# The Baily Star

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Getting the Taxes to Coffer

The central element to any budgetary exercise has always been the largely unresolved concern for raising adequate resources for it. The discussants at a Daily Star pre-budget roundtable on Saturday, therefore, zeroed in on the wherewithal question, and we believe they have hit the nail on the head. Majority of them said the government could substantially raise the level of revenues — and within the parameters of the existing tax structure — by plugging the collection holes alone. It does not have to increase the levies or rates nor broaden the tax base for the purpose. All they are basically saying is that the collection targets set in the annual budget will have to be met at the year-end. A perfectly legitimate expectation.

The validity of the point they have made lies in the fact that there would be no rationale whatsoever for any tax-raise or expansion of the tax base if any government failed to collect the levies it had imposed. "Consolidate and advance" should be the operational strategy here without any deflective

lamentation over a limited tax base.

Yes, our tax base is poor covering as it does some one million people, while a potential exists for bringing ten million or so into the tax net. But when we have messed up with a few lakh payers allowing the higher solvency bracket to underpay or dodge taxes in collusional arrangements with tax collectors, what disastrous consequence would await us if we were to broaden the tax base just

So, the imperatives are now to improve tax administration and simplify the assessment and paying procedures. Rules open to bending and variegated interpretations and procedural rigidities have a way of breeding widespread corruption in revenue matters. The tendency to evade taxes is near-universal but what makes a difference with that human proclivity is a system that discourages it, nips it in the bud. Let's consult the experts, take a leaf out of the books of countries which have successfully curbed the tax dodging phenomenon. The Voluntary Declaration of Income Tax scheme in India is worth studying by us in this regard. We know many suggestions are gathering dusts in the office shelves. It is time for some action now.

## SAARC TV Network

We like the idea: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's proposal for a SAARC TV network. Enthused though, we however cannot help feeling authorities need to guard against the pitfalls in this respect before really getting on with the idea.

There is no denying television can be a powerful medium in strengthening the cultural bondage among the people of this region. An integrated TV network's potential in promoting friendship, cooperation in areas of common chronic problems can be hardly overstated. If utilised up to its potential SAARC TV network will not only equip us to meet the challenges of the next century but also do wonders in removing the legacy of mutual insincerity, distrust and internecine bickering, something that has come to defeat a possible collective approach to tap the full potential of the region.

But experiences in this direction have hardly been encouraging. SAVE or the SAARC Audio Visual Exchange is a case in point. An unimaginative package of programmes of the seven South Asian nations, it has been an utter failure from the viewpoint of audience's acceptability. One reason it never made its presence felt among the viewers was authorities' inability to go about it professionally. It was more dut of a bureaucratic obligation to uphold the spirit that SAVE was launched in and not from any professional commitment. Control is a very vital factor in this regard. Let's not forget this is a creative medium and the only purpose stupid intervention in the name of regulation can serve is to rob creativity. This is all the more pertinent in this age of competition and multiple options. One has to be innovative and attractive to stay in the business.

We suggest governments don't make unnecessary haste over it and dwell on the said aspects exhaustively before okaying the proposal. Only if creative professionals are allowed to work freely that SAARC TV network has any future to attain its goal, otherwise it is going to be another study in failure, as usual.

## Motivation First, Please

That was an infinitely funny picture The Daily Star front-paged on Saturday. Not only for the bad grammar on the sign-board proclaiming the vicinity in the photograph a SILENT ZONE but more so because the DOE (Department of Environment), who put it up there, has by the some sign fixed a ceiling on noise in the area at 45 DECIBELS. Must be the work of some noise expert!

tions.

How would the noise makers in the area know that they are crossing the limit? And no one individual can possibly have the power to ensure that the combined noise of the area keeps to the limit. It will take a mobile DOE team to patrol selected city noise points and monitor the level and then inform the people at fault that they were crossing the limit. The DOE team is not there. What then is the use of putting such signs up? DOE must be an extraordinarily efficient organisation to suddenly woke up to the disastrous facts of noise pollution and get down to putting up the signs. Surely the DOE people wouldn't like a bit of policing about. And who would care to listen to them and why, if

they start going about? No, there is no chance of such sound pollution to abate if things are left alone to DOE. The hawkers still flaunt their migratory bird preys on the busiest city streets. Because the government doesn't as a whole react to this and police personnel often get down to do a hectic bargaining with those culprits. In public transports, buses particularly, smoking is back with a vengeance. In the buses and in restaurants they play 'music' above a 100 decibel level. The government — all of it — must make it a business to fall upon infractions of DOE instruc-

The first and most formidable problem with sound pollution is that there is a pervasive lack of awareness about it. The child goes to the fair and unfailingly buys a racket. The nation as a whole is passing through an interminable spell of infancy. It is still very much a problem of awareness. DOE must first mount a saturation campaign of motivating people against noise and noise-making — on billboards and in newspapers, in cinemas and televisions. They must prove good at it. To start with.

# The Dayton and Beyond

The hatreds on all sides are still too fresh to make Dayton objective a worthwhile goal anytime soon. A fresh flare-up among the ethnic communities is most likely if the coalition forces are withdrawn in June 1998 as has been projected in the Accord.

camp notwithstanding the process' impending danger for for awarding 50 per cent of European security. The West Bosnia's land area to Serbs and generally welcomed the an ineffective cease-fire was development and not only imposed from July 1994.

S former Yugoslavia, a so-

cialist monolith started to

Adisintegrate at the

beginning of the decade, the

mood was festive in the western

promptly recognised Slovenia

and Croatia after their break up

from Yugoslavia, the issues

arising out of their separate

statehood were neatly settled by

a predominantly Muslim

Bosnia-Harzegovina followed

the suit by holding a referen-

dum for independence from dis-

integrating Yugoslavia in

February 1992. Bosnian Serbs'

opposition to the referendum

and their attempt to form a

'Serb Republic' right within

Bosnia sparked violent clashes

ily superior and not much af-

fected by UN-imposed arms em-

bargo swiftly proceeded, with

tacit approval from Belgrade, to

occupy almost three-fourths of

Bosnia's land area although

they formed less than one-third

of country's population. Thou-

sands of Bosnian Muslims were

massacred, an equal number of

women dishonoured, old and

unable left in lurch and chil-

dren maimed by the Serbs in

gruesome operation of what

they called an 'ethnic cleans-

while the Bosnian Muslims de-

pended in good faith only on the

mercy of merciless peace bro-

kers, the western alliance's ac-

tions, bereft of a sense of ur-

gency, were confined mainly to

holding inconsequential peace

talks while Russians took the

side of the Serbs because of the

nexus of their slavophile fra-

ternity. Instead of taking the

aggressor to task the Partition

Plan - only visible 'solution' of

the international community —

authored by the US, UK, France,

Germany and Russia provided

In the unequal conflict,

The Serbs, already militar-

eversince.

But the problems arose when

European Community (EU).

However, the Serb's arrogant refusal of peace plan disrupted the fragile peace in Bosnia and Serbs' aggression resumed with renewed fury. By the middle of 1995 the Bosnian Muslims were on the brink of annihilation when the "UN declared' safe areas for the Muslim refugees also became targets of Serb brutal-

NATO's new 'strategic concepts' adopted in November 1991 did acknowledge new threats facing the allies including those in the Balkan but Yugoslavia still remained peripheral to the alliance's core interests. To observers both in the US and Europe it was an "European problem' to be resolved by purely European organisations and not by translatic outfit like NATO. Nevertheless, the US, the only NATO member which could unilaterally play a role in the Bosnian crisis dithered for long and failed to develop a workable approach.

However, by the summer of 1995, the UN credibility was at its nadir and US-NATO weaknesses were profound with Serb forces overrunning the UN-designated 'safe zones'. As European diplomacy failed and Clinton administration with its foreign policy inventory almost blank at the fag end of Clinton's first term began to play more active role in Bosnia, NATO was increasingly called upon to provide military cover

to peace efforts. Boosted by three weeks long NATO bombing during September 1995 the renewed negotiation in Dayton Ohio reinforced for the first time, UN capabilities on the ground and a shift in the region's political and military balance produced a peace agreement for Bosnia at long

last. Claimed to be the centrepiece of Clinton's foreign policy, Dayton Accord ended the fighting in war-torn former Yugoslav republic of Bosnia-

Harzegovina. For the US it was a hard-won foreign policy accomplishment with the stationing of 60,000 US and coalition troops to implement the provisions of the accord. Yet virtually no one familiar with Bosnia believes that peace will endure after June this year once the coalition forces are withdrawn as stipulated in the accord. Even people who participated in crafting the accord assert with

equal conviction that failure to

munity but only under terms which left central control in the Muslim dominated state rather tenuous and the ethnic minorities quite powerful with considerable autonomy. The checks and balances provided in the accord could have been a brilliant idea but did not quite well work according to the experi-

ences of over two years. The military aspects of Dayton Accord have so far been successfully implemented with 14,000 troops on the ground still well armed and possessed of stiff rules of engagement. A robust Stabilisation Force (SFOR) authorised to demand and get compliance from all



implement it will surely result in a resumption of war.

Dayton was a brilliantly negotiated agreement because it could put an end to the conflict when all other efforts failed. But it aimed at an impossible objective: the creation of a nation where no sense of national community existed. Dayton wanted to keep Bosnia united and shunned the idea of partition because none of its independent units could be economically viable and they would invariably be at war with each other to gain that viability.

This implied inclusion of ethnic groups, the Serb and the Croats, who would have to live as minority people in a state dominated by larger Muslim group. Both the ethnic groups agreed to do so only under the

pressure of international com-

parties on matters for which it is responsible, has been holding peace for almost three years. But the implementation of civil elements of the accord is not

equally a success as yet. There is a problem of compliance because of the lack of a single authority to ask for it as a plethora of governments, humanitarian and non-governmental organisations are functioning in this sector. Still more acute problem in this regard is the lack of cooperation by three parties involved. In fact, two of the parties of Dayton — the Serbs and Croats worked hard to ensure that their entities would be as free as possible from the domination by the third.

Given the investment of US prestige in the current multiethnic arrangements the only other alternative, the partition would be difficult. Not only reversal of US policy would incur the US her credibility cost and she would like to preserve the centre piece of her policy partition plan entails other substantive problems. Only the Croates, by virtue of their geography, would probably be integrated by adjacent Croatia and together with their ethnic brethren prosper subsequently. As a matter of fact, nearly 30 per cent of Bosnian Croates have already left the republic since the Dayton accord was signed and resettled in Croatian Krajina.

The Bosnian Serbs are not, however, welcome as refugees by a economically collapsing Serbia; neither can they form a viable entity if completely independent. Bosnian Serbs with the stigma of their cruelty of 'ethnic cleansing' have practically nowhere else to go. Frustrated with the waning prospect of multiethnic state, the Bosnian Muslims, also nourish the desire of a pertained state controlling 65 per cent of the country's land area and with guaranteed access to Adriatic

Burying these diverse motives and desires of the ethnic groups the United States in particular has been persistently promoting a federal structure, but to deny overwhelming power to the Muslims the Dayton has outlined a central government sufficiently weak so that the minorities could maintain the autonomy essential to their sense of security. The accord did not, however, explicitly acknowledge the right of the minorities to govern themselves. Defying the critics, the US continues to deny that right in principle. Embedded in US policy seems to be a righteous retribution directed against the

national Donors Reconstruction Programme and evidently revitalisation of economy has taken place. The refugees are returning for resettlement although old prejudices continue to linger. According to observers, the hatred generated by war must fade before any real mixing of the groups can take place. The military programme introduced after Dayton Accord aims at training and equipping the Federation to defend against potential Serb offensives should the peace process fail. It is considered to be Muslims price for accepting the terms of Dayton. Because the Muslims believed that they could do better on the battlefield

in August 1995 precisely when

Americans intervened. The

Europeans, for their own

reasons, are however averse to

the idea of arming the Federa-

tion which they think would

Serb for starting the war in

\$5.1 bn have been pumped into

war-ravaged Bosnia by inter-

In the meantime, estimated

Bosnia

only benefit the Muslims. The hatreds on all sides are still too fresh to make Dayton objective a worthwhile goal anytime soon. A fresh flare-up among the ethnic communities are most likely if the coalition forces are withdrawn in June 1998 as has been projected in Dayton Accord. The only alternative to the resumption of the conflict will be a protracted mission for the coalition troops who will have to hold this unhappy land together by force.

Whether the US, which supplies the bulk of the troops, has the political will to sustain peace in Bosnia at any cost remains to be seen. The Dayton has however made one substantial difference in Bosnia's military equation. In the event of a future conflict in Bosnia, many observe, the Bosnian Muslims, now confident and spoiling for a rematch, will almost certainly initiate it and guide its course to their advantage - if uninterfered by the outsiders.

# De-energising Power Rates

For the IPPs it may mean a curtailing of windfall profits at the most; for the long suffering consumer of Pakistan it may mean the difference between hunger, misery and privation if the costs are not reduced.

VER the past few months has become quite apparent that Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and Karachi Electric Supply Corporation Ltd. (KESC) are in a serious debt crisis. This was brought into sharp focus by the brutal murder of MD KESC Shahid Hamid several months ago by what seems clear was a professional hit team, the reason being that the late MD was delving deeper into the various irregularities that would have exposed quite a number of people. The explicit warning inherent in the gangland-type assassination was thus made quite apparent to others in similar situations. Needless to say the warning has been heeded to the detriment to the interests of the people of Pakistan even by the small dedicated band of people determined to eradicate corruption. The government has been concentrating on the Independent Power Projects (IPPs) as the major reason for the power rate crisis, that in fact was the final straw that broke the camel's back. Let us take the straws that count and list them under two heads, viz (1) generation and (2) distribution of electricity and then work our way back to some of the more

scandalous IPPs. Whether the generationmode is hydel or hydrocarbon the machinery has been overpriced. While it did not make much of a difference in hydelgenerated electricity, the price padding in hydrocarbon fuel generation machinery has kept on escalating alongwith the price of fuel. At least two or three WAPDA chiefs made enough money to live out lives far in excess of their basic known means. To add to this the power plants are being run quite inefficiently thereby giving us unfavourable power to price ratio. With transmission losses quite high, the basic cost of bringing electricity to the doorstep of the consumer is quite high. At the consumer's bus-bar a completely different malia takes over, the meter

readers and inspectors. The categories of consumers are (1) industrial, (2) commercial, (3) domestic urban, (4) agriculture, (5) government departments and (6) domestic rural. Without almost any excep-

tion almost all industrial and domestic consumers cheat. One simple litmus test are the ice factories where it is comparatively easy to calculate possible consumption against the product made. For the ice presently coming out of each factory, four to five times or more greater voltage has to be used. Obviously the ice factory owner brainchild of a senior World would sell at a profit which means that at least 90 per cent, of the electricity is not paid for. On a lesser scale so do commercial users since it is easy to cal-

culate the load factor because of the air conditioners and other appliances against the energy that is paid for, and the same is true on a commensurately lesser scale for domestic urban users! Government departments do not cheat, they simply do not pay their bills, at least on time The agricultural consumers not only cheat, they hardly pay their electricity bills whether it be for tubewells or domestic use Some areas do not pay electricity bills at all e.g. the rural areas of Balochistan and the Tribal territories, protesting vociferously any attempt to

make them do so. Obviously if 50 per cent or more of the electricity generated by inefficient and overpriced plants run on expensive imported fuel is not paid for, this force-multiplies the pressure on revenues against expenditure, what does one expect the government to do except raise prices to reduce the adverse negative gap between expenditures and revenues? However, this is a Catch-22 situation, the raising of prices plays into the hands of the unscrupulous who increase their "demands" commensurate to the increase in prices, the net result is a meagre increase in energy revenues, that is more than washed away by the inflation that ensues be-

cause of raised prices. Into this cauldron of opportunity came the IPPs on the strength of a very imaginative and comprehensive private sector energy policy floated by the Benazir regime. The policy had everything going for it and had it been implemented properly. it would have been tremendous

energy plus for Pakistan. What was wrong was (1) the price indicator of HUBCO, (2) the sale of Kot Addu and (3) the individual manipulation allowed to each IPP in a wild west energy environment (no pun intended on the then Supremo of Environment). HUBCO was all wrong for the right reasons. The Bank employee, Ebrahim Elawan, its cushy-cozy deal was

the government. Why was the cost price so high in Pakistan's case? If, the IPPs had agreed to reducing the cost, why should we open a Pandora's Box, on the other hand they deserve criminal prosecution for criminal wrongdoing for falsifying financial records. By invoking a similar Corrupt Practice Act through a Presidential Ordi-

nance, the Nawaz Sharif regime

## AS I SEE IT

Ikram Sehgal writes from Karachi

quite apparent from the appointment of Consultants for the Project, then a brand new US company K&M Engineering. While the owners of this firm were US Construction giant Bechtel's former employees Kappas and Menendez, this firm did not have any requisite experience to handle a project of this size. Yet the World Bank and USAid kept funding it for five-six years at Pakistan's expense till the project was approved almost at gun point. The price became a bench-mark, and the cost broke every world record for corruption. The thumb rule for every MW of electricity is US\$ 0.9 million as an all-in price, for HUBCO Pakistan has had to pay as much as US\$ 1.6 million for every MW of electricity as project cost. Obviously the cost went up and with HUBCO as an indicator (0.9 @ per km/hrs), no wonder WAPDA is in a deep financial mess. Similarly Kot Addu's new owners raised the selling price to three times what it used to be pre-sale (and the sale itsel

was virtually a fire-sale). On the face of it, it seems a fairly easy assumption that bribe was paid except in 2-3 cases. The US firms stand to run a foul of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, that is exactly why they have launched an expensive and sophisticated media campaign to pressurise

m the ap- has adopted a sophisticated method of dealing with the IPPs. Essentially they are now required within seven days of issues of notice to certify that they have not bribed anyone in a position of influence. Instead of threatening to revoke the sovereign agreements without reason and thus damning any hopes of future foreign investment, what has been asked for is reasonable, after all what is unreasonable in confirming that the respective corporate entities did not indulge in corruption? A window of opportunity has been left open, in lieu

of co-operation to revive the

power tariffs downwards instead of the project being cancelled in entirety. If the IPPs have not indulged in any corruption they should have no problem complying with the certification. A threshold of integrity requires them to confirm compliance or reveal the names of those who took bribes and kickbacks. Mian Nawaz Sharif should

be commended for taking a concrete step towards accountability. And why limit this inquisition to electricity and gas only. why not apply this certification to all major projects, including defence material, afterall why in the face of strategic common sense vital to the existence of the country, the Navy does not want to cancel two of the three submarines on order from France in order to buy hightech combat aircraft off the shelf that the PAF desperately needs? And while we are at it, why not also have Biwater, UK certify that in the US\$ 25 million water project it did not pay money to some senior politicians and government functionaries? Let us expand the scope of this act to effect accountability across the board.

the IPPs are a good start! Instead of privatising generation we should immediately start to privatise distribution. A city such as Karachi can be divided by KESC into Zones depending upon its transmission

i.e. the grid stations from where the electricity is distributed in each area. After catering for loss, the private distribution companies must pay for electricity consumed at their busbar, maintaining the transmission system through the revenues they generate. Raja Nadir Pervaz, Federal Minister for Water and Power, is to be commended for his Herculean efforts to get the IPPs to toe the line, however he also needs to drastically re-structure and reform WAPDA and KESC, or at least curb their inefficiency and corruption somewhat if we are to successfully de-energise power rates.

One must be wary of cronyism here, we cannot afford to replace one set of crooks by another. In the recent election to the Board of Directors KESC, deep-seated political cronyism was quite apparent, a systematic prelude to corruption on the road to privatisation. At the end of the totem pole is the common man who has come to such a stage in paying a high price for electricity that he probably will have to do without electricity in the future if he and his family have to eat. For the IPPs it may mean a curtailing of windfall profits at the most; for the long suffering consumer of Pakistan it may mean the difference between hunger, misery and privation if the costs are not reduced. Not only for the consumer but for the country the future is dark indeed if the IPPs manage to crawl/bribe their way out from this piece of legislation!

# To Any Daughter Desecrated

HE could have been my daughter. She could have been anyone's child. Thursday night she was called Shazneen. By any other name she would have been the victim of a frenzied brutality, ripping her mercilessly from life, devastating with unimaginable grief and pain her parents, stunning her friends and family with a paralysing horror and agony. Those who know a victim and her family know what it is to be shattered, but those who read a mere item in the newspaper read only of

the violent closing of a life. We read with appropriate sympathetic interest or with passing curiosity, but we read passively, and are unaffected. We do it all the time. Newsprint does its duty, though in the end it does reduce a life to a mere statistic. And we the readers, also dutifully and habitually, make the necessary comments and read on. Over our cups of tea, in the backseat of our chauffeured cars, sitting in our swivel chairs, we go on perusing the violation of our innocent neighbours and fellow citizens. And that's where it ends. And of course, our leaders don't even glance at the news items. They

have better things to do. Everyday it is happening around us. Innocent girls are meeting horrifying deaths. We read about them in the morning's paper, an entire palpitating life slashed and neatly fitted into a column. We don't hear the scream, visualise the pain, the bereavement, imagine the agonising helplessness of the family, perceive the loss, ponder the senselessness of the. crimes. Only when we know someone closely does the full horror of a crime dawn on us. Only when a near and dear one is attacked does it become clear to us that we are living in a city

by Neeman A. Sobhan that has become the breeding ground of a class of inhuman, demented, twisted minds. But criminals of violence don't just happen, they are a result of societal alienation, deprivation, social dislocation, moral instability, stratification, and

above everything, the absence

of, and thereby a lack of respect

for Law and Order.

When we agree to tolerate living in a society where there is no one in the top echelon who feels accountable for the erosion of law and order, we sanction the proliferation of crimes and criminals. When we keep quiet and watch our powerful leaders protect criminals, we stand back and witness the rape and murder of our women and children. When we suffer silently and not take issue with the transformation of our city into the hotbed of violence and bloodletting, we are sentencing ourselves and our children to a life of

insecurity. When crimes go unpunished, when there are no exemplary arrests or justice, when law and order becomes a joke, when the police are the eunuchs of society, and the mastaans, with the full blessings of our political godfathers, call the shots, are we surprised that the moral fabric of society should have frayed and torn to such a pitiable state? We have been patching it with our indolence. political apathy, and passive complicity, and tried to cover our nakedness with whatever

rags is left to us. But when the society has degenerated to such a level that we cannot trust our employees, where we fear what lurks in the heart of every second person. where we cannot be sure who

might stab us in the back, isn't it time to take a good look at the writing on the wall? Isn't the hour for reckoning at hand? Shouldn't we hold our leaders to account? And I mean all of them, for let's face it, we know that it does not matter what their political affiliations are, or which party they belong to: ALL OUR POLITICIANS ARE GUARDIANS AND PROTEC-TORS OF OUR CRIME LORDS. Unless THEY decide that rape and mayhem will not be tolerated in society, unless THEY decree that our daughters and children will be safe on our streets and in our homes, we the innocent citizens and bereaved parents will forever be hostage to violence in this country.

For all of us who have children, or a conscience, it is not enough that we mourn a violent death, we must all bear responsibility for turning into a society where the desecration of an innocent life is possible. We must all force our highest seats of authority to stop fooling with our lives and our morals. Let us not take the rape of our society lying down.

When we gather to offer our prayers and condolences to the

bereaved family of a desecrated daughter, can we ask all the powerful people of this city to take a stand, to pledge the end of senseless violence? Can we promise to create a purified, more morally accountable and secure environment? Wouldn't this be the only way for us to vindicate a meaningless death, and create out of a wasted life something of enduring value? Shazneen by any other name, is our own daughter, one of our many. Let us build a civilised environment in their names. and not allow their deaths to diminish the value of their truncated lives.

### Death of Shazneen

Sir. The death of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, an ex-classmate, has haunted me immensely. She was raped and stabbed, by one of her servants and it is likely that other people were connected as well. It is 'sick' to imagine that a fifteen year old girl can be murdered so ruthlessly.

Where is our society going to? The women are afraid to live in a country where five year olds are being raped. It is time for our people to take a stronger stand against these 'perverts'. We have to fight to make this country a safe and better place to live in. Arbab Quadri,

House 92/A. Road 7/A, Dhanmondi, Dhaka \* \* \*

Sir, I am a girl. Is it a curse for me? Is it a curse for my parents? Think for some time.... Shazneen...can be your daughter... can be your sister... or may be you could be the poor girl. Twenty stabs and rape can you think this for someone? We the girls always victim of this male creatures. I must

say the girls as age of 3/4 years also fail to escape from their inhumanity. Is this any kind of game? This a matter of a girl's life! This is a country, ha!!!... that gives no security to any

The political leaders, what

are they doing? Nothing, they are doing nothing for us ... I am a university girl . I know my One Who Feels self-respect. People of my age or above know that and think also... but when a rickshawpuller looks at me in scrutinising eyes ...weighing my body ... l can do nothing ... I just can escape from there. But why do we people have to escape — we are not doing anything ... this is not our fault that we are female. The Mollas say that we should wear Borka... But why should we — what is our fault? Now we see that we are not safe in street or market or the place like these. But it has been proved that we are not safe in our own houses, own bedrooms either. The Shazneen murder has

proved this. I am asking the parents, ask your daughters or sisters what they might have gone through. Readers, you may say these are happening all over the country so what solution do you want's The solution is... we should make our law very strict ..every criminal must be arrested and necessary actions should tollow, if necessary sentence them

The best solution is ....KILL US, WE, THE WOMEN, Kill us.

Dhaka

#### The DU at stake Sir, Gunbattle again rocked

the DU campus. Again the same picture on the newspapers armed goons, police as spectator, feared students. Again the same press conference demanding 'exemplary punishment' same probe body whose report never sees light, etc.

We strongly believe that our political leaders who always claim themselves to be against terrorism, are playing with the students for their sake. They are acting shamelessly. They are the ultimate killers of those students who have come to DU with big hopes. Teachers are also involved in politics.

A DU student Dhaka