double. Take the case of spendings on education. Out of a 100 taka budget, the "very poor" HHs spend Tk 2 on education compared to Tk 8 by the rich. In between, the "moderately poor" incur Tk 4. Thus as income goes

T ESTERDAY, Rajab 13.

Islam Hazrat Ali (RA) — the

Commander of the Faithfuls

and philosopher and statesman

of emiences par excellence. The

last Prophet (SAW) quoted in

Hadis said. "I am the treasure of

knowledge and Ali is the door"

This is sufficient to prove what

our last Prophet thought about

Hazrat Ali whose "Zolifigar-e-

Haideri" is well-known in Is-

Hazrat Ali in high esteem and

consulted him on crucial and

vital issues pertaining to the

governance of the Islamic state

and in military affairs, and the

last Calipha suggestions were

always approved by the former.

lation Hazrat Ali (RA) was the

most competent disciple of the

Prophet. His childhood had

shaped the foundations of Is-

lamic polity under the guidance

and teachings of the holy

Prophet (SAW). The Quran has

abundantly substantiated this.

As a scion of the Household of

the Prophet, Ali (RA) grew under

the brilliant sunshine of mys-

teries and spirituality. Fakhr

Rasi quotes Hazrat Ali as say-

ing, the Prophet had taught him

1,000 books of knowledge and

In the school of Divine Reve-

Our beloved Prophet held

amic history.

was the anniversary of

birth of the last Caliph of

Islamic warrior.

up, spending on education also goes up.

The discussion so far hov-

ered around ABS i.e. if given a budget. But what happens to the patterns of spending if and when the amount in the budget goes up? We want to mean marginal budget share (MBS) i.e. the share of the incremental budget. It could be gleamed that for each 100 taka addition to their existing consumption budget, the "very poor" and "moderately poor" HHs tend to allocate Tk 14 on the purchase of rice compared to Tk 6 by the other group. It is because even when budgetary resources go up. the demand for staple food is not declined very much, at least at the poverty level. The poor HHs spend 7 per cent of their incremental budget on livestock products compared to 16 per cent by the rich. On fish products, the shares are 7 and 11 per cent respectively.

The MBS of essential items like salt, kerosene etc. tend to remain same and a rise in budgetary amount does not seem to affect the demand substantially. By and large, the findings suggest that expenditure elasticity or demand for essen-

tial commodities are low while those for luxury items are high. With rise in per capita income, HHs tend to shift their preference from food to non-food items and among food items from rice and wheat to livestock products. The most important changes that occur pari passu the rise in budget amount is in the case of service items. Education and health expenses are mostly related to a variation in the budget. Their expenditure elasticity, and MBS are very high for the poorer seg-

While employment generation (and hence income growth) should be the perennial objective of policy makers, the analysis tend to show that the dynamic changes that follow such generations should clearly be grasped and duty considered Policies do not remain static. The over-emphasis on cereal production that sounded lucrative a decade back might not sound so now because with rise in per capita income, there occurs a transition in consumption preference. If supply is not then augmented to match demand, the "price effect" might thwart any attempt to raise people's real income. In rural areas, the supply of non-rice commodities should be increased immediately. Prices of rice are rising very slowly while of those are soaring high.

Hazrat Ali is well-known for

his piety, deviation and un-

flinching faith in the Almighty.

Historians of western thoughts

have admired the military ca-

pability of Hazrat Ali in their

researches. Our universal

Prophet of Islam gladly gave his

most loving daughter Hazrat

Fatima in marriage to Hazrat

Ali. This giant of a man was an

indefatigable warrior whose

military skills proved success-

ful in many operational activi-

Hazrat Ali termed Quran as the

world of wisdom and knowledge

within a small compass which

guides mankind in any and ev-

ery respect. Ali said, "Ask me

any question you may have,

before I die". The Prophet is

learnt to have said, "Ali is with

the Truth and the Truth is with

all remember him and try to

emulate the timeless and noble

thoughts in our day-to-day life.

Being the gateway to the city of

knowledge, i.e. Hazrat

Muhammad (SAW) Hazrat Ali's

contribution to the spread of Is-

lam is immense and only

through practising his practical

approach to spiritual and mun-

dane issues, we can pay the beat of homage to this great Savant

On this pious occasion let us

A man of sublime thoughts,

ties in times of war.

# A Homage to Hazrat Ali (RA)

by Sayed Eqbal Rezvi

that from each book he had ac-

quired another 1,000 books of

learning. Hence, who else other

than Hazrat Ali (AS) could be

nearest to the Hazrat Maham-

mad (SAW) and well-versed

with the Allah's revealed book

pounder of the Quran said that

Hazrat Ali was second to the

last Prophet in interpreting and

expounding the lofty thoughts

enshrined in the Quran. Umm

Salamah, wife of the Prophet,

quoted his as saying. Ali was

with the Quran and the Quran

was with Ali. Whatever Hazrat

Ali said or did was inspired by

the Quran. In other words, Ali

was the Quran incarnate, Ali

was the true follower of the in-

junctions incorporated in the

book of Allah. Hazrat Ali letters

to a provincial governor com-

piled under the title of "Kahjat-

ul-Balagh" is a document of

wisdom, knowledge and Islamic

governance. His thoughtful sug-

gestions to the Governor how to

govern, how to deal with peo-

ple's problems, how to apend

revenue of the state, how to im-

plement Islamic ideals and

practices ought to be thoroughly

read and followed by rulers of

Muslim countries if they really

Ibn Abbas, an eminent ex-

# BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE Verbatim Text of Cross Examination of 39th Prosecution Witness

Continued from yesterday

Cross-examination of Risaldar Monsur Ahmed, the PW-39 in Bangabandhu murder case, began when the court resumed on Thursday.

Following are the excerpts from his examination by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman, defence layer for accused Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur Rahman:

Q: Did the three tanks come out from the cantonment to-

A: I can't recall whether the number of tanks was three or four. Those moved one after another with recess. Q: Did the tanks go straight

to Bangabhaban? A: I saw some other tanks after reaching cantonment 3rd gate. My tank went to Bangabhaban after waiting for a while

Q: Was the 46 Brigade situated on the north of 3rd gate? A: Near Chairmanbari on

in front of the old airport.

can't say where the other tanks

right side of the 3rd gate. Q: Was you tank the first to reach Bangabhaban?

A: No, another reached there Q: Did you go to Bangabha-

ban for a special task? A: Our CO Major Farooq told us that tank would move for a special task. But we were not aware of the special task.

Q: Did the tank commanders know it? A: It was not known to me.

Q: Did you do the special task before you went to Suhrawardy Udyan?

A: I discharged my duty at the order of the tank commander. I didn't know whether it was the special task.

Q: Was it not know to you

that the duty was for the emer gency situation of the country? A: No, it was not also known

Q: Did your tank go to Bangabandhu's residence at Dhanmondi 32 before going to Bangabhaban?

Q: Your tank moved after the incident of this case.

A: This is not true. Q: Did you obey the order of Col Shafat Jamil to return to Cantonment from Suhrawardy

Udvan? A: I returned to cantonment at the order of my tank commander.

Q: Did Col Shafat Jamil go to Suhrawardy Udyan before you came back to cantonment? A: Yes, he went there.

Q: Did you salute him? A: As per rule, our officer brought us in attention position and we saluted him. Q: You were given special martial-law allowance for discharging special duty at

Bangabhaban. A: I can't recall. Q: Do the senior commissioned officers make orders to

you directly?

A: We received order through our respective commanders. For special and emergency cases, officers brief us and make orders directly to us.

Q: Do you consider the duty that you discharged from August 15 to return to cantonment a special duty?

A: No. I don't. Q: Were you also disbanded when the 1st Bengal Lancer was disbanded? A: No. I was sent to another

regiment. Q: Before that, there was a hearing and you were quesA: We were called in a fall-in

and questioned Q: The Commander of 1st Bengal Lancer, brigade Commander of 46 Brigade and senior officers were present there.

A: The CO of 1st Bengal Lancer, brigade Commander and GOC of Bogra were present. A: Isn't it correct that disbanding was a punitive action?

A: Yes, correct. Q: You had an active and direct participation in the incident of this case.

A: This is not true. Q: Didn't you come out from the cantonment for an exercise? A: I along with the tank came out of the cantonment, went to Bangabhaban and discharged stand-by duty there at the order of my CO for, what he said, a special task for emer-

gency crisis of the country. Q: Were you not given any idea about your duty at Bangabhaban?

Q: Did you carry out all the orders that you received from August 15?

A: I carried out the directives at the order of my tank com-Q: Was the dress of police

'khaki' from August to October, A: Yes. Q: You were directly involved in the incident. You came to

give witness being asked by prosecution for the sake of your A: This is not correct. Advocate Sharfuddin Mukul,

defence counsel for accused former state minister Taheruddin Thakur, declined to examine the witness.

Further texts of cross examination will be published as and when received.

## **OPINION**

# For a New Generation, New Dream

mean business.

Liberation wars all over the world are cherished and referred back to over and over again. It is an event of pride, a topic to be shared and preserved. But I fail to understand that in our case it has been the other way round. Luckily or unluckily I do not hail from any particular political back ground. But even I do not understand why many people ever since the liberation war in '71 were scared to write down the truth. Ever since I was young have been told over and over again that the Indians were bad because they were Hindus and they were not to be trusted. I was also made to understand that the Hindus were there to undermine and destroy the Muslims for good, and because the Indians couldn't stand Pakistan being together, so they did everything in their power to break Pakistan up, simply because they are scared of Mus-

The funniest thing is that I was also ordered not to support Abahani Krira Ckakra simply because they were affiliated to Awami League and not to be trusted as they were nothing but 'Indian spies'. On the other hand, the Mohammedan Sporting Club belonged to the Muslims and should be followed and respected. The strangest thing is at that age a silly logic like that made perfect sense in my mind. Because of that whenever I used to see the Awami League logo of "the boat" or the football matches between Abahani and Mohammedan, deep down within a hatred used to boil out towards the boat and Abahani Krira Ckakra members and their followers. When used to visit people's houses where they had the famous posters of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman giving his famous speech, I wondered how people were this much blind. After all, because he wanted to sell off our motherland to the enemies and was assassinated And to make sure that no one else managed to sell off our country ever again in the future his entire family was wiped out. To me a brutal assassination like that made perfect sense

And somehow at that tender age the feeling of Indians ruling us used to send shivers down my spine. I started growing up. Bit by bit I was exposed to some history, in which I started learning exactly why and how we fought the Liberation War. I was told that the Pakistanis used to put us down because we were Bengalis. Everywhere 'they' were given the priority, no matter how much qualified we were. Bengalis weren't facilitated to pursue higher education, neither were they allowed to better jobs; everywhere we were su-

Masroor Ahmed Deepak perseded. People of our country couldn't take it any more. Then came a time when the '70 election was held, and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won. Even then 'they wanted to rule us from Karachi People naturally became agitated, that's the reason why they fought a bloody battle for nine months and won. And because the Indians helped us, we managed to win the war quickly

and easily. From then onwards a dual feeling persisted within me. Part of me hated India for dividing and the other part of me hated Pakistan for treating us like slaves. Therefore I naturally assumed that we had no true friends, both the countries around us were our apparent enemies. We have constantly blamed the Indians and Pakistanis for destroying our country from the beginning.

But how are they to blame when we ourselves are destroying the country from within? Each and every single person who assumed power did so because of his/her own interest. The interest of the people was always given no priority at all. People joined politics to become ministers simply because it was taken as a form of a lucrative business prospect. All the money that they used to pour into the election campaign were recovered many times more by the time they finished serving their tenure.

Each and every single government tried to arrest the previous leaders by bringing charges against them. They try to wipe out or rename whatever have been done before and do everything in their power to make the past regime look bad. What they fail to realise over and over again is that the people didn't elect them for back stabbing. The money that we pay as tax-payers every year is just not there so that they can buy tax-free vehicles for themselves or arrange unnecessary tours all over the world. Then, each and every single political party makes sure that they have enough students backing them up. Why? Why destroy the students future by dragging them into politics? Don't they have enough confidence within themselves to stand rather than use students as shields?

Every single year the government universities all over the country become virtually battle zones. Leaders claim that the students should be kept aloof from politics, but why are they scared to implement that? Because of the politicians' stubbornness a certain age group is being deprived from education. For the students "the pen is mightier than the sword" does n't apply. Are the politicians re-

sponsible? Yes they are. They are not the ones who'll go to the students' parents and say they are sorry for destroying their wards' lives. No matter what happens to these students, they'll be happy as long as their kids are studying in the private

universities or better still,

abroad. Why do these politicians try so hard to condemn the previous regime and destroy everything they have done? Why do they try so hard to take us back 100nay 500 odd years? In the West when something appears beneficial to the country, both the Government and the Opposition become united for it. Does that mean that they have the interest of the country within their hearts more than

It is not that India and Pakistan are our enemies, there are worse enemies within us. And it is our moral duty, as citizens of this country, to root out and drive them out. We ought to openly condemn them all. We should take off their phoney masks and expose them to the whole country. Only then the rest of the rats will go back to their holes or better still to their own countries.

The most important question is what are we left with now? For the past 25 years we have been given empty promises, backstabs, assassinations, rapes, bribery, corruption, student politics, strikes everything that hampers the growth of any developing country. These seem to be a trend of

politics in our country. It is time for a drastic change in policies. A change of blood and a wave of new ideas are the only thing that might help our ailing country. There are people still living amongst us who truly believe that a change can be done only if all of us try hard. There will be obstructions and problems. But by overcoming these reaching our goals will be a matter of time only. So let us make sure that there is no more delay in working towards a better, brighter tomorrow

Let us make all the departed

souls of '71 smile with pride from the heavens rather than cringe with embarrassment with a sense of loss. Let us walk with our heads high, show the rest of the world that we are a country, a nation to be reckoned with. Let us prove that a green passport shouldn't necessarily bring a sense of doom in every foreigner's heart. We have the ability, we have the will power and the motive to make a change. Let us do so. We didn't fight for nine months simply to be called a bottomless pit and eighth most corrupted country in the world. We can make a difference

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

### "Question creates question"

Sir, It appears from Mr Jerry's letter under the above heading in the DS October 15 issue that he is now trying to get away from the controversy he created by hiding behind the minister's 'skirt'. With all due respect to the ministers — present and past — their words, particularly political statements, cannot be passed as gospel as Mr Jerry is trying to imply. And Mr Jerry, therefore, cannot alone decide to draw an end to this controversy unless the readers and the journalists wish to say so.

Will Mr Jerry please explain, unless he has really resigned from this topic, what is the big difference' between 'seeking support' and "joining hands on the same platform" relative to the time when the Awami League sought the Jamaat-e-Islami's blessings?

A A Choudhury House #8, Road #5/1, Banani, Dhaka

## Fast food

Sir, Fast food shops are popping up like mushroom in every nook and corner. The main reasons behind setting up fast food shops are — it is profitable, easy to set up anywhere and hardly any formality of obtaining trade licence is required. All sorts of junk food are sold in these shops. Consumers hardly have any choice to judge the quality and ingredients of the food. These have weird Spanish, Mexican, Ara-

bian and American names. Price of these food also vary according to the location, decoration (interior design), customer service etc. These money making food shops need to be brought under certain rules and regulations. Govt should take immediate steps to appoint food inspectors who would act as customers to check the quality of food served.

Today's younger generation feels more comfortable with these fast food shops as these shops provide them a much desired place for recreation and gossip. It may bring dire consequences upon the health of our younger generation. I myself got annoyed finding stale food in a much renowned bakery shop located at BAF shopping complex. Though they apologized but selling stale food is not stopped everywhere. Quality of food must be sustained as it is a direct threat to our health.

Fast food shop owners spend a lot of money on decoration and to please their customers but not even ten per cent is spent as a whole on the improvement of kitchens which are the primary source of all food so nicely displayed on expensive shelves. We can not shift any blame we should share the blame for not being able to provide healthy and nutritious value added food to the customers. If customers demand fresh and healthy food there is nothing wrong with their right as they are paying money for it.

Mohammad Shahid Jamal Monipuri Para, Tejgaon, Dhaka

#### Tele Enquiry-17 revived

Sir. Uptill 19th October, telephone inquiry was dead. Thanks to the BTV 'Prekkhit' producer and our Hon'ble minister for making the dead alive. Nation desires and demands such quick responses to the irregularities and injustices of any sort.

HK Das Minto Road, Dhaka

## US unkindness

Sir, Recently, the US added a new rule to DV-99 programme which is special DV processing fee, before the final selection.

I think it's extremely inhuman to Bangladeshis because most of the applicants of DV-99 programme are unemployed although they are educated and they come from middle class and lower income families. They are unable to pay this DV processing fee, before the final selection - and also the amount of this fee is too much for the Bangladeshis.

Sheikh Azahar Mossain 10-A, 19-9 Mirpur, Dhaka-1221

## The post office

Sir. The communications system of the world is getting faster but ours is not. Others try to send information as quickly as possible, but we don't. Post offices are a unique source to do that. But our post offices remain open from Sunday to Thursday. What if a letter reaches the postman on Thursday but he (the postman) somehow fails to distribute the letter to the addressee? Then the person will get his letter on Sunday. As such, people are prefer-

ring courier service to post offices. The government should think over how to utilise the post offices properly. Main Uddin Sabul

514 Zia Hall, Dhaka University