The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali Dhaka Thursday, March 5, 1998

The Measure of Seriousness, Please

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina informed the Jatiya Sangsad on Tuesday that the government has a plan to revamp the Bureau of Anti-corruption. In fact the government was busy implementing that plan. She admitted that eliminating corruption was not easy and called for co-operation from the society. But society also needed strong motivation to be able to get out of the corruption disease. She was forceful in painting corruption's evil ways sapping out the vitals of our nation. If people wanted so, her government would institute a tribunal for corruption cases.

We welcome her words. But if corruption is indeed our society's enemy number one, what we have in her words wouldn't even prick that devil with a pin. What kind of revamping the Bureau of Anticorruption is headed for is best known to her and her government. But is this going to anoint the agency with powers that it would need to effectively move against corruption by any citizen? As things are and have been the Bureau cannot act according to its own judgement of things. It has rungs and rungs of superiors, ending in the Prime Minister, to tell it what to look into and what not to. In the governmental scheme of things the Bureau comes much below the top echelons. And it cannot probe government and sue it. And it is not enviably placed in suing even any incumbent government personnel of some stature. What it did when, according to Sheikh Hasina, for long 21 years the society was relentlessly being consumed by a spreading conflagration of corruption? Nothing. And nothing like revamping, recasting or even sifting its personnel will enable the Bureau to move against all who smell of corruption.

What is needed, if the Prime Minister truly means business, is a top thing answerable only to President and headed by, rather than a career person, some one recognised by the nation as a man or woman of matchless integrity. Something like they had in Hong Kong, the Royal Commission on Corruption, having the ultimate in state power to probe and prosecute any person or agency, however mighty, even politically. Short of properly empowering me Bureau and taking it out of political control, no amount of revamping the body can deliver the goods.

The Prime Minister's stance on setting up tribunals for trying anti-corruption cases is hard to understand. The government is not going for tribunals but if people want these, the demand would be considered. Why isn't the government interested in tribunals if these can dispose of the piling up load with expedition? Why have the people to ask for it if it will help curb corruption?

Question Leakage

With just a day to go before the test for admission into medical coffeges the air in Chittagong is rife with rumour of question paper leakage. Nothing can be more disturbing and confusing for students who have toiled honestly to prepare themselves for probably the toughest battle of their academic career. The way this leakage rumour has spread it is not unlikely something might have really gone wrong. Some people, as the report of a leading Bangla daily indicates, have approached the so-called coaching centre authorities offering them the questions for a 'price' of Taka two lakh. To put a complexion of authenticity they have, reportedly, asked for post dated cheques.

Leakage of admission test questions is not an entirely unheard of criminality. Not long ago allegations over leakage of questions of Dhaka University's admission test created quite a bit of furore. Probe committee was commissioned promptly and some teachers were implicated. But the matter ended there with no punitive measures following the findings. We don't know for sure if the questions of this year's medical college admission test are really out 'for sale' but wiser it is to assume that something fishy has taken place. After all, if there is smoke there must be some fire. We urge the authorities to take stock of the situation immediately and if need be, hold the exam on a revised date with a new set of questions.

Besides, the authorities should immediately go for a drive to cleanse the educational institutions. The loopholes have to be detected and plugged now. It should be remembered that rumour or real this kind of revelations are eminently dangerous for the society. Not only the purpose of real evaluation is defeated but people's trust in public institutions

are also badly shaken.

And surely something needs to be done about these mushrooming coaching centres. Apart from licking students into shape for a particular examination, these centres are serving no purpose at all. For all practical purposes they are making a mockery of the real objective of education.

Arrest the slide now. Clear Them

A very eloquent visual adorned the front page of a leading Bangla daily yesterday. It could have very well done without the title overbridg-o hawkerder dakhaley and the story. The picture said it all. It may appear, as the report said, some kind of a visual illusion for the crowded hawkers' market but it was actually a glimpse of the overbridge at Farmgate.

But it is not hawkers only. It is a veritable assortment of anthropomorphic activities and attitudes - crippled beggars rolling in the muck with chants for pity in metronomic regularity and habitual shovers and feelers of female bodies, every variety one can think of. With peddlers and their queuing customers eating most of the space from two sides there is hardly any room for agreeable passage for somebody to walk through. What an irony! A passage built exclusively for pedestrians turned so easily into rootless traders' paradise and no one seems to be bothered about it.

The ubiquitous presence of hawkers have really played havoc with Dhaka's streets. One reason things are not looking up despite authorities' loud and repeated eviction drives is probably lack of sincerity and sense in relocating the peddlers. But the problem is growing in shape and intensity far too quickly for hasty pointless experiments over an indefinite period of time. We demand the authorities clear the overbridges and footbridges immediately from the tyranny of undesirable presences. Let them be places for safe and untroubled passage of the pedestrians.

What an Unblemished Joy It Is! Success of AL-BNP Dialogue

One must give due credit to the respected leaders of the two principal political parties only with whose blessings the agreement was made possible. But, the ultimate victory was won by the people of the land themselves, in fulfillment of their determination to uphold the spirit and to set up a tradition for democracy.

HE past recent years have witnessed and almost established a political culture in our country which is marked by a series of accusations, recriminations and parliamentary boycotts or abstentions by political parties that have seriously marred the climate congenial for development of a healthy democratic tradition. As a consequence, people's frustrations have multiplied and been matched only by the mounting despair and apprehensions for not being able to tread on the desired democratic

Now, on the 2nd of this month, the order of conflict and turmoil suddenly gave way to one of understanding and compromise. The BNP and the Awami League leaders met, seriously and sincerely discussed an issue of high political significance and, finally, signed a formal agreement. It envisaged BNP's return to the Par-

liament, on the 8th instant. The BNP has been abstaining from the Parliament since August 30 last year in protest of what they said as the ruling party's deliberate action to deprive the opposition party of their le-gitimate right to effectively participate in the deliberations of the Parliament. They alleged that the government party in collusion with the Chair violated the 4-point agreement that had been concluded earlier, seeking redress to similar grievances. Besides implementation of the provisions of that agreement, they advanced a number of demands emanating from the prevalent conditions in the country which needed to be met before their resumption of proceedings in the Parliament.

Later, they conceded that agreeing to meet some of these demands would demonstrate sincerity and goodwill of the ruling party and this would create and atmosphere favourable for the

BNP legislators to return the Parliament. The BNP leader herself took out a procession of over a hundred legislators to the Hon'ble President, urging the latter to organise a dialogue

with the government to resolve the issue. The government party vehemently denied the allegations having violated provisions of the previous agreement and stalled consideration of acceptance of the opposition demands as a prerequisite to BNP's return to the Parliament. They insisted that the lone and the most appropriate forum for resolving outstanding issues was Parliament, and continued to urge the opposition to return to its floors for deliberation. The contacts made between the two sides had so long brought to no fruition. They admitted, however, that they themselves had boycotted parliament for over three times the duration BNP abstained, while in the opposition. But, that was for a legitimate purpose, they claimed and the reasons for BNP's abstention were not legitimate.

Meanwhile, they started recruitment of ministers from the abstaining opposition party and succeeded with two such legislators. Some more of such surprises remained in store and would come out in future, it was claimed. The BNP promptly expelled the two recalcitrants from the party and dismissed them as debased and disloyal worthy of pruning from the main body.

The last successful rounds of lengthy talks ranging over three days deliberated on all the pertinent issues. The discussions took place in a cordial atmosphere which gladdened the hearts of optimists, with the prospect of a break

through. There were, as expected, hard bargaining, horse trading. What finally mattered was the success of the two die-hard opposing parties in clinching a long awaited agreement. It would be fair to look into the matter positively. Both the parties, notwithstanding their continuing vituperation against each other, did, indeed, desire a settlement, albeit on one's own terms. But, no agreement between two sides could be reached without give and take, except, of course, between a victor and the vanquished.

Both the Awami League and the BNP may wish to draw satisfaction to consider themselves as having won the battle. But, neither can truly be branded as the victor or the vanquished. Both got and gave. Giving in this instance, is not a measure of defeat, but a magnanimous act of generosity and expression of political sagacity. Both sides gave and became victors. What were traded? The BNP got the assurances that the old 4-point agreement will be adhered to strictly in order to re-establish the appropriate atmosphere inside the House and that the opposition legislators would receive a fair deal and would not be discriminated against.

In the House, they would be allowed to speak as per their due, the government controlled television should televise proceedings fairly and the Speaker should try to be impartial in conducting business of the House. Outside the Parliament, police cases on a number of BNP leaders and workers would be withdrawn, Manik Mia Avenue or Panthapath, with wide and traditional space in a central area, would be, inter alia, designated as venue of political meetings and induction of all 113 BNP members in parliamentary committees are the principal issues on which the ruling party conceded.

The Awami League also has reasons to be happy by con-meeting Currents and Crosscurrents many of the demands of the opposiparties and made the latter by M M Rezaul Karim agree to raise

these issues on

the floors of the Parliament. The spectre of a prolonged abstention or boycott of the parliament by the opposition, with a concomitant gain in the momentum of a political movement that eventually led to a change of government, was looming large in their mind's eye. That fear was allayed. What was the big gain of the Awami League was their ability to persuade the BNP to return to the Parliament by way of meeting only a part of the BNP demands. The BNP also may derive satisfaction, strangely for the same reasons, that they were able to win some of their demands from the ruling party.

The Speaker at whose behest the negotiations were satisfactorily concluded deserves commendation. Also, members of the negotiating teams through whose long, arduous and painstaking efforts the talks succeeded, have held the nation in gratitude. Finally, one must give due credit to the respected leaders of the two principal political parties only with whose blessings the agreement was made possible. But, the ultimate victory was won by the people of the land themselves, in fulfillment of their determination to uphold the spirit and to set up a tradition for democracy. They heaved a sigh of relief and rightfully so, at the break of this heavy political dialogue. Let us hope that provisions of the agreement will be meticulously adhered to by all concerned and for long.

LETTER FROM AMERICA Women Powerful Men Love

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton

Saying "boys will be boys", we hypocritical men forgive fellow men so easily. Think of the consequences if a woman leader had been as errant. Proclaiming her "a whore and a slut", men would be hounded her out of office, or worse, burned at the stakes in earlier times.

N a recent survey, 82 per cent of American women ▲said that they will not sleep with President Clinton, again!", so goes a current joke

making the rounds. 'My father knew Lloyd George, Lloyd George knew my father!", the British joke about their philandering former Prime Minister to this day. The expression means that during Lloyd George's premiership, no one could be sure of his parentage, and that Lloyd George's philandering was carried out with the full knowledge of the A century earlier, as the

Duke of Wellington was preparing for the Battle of Waterloo. his mistress threatened to publish his letters. The Duke responded: "Publish and be damned!". "She did and she was." President Franklin Roosevelt's long relationship with his non-wife, Lucy Mercer Rutherfurd, is well known. During World War II, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, General Dwight Eisenhower, had a prolonged affair with his female British chauffeur. President Kennedy's dalliances with actresses Angie Dickinson, Audrey Hepburn, and most notably Marilyn Monroe, are only the tip of the iceberg. Years after President Lyndon Johnson died, people came out of the woodwork and sued his estate claiming to be his illegitimate children. With the concurrence of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, himself no saint, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Edgar Hoover began wire tapping American Civil Rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960s. The racist FBI Director sent the tapes of the eavesdropping, that apparently caught King engaged in infidelity, along with an anonymous letter suggesting that King commit suicide or his "filthy. abnormal self", would be exposed to the world.

Should the British government have dismissed the Duke. one of their genuine heroes, because he had a mistress? Extramarital adventures aside. David Lloyd George was a very successful British Prime Minister and a great World War I leader. Should the world have

been denied his leadership because of his personal foibles? Can anyone say that their personal fondness for the women of their choice adversely affected the performance of the supreme civilian (Roosevelt) and military (Eisenhower) leaders of World War II? Did Kennedy's weakness for women diminish his performance during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, or in propelling the world towards nuclear disarmament. Finally, should Hoover been successful in destroying one of the authentic American heroes of the twentieth century, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., only because he had some human weaknesses? As all of the above cases illustrate, statesmanship is not necessarily predicated upon marital

The US public has recently developed an appetite for the sex lives of their politicians. This zeal to learn about the bedroom etiquette of public officials, will drive away many of the brightest Americans, who may or may not have a skeleton in their closet. In the Clinton-Lewinsky case, possible sex between two consenting adults have been criminalised. An "independent" prosecutor and a grand jury are looking into the sex life of the President of the

United States. Kenneth Starr, the "independent" prosecutor says he is investigating not sex life, but sex lies: whether President Clinton lied about sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky under oath, and told her to lie about it. Even if the charge is true, the offense would be perjury. Almost no one is ever

tried for perjury in a civil case. "Almost everybody lies about sex", said an English commentator in the Spectator. The Financial Times wrote: "How many 50-somethings in Washington can put hand on heart and say that they have never lied about sex?"

Says Anthony Lewis of the New York Times: "Prosecuting a President or anyone, for lying about sex is a grotesque notion. In all likelihood, Mr. Starr has it in mind not to indict the President but to send evidence to the House of Representative for consideration of impeachment. But an impeachment pro-

ceeding over a President's sex life, or his truthfulness about it, would be hardly less grotesque. Which member of the House would cast the first stone?"

Lewis continues: "None of this is to say that sex with a young intern or lying about it, if they happened, was morally excusable. President Clinton was on notice — years of notice that his sexual behaviour was an issue. If he ignored the warnings, and then went on television to deny the truth, he will be judged by the American people in those terms, and should be. But that is the public's judgment, not one for prosecutor."

There was no sexual harassment here. By all account, it was Monica Lewinsky who sought out the President and seduced him. She would loitre about the President's Oval office barely clothed. On a number of occasions, she was warned by the White House staff to dress modestly. One of the reasons for her transfer to the Pentagon was her repeated violation of the White House dress code. It is well known that many women are attracted to men in power. By "bedding" the President, Monica Lewis attempted to add the brightest feather in her cap!

Published reports say that President Clinton is now prepared to admit that he had physical contact with Monica Lewinsky, but it "wasn't sexual", only "kissing"! Detractors are going to jump all over Clinton if he actually says this. Remember his famous gaffe during the 1992 Presidential campaign when he admitted to smoking pot, but added as a qualifier, "but I did not inhale!" What is he going to say now? "I kissed Monica Lewinsky but did not...'

We must not let all of these men off the hook so easily. There was betrayal of trust involved in each of the cases. Didn't these men promise to be faithful to their wives, with God as the witness? Saying "boys will be boys", we hypocritical men forgive fellow men so easily. Think of the consequences if a woman leader had been as errant. Proclaiming her "a whore and a slut", men would be hounded her out of office, or worse, burned at the stakes in earlier times.

Miracle or Debacle?

In fact, we are least concerned with the miracle or debacle in rest of Asia. We face a continuing debacle of one type or the other which we must overcome first and create the preconditions for the miracle to follow.

ince 1970s, vibrant economies of South-east and East Asia maintained a fabulous growth Prate often exceeding 10 per cent per annum. As a consequence, per capita income increased by three to four times over a twenty to twenty-five years period. Within one generation, universal literacy was achieved, a huge segment of the population became urban, better nourished and moved up to the middle class status. The economies from being overwhelmingly agricultural became newly industrializing economies since manufacturing and service sectors are now the major sources of income and employment for the people. Never before, such structural changes were achieved in so short a period. It was indeed

However, Asian miracle seemed to have collapsed since the middle of last year. Starting with the financial crisis consisting of steeply declining exchange rate, flight of capital and collapsed financial institutions, the crisis deepened further with closed factories, bankrupt enterprises and sharply rising unemployment. Now no body talks about the Asian miracle. The so called tiger economies today confront the Asian debacle.

The South-Asian economies failed to join the mainstream of high growth Asian economies. We craved for the miracle (who doesn't) which never came. Hence we did not face the debacle. There seems to be a misplaced sense of satisfaction: after all, slow and steady wins the race; our 3 to 5 per cent growth is perhaps the ideal. We may not witness the miracle; neither we will pay the price of a debacle. Unfortunately in South Asia, our lack of success in achieving the desired level of economic development is not justified by what is happening today, elsewhere in Asia. We tend to look for a black cat in a dark room which is not there. Our limited perception of slow and steady growth would imply that we will never bridge the gap between the rich and the poor nations and South Asia, for the foreseeable future, would remain the most conspicuous poverty belt of the

What we have failed to see is that the debacle. compared to the two decade long remarkable growth of the tiger economies, is likely to be a short term phenomenon. No doubt, there are

unresolved problems and the economy is going to suffer for a year or two in terms of low growth rate, high unemployment and reduced business income general However, already

Window on Asia

Shahed Latif

there are signs. although very faint, of a turnaround in Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea; while, the Philippines have already reversed the downward trend. It may also be noted that the economies of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore sustained the miracle. In fact, out of the original four Asian Tigers, the so-called Gang of Four, only South

Korea faced a debacle. Asian miracle, as a phenomenon of unprecedented magnitude has continued to flourish since the debacle was partial - specific to few countries and for reasons well known to all of us today. It does in no way justify the slow pace of South Asian economies. The export led growth strategy, fueled by foreign investment has proved to be capable of taking the economy on a path of rapid growth in a situation of excess labour supply, spread of literacy and above all, commitment of the government to a liberal market economy.

The fundamentals remain intact. What are these fundamentals? First, for an economy to grow rapidly, it must produce more - as much and as quickly as possible and continue with it in a sustainable manner. But whatever is produced must be sold. Given the low income, there is no domestic market to absorb the expanded production. Naturally, export mar-

ket is the answer. In the export market, we must compete with suppliers from all over the world. What do we produce for export? Our labour is cheap and we concentrate on the production of those goods and services where labour constitute a significant share of the cost of production. Initially, we do not have the skill. We focus on the manufacture of those items where relatively unskilled labour is sufficient or the skill can be acquired easily. This has been the basis of the remarkable growth of the garment industry of Bangladesh. Now the issue is not only garment, there are several other labour intensive industries which should flourish in Bangladesh and eventually lead to the situation where manufacturing becomes the mainstay of the economy. Only then, Asian miracle can be replicated in Bangladesh as well.

However, manufacturing growth of the scale experienced by other economies of Asia also calls

for rapid spread of education, in particular, universal literacy is a must. Moreover, export manufacturing calls for a liberal market economy when foreign investors will be interested to come forward since they are assured of free movement of capital including returns generated by their investment. In a market protected by external tariff or influenced through administered prices including subsidies, manufacturing cannot be competitive. Production for export must face open global competition and if prices are right, then competitive advantages will itself select the types of manufacturing that ought to flourish in the country.

This is the lesson of the Asian miracle which remains valid and intact. There is no reason to be apprehensive and therefore we should further reinforce the policies of an open economy which

have already been initiated by the government. It still remains to be explained why the miracle turned sour and there is a debacle in the financial markets of the ASEAN economies in particular as well as in South Korea. Growth in an open economy calls for discipline through well managed financial institutions. Unfortunately, given a long period of rapid economic growth, profit expectations went up too high to be sustained even by high levels of economic performance. As a consequence, investment in the real estate sector, to begin with, became saturated and there was an excess supply of housing and office buildings. The companies involved faced difficulties in repaying huge amounts of funds borrowed. Their market prices of shares started to fall. Beginning with the real estate companies, profit expectations in other sectors of the economy also tend to

I have mentioned before that high levels of economic growth of Asian miracle economies were fueled by foreign investment. There were cheap funds available in the developed countries and with free movement of capital, those funds did find attractive investment opportunities in the rapidly growing economies of Asia and the pacific. Thus direct foreign investment, portfolio investment as well as funds for borrowing were in plenty. However, once profit expectations began to diminish, starting with the real estate sector.

those funds also began to run away to safer Consequently, demand for dollars in exchange of Thai baht, Indonesian rupiah or Malaysian ringgit multiplied almost overnight.

Rapid exchange rate depreciation was a must under the circumstances. It was also true that due to rise in wage levels, several labour intensive industries were also faced falling export earnings resulting in increasing balance of payments difficulties.

The Asian miracle was first vitiated by the financial crisis manifested through the flight of capital, steeply declining exchange rates and run on the banking institutions which were overwhelmingly exposed to the real estate sector. Then came the real squeeze on to the manufacturing enterprises since due to huge depreciation of local currencies, they could not meet the repayment obligations of foreign borrowings. In an open market regime, the domestic rates of interests went up sky high. It is now difficult for enterprises to secure the working capital loans although they might have gained in terms of their competitive prices.

The crisis therefore is essentially of a financial nature and it can be overcome provided the global rescue mission through IMF is able to restore the confidence of investors. At the same time. institutional arrangements have to be firmed up so that before the next round of over heating of the economy, the brakes can be applied well ahead of the crisis in the financial markets.

In Bangladesh however, we face a debacle of some sort well before the miracle could even appear on the distant horizon. The financial system is tarnished by long overdue loans and the share market has collapsed into insignificance. We welcome foreign investment and at the same time face a real crisis in electricity generation. We cannot witness a flight of capital since the capital must flow in first. We crave for rapid expansion of labour intensive manufacturing while the labour force remain largely illiterate. Therefore, to say that we do not face the financial crisis of some of the South-east or East Asian economies is essentially out of place.

In fact, we are least concerned with the miracle or debacle in rest of Asia. We face a continuing debacle of one type or the other which we must overcome first and create the preconditions

for the miracle to follow.

Striking oil — a blessing?

Sir, 'Just striking oil, producing and even exporting it. doesn't make a country rich' said my brother after returning from Venezuela. I was aghast on hearing this and had a terrible feeling that this can also hold true for Bangladesh. Venezuela is an oil-exporting country, a member of OPEC but some parts of it are even poorer than Bangladesh! This I was told Further, I learnt that most parts of the country are underdeveloped, only its capital Caracas looks developed and a modern city.

He added that if the government policies are not right, corruption is rampant as in the aforementioned country and ours, it doesn't let a country prosper, however oil-rich it may be. I got worried that if that be so, the same thing can happen to us, here in Bangladesh. In spite of striking and producing oil, our poor people may remain as poor as they are now, while the rich will get richer and richer still, for the benefits of oil production may go only to a handful of top brass. Can this nightmare really come true? I do hope and pray not.

Whereas the damage that oil

exploration does to the land and to the farmers who till the soil is grave. We have already seen how devastating it is to the environment if an accident like that in Moulvibazar occurs. How uncontrollable these fierce fires are, how they burn vast areas of fertile land around them and render extensive areas complete wasteland by the scorching heat, for tens of years to come. What compensation by mare cash can make-up for this colossal loss? Even when accidents do not occur, digging deep wells into our fertile soil here, there and everywhere in dozens of places, is surely going to play havoc to the environment. Is somebody going to pay the farmers for destroying their cultivable land? Can this loss be made up by money? Ours is

mainly an agricultural country.

We do hope that, that will not suffer in the hope of striking oil - the benefits of which are still doubtful to reach the teeming millions who live from hand to mouth. That, oil exploration and production is so devastating to the environment, is the reason why USA and other developed countries do not explore it too much, in their own countries. They, rather prefer to import it from other countries, at the cost of the exporters' environment, saving up their

How very clever!

Dr Sabrina Q. Rashid. Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka

Mere Tk 15 crore! Sir, It is incredible to read in

the newspapers that the major problems of the Karnaphuli Newsprint Mill (KNM) would be solved with a development allocation of only Taka 15 crore for BMRE. Then, what are we waiting for? There must be catch somewhere, otherwise the problem is not as simple as only cash-flow.

country of 120 million cannot support one newsprint mill. The KNM cannot sell what it produces and huge foreign exchange has to be spent every year to meet the demand for newsprint, including the printing of cheep textbooks.

The indifferent attitude of the KNM administration and the controlling authority (the government) is not clear. The systems loss is not being announced. Now the CHT problem is claimed to have been 'solved' by the people's government that is the region from where

the raw material comes. The industries under state control are dying out for administrative and management reasons. The politicians play with this sector as political tools, choosing the negative or positive side as time and situation demands. The sincerity of policy stands is questionable.

Now after decades of indecision and playing footsie footsie, the MT Factory at Gazipur is be-

ing handed over to the military Bad money has driven out good money from the market, but bad industrial units under state care cannot be laundered. The suspicion is that ultimately it is the political will which decides the outcome of any pending is-

What is the other side of the coin? We should be exporting different types of paper! Let us do some paper work. A Husnain Dhaka

Number of rape cases

Sir, The number of rape cases perpetrated in many parts of the country makes all of us alarmed and the social fabric threatened. All of us often notice some heart-rending news of rapes in the newspapers. It manifests the immoral propensity and sexual proclivity of a large number of youths and about all the decadence of our

social condition. This ominous situation badly invites the sincere attention of all to take proper attempts to establish social order It is unbelievable that the and harmony. I am giving some humble suggestions to be considered by the government, educationists and all others concerned:

> a) Exemplary punishment should be given to those who are involved in rape cases and other sexual crimes. b) The young men and women should be encouraged to study the biographies of our Prophet (PBUH) and other noble personalities. c) Moral and religious education should be introduced in our curricula. d) The women should be encouraged to put on decent and modest dress because, in many cases, the sexual temptations and the evil instincts of the youths are aroused by the laxity and indecency of women in dress. e) The Information Ministry and the Censor Board should not allow anyone to produce obscene cinema - and all other sexual vulgarities should be checked.

Mahmud Dhaka University