# The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali Dhaka Wednesday, June 17, 1998

# Why Trivialise the JS?

BNP's keeping from the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad on top of its track-record of parliamentary boycotts is almost taking the form of a national betrayal. The party seems to have made it into a habit of doing so. There was a saving grace this time round for some fleeting four to five days when it looked as if the party had made up its mind to attend the JS session 'come what may'. Like a sand-bag resolve this got washed away in a high tide of habitual diffidence. Previously they would cite reasons, even mouth excuses to perform walkout antics leading to those nightmarish boycotts. Sometimes their stand-off on one or two issues might have evoked sympathy for the cause but not for the boycott as such which was considered a breach of trust by the electorate.

Now the outlook gotten worse with the party not even feeling that it owes an explanation to the nation for its absence in parliament. The 'long march' fatigue apparently made them put off their attendance in parliament and now it is the 18th June hartal they are preoccupied with in a frenzied manner. The fallout of the hartal might well give them another handle to postpone their presence in parliament. And eventually when they bring their minds to attend the session something or the other could crop up to push things back into square one.

We have never tired of urging the opposition to refrain from relinquishing their right and duty to attend parliamentary sessions to make their presence felt where it is most needed rather than squander it on the streets or in arm-chair closets. Parliament is the property of the people and not of the ruling party. What is more, from the standpoint of its watchdog role, Jatiya Sangsad is the opposition's natural habitat. Politically, ethically and by all cannons of constitutional law, the opposition is duty-bound to attend JS sessions, no questions asked.

If their talks with the Speaker had failed to yield results on the implementation of a previously agreed upon code of conduct that is more the reason why they should report this to the parliament and grill the violators in full public view. Regardless of what the Speaker says or does or how the ruling party acquits of itself, BNP should attend Parliament's sessions with all the home-work done to put the government on the spot. That is what they are for. And two years down the line they have enough to talk about on the floor of the House. Take the JS seriously to stop belittling yourself as the opposition party.

## World Cup Vacation!

Untenable things aplenty have recently been the lot of one of the nation's premier educational institutions - the BUET. But not one of them was half as outrageous as Monday's decision by the authorities to close the university for nearly a month — so that its students could enjoy the World Cup TV relays. Press reports say this has been done in response to demands made by the students. Well, well, no one knew universities could be closed like that. The politicians are known to stoop low and break norms to placate their constituency. Why have the teachers to emulate the politicians and be jolly-good-fellows to students? Well, they too must have been dying to enjoy the nightly fare wafting from far France. So that is bad enough. Can there be something more?

The students had been denied of a full month's class already. And for no fault of theirs that closure came straight from the teachers' strike. A strike aimed at seeing their dear VC's resignation declined by the government. And now that the classes had resumed in force, the teachers clamp a new closure!

No educational institution has been closed just because of World Cup. All offices and business establishments are running as usual. Do the university authorities — really the teachers — feel it is only their students who are night after night remaining glued to the TV sets till the small hours? Wrong. And they know it. Then why this unseemly compromise with pedagogical principles?

The BUET authorities must beware of the precedent they are setting by this utterly atrocious decision. The BUET is not going to produce next month a champion soccer team. The waking hours of the students would be for sheer entertainment. This is no examination season at the BUET. Wakeful nights aren't going to hurt the students or the teachers. Some physical discomfort for such top entertainment should have been perfectly in order. Were the students serious enough in their demand? Perhaps not. And yet the inconceivable happened. We have no language to denounce such imprudence, such ghastly bashing of academic rectitude.

### Polythene Hypocrisy

We strongly endorse business community's critical view of government's decision to use polythene bags for jute packaging. A cruder instance of a suicidal decision cannot be imagined. Polythene is imperishable. Already indiscriminate use of polybags has played havoc with city's drainage system. Besides, polythene robs the soil of its fertility. And then think of the cost it is coming at! These polybags, if the government is foolish enough to stick to its guns, would rule out one of the remaining marginal uses of jute, one of our main foreign exchange earners.

The decision reeks hypocrisy too. There is precious little the government has done so far to protect the environment although there never has been any shortage of publicity hype to inform the world about its concern over environmental degradation. Not one of its projects, ranging from the drive to cleanse Dhaka's polluted air to Buriganga's contaminated water, has taken off.

This decision comes as an unassailable proof of what has long been felt by us: government is not at all serious about environment. It is a shame the criticism has come of all places from business quarters and not from government's won relevant department.

We demand the government revoke this decision immediately and save both environment and jute from a threat that can be helped.

# The Summer of Our Discontent

by Nadeem Rahman

" ... The West throughout the last five centuries has displayed extraordinary energy — energy which has taken many forms, some good, some bad. But all this, which might have ministered to human happiness, has been vitiated by one fatal fault; the love of power over other human beings... Perhaps some at least of the nations of Asia will have learnt this lesson from their sufferings... Perhaps, on the other hand, they will only have acquired a wish to initiate the ruthless mastodons who are bringing the West to disaster. I have not the gift of prophecy and I cannot plumb the depths of human folly, but, while there is uncertainty, hope and apprehension are equally rational, and hope is more likely to beneficial. So long, therefore, as hope remains possible. I shall continue to hope. And a large part of my hope will be centered in the East."

— Lord Bertrand Russell A Re-awakening Of The East

Ultimately, the Cold War ended because both superpowers armed themselves into bankruptcy. There was no other

nobler reason. Closer to home, we are about to embark along a similar path. Two bombs, both ethno-religious in origin, both driven by internal political compulsions. One, delivering the wrath of Allah. The other, accepting no converts. Each determined to prove itself, regardless of the inevitable outcome. But the stakes have been raised to an unprecedented level, and no citizen of South Asia can any longer sleep in peace, nor escape the nightmare of the nuclear overkill. The consequences of a nuclear accident alone, would have potentially disastrous effects on the environment and ecology of the entire region for years to come. At the end of the day, the Muslims might celebrate their hollow victory with whisky, while beef stakes satiate the euphoria of the BJP bomb. With or without a war, a South Asian nuclear arms race will destabilize everything. from garments quotas to the transfer of technology, from the Middle East peace process to Japanese trade and aid in the region. Most of all, it will disquiet the slumber of Asia's indisputable giant, in this year of

the tiger. But paper tigers abound, and Sri Lanka has shown the way in acquiescence. In Bangladesh, the government has neither the courage nor the conviction to deviate from the well trodden path of toeing the line. Apart from a feeble and half hearted pretense of alarm, it would condone anything asked of it by our immediate neighbour. Nepal and Bhutan are in a landlocked stranglehold, while the Maldives maintains a dignified distance. Its protests are loud and clear. In this scenario, the five non-nuclear so-called equal partners of SAARC, are simply unwilling pawns in the power play of the two aspirantpseudo-superpowers. The bomb has ushered if not the death of SAARC, at least its total redundancy. Unwittingly, the BJP blueprint has only succeeded in elevating Pakistan to unquestionable equal status, in terms of military might. And the in-

troduction of world class weaponry has ensured the internationalization of all hitherto bilateral issues, most no-

tably Kashmir. An Indo-Pak nuclear war will effectively disintegrate South Asia as we have known it for the last half century. In Pakistan, the bomb will neither silence the MQM nor undo the Bhutto legacy. In India, with the brandishing of the bomb as a political cure-all, the BJP have miscalculated beyond their wildest dreams, increasing the velocity of the centrifugal forces to a point of no return. In the fallout, new flags and a new political geography may emerge, with ethnicity and regionalism in the forefront. For all their rhetoric, the BJP have achieved the one thing they sought to avert. They have all but handed Kashmir to the Kashmiries on a silver platter. Pakistan's options on the other hand, in this test of nerve, are somewhat greater. To begin with, they are in a unique position to flirt with Islamist fanatics and all variety of anti-Western but not necessarily pro-Indian elements.

The West must now contemplate the horrifying specter of Muslim fundamentalists loitering the streets of western civilization, with nuclear tipped suicide pills between their teeth. Or, it might meet Pakistan half way. Pakistan is already so beholden to its Middle Eastern mentors, that it cannot possibility resist the pressures of an Arab lobby (should such pressure be exerted), particularly in view of forthcoming economic sanctions. Unlike India, Pakistan has not once elected a single fundamentalist party to power. Perhaps elections have been few and far between in Pakistan, but the only administration to remotely resemble Islamist ideals was that of Gen. Ziaul Haq, enjoying full American support. Pakistan's grievances with America are many, from the days of the Cold War to Afghanistan, and more importantly, America's history of let-downs inspires little confidence in America's credibility as honest broker. In the absence of any serious and/or substantial American initiative, Russia could play a pivotal role in mediating peace, as it did in Tashkent after the '65 war. But Russia today, is dying of internal hemorrhage. The prognosis,

it would appear, is grave. If mankind is to continue with dignity, the West must rethink its diplomacy of duplicity and double standards. England as head of the Commonwealth has shown its nationhood of shopkeepers and kept intact the interests of British trade and industry against all odds. America as self-appointed savior of democracy, must match words with nobler deeds than its archives would admit (a list of US-sponsored dictators and CIA inspired coups comes immediately to mind). Notwithstanding her contribution to liberty, equality and fraternity, not to mention art, music, fashion, and everything to do with culture and civilization, France must finally accept geopolitical decline, as England has, with

grace and compromise, Germany must be permitted to be Germany again, cleansed of guilt, despite the efforts of all the erstwhile Allies. In the East, Japan must accept leadership (as indeed it has) in strengthening Asian economies. China must come to terms with the winds of change and its Western acquired philosophy of counter-capitalism. And last but not least, mother India must learn to let go, in order to reunite her family.

Humanism must prevail if humanity is to survive. When Vice President Nixon asked India's first Prime Minister what he wanted most for his country, Mr Nehru replied "Give us a generation of peace". Since then, India has fought four wars with two neighbours in as many decades and twenty years of non-alignment were thrown to the winds in seeking American assistance against the communist Chinese. In all fairness, at least three of the wars were defensive. But the mood is considerably more aggressive now, and in much the same manner, the nascent Gujral doctrine has been cast aside like a candle against the wind. The time has come for us to echo the words of Pundit Nehru to the current incumbents of Indian leadership and the guardians of Mahatma Gandhi's legacy. We are passionate Orientals

and restraint is not in our nature. Our war machine is not equipped with the sophisticated checks and balances of the West. Our decisions are emotional, personalized and totally without accountability. Thus the words of Bertrand Russell, quoted above, ring truer than ever before. Lord Russell, who was a dedicated ban-thebomber, wrote this essay at the height of the Cold War, when both Eastern and Western Europe lived in constant fear of a nuclear holocaust. He placed a good deal of hope on the reemergence of the East and Eastern values. In the context of war and peace therefore, particularly in this, the summer of our discontent, a re-awakening of Eastern virtues and traditions of tolerance, is all the more essential. Lest we do to ourselves, what others could not do to us. Time is of the essence. The final countdown has begun.

Unfortunately, nuclear power, like money, is of no use to anyone, when safely secured in underground vaults. It dares the gambler in us, and considering what manner of men we are, I feel confident that sanity will not prevail.

## OPINION

All thinking citizens are

very much concerned that our

politics is not being cultivated

in the proper manner, and the

politicians, a very important

section of the community, have

continued to fail to deliver.

Their repeated failure to run the

state in a peaceful and non-dis-

ruptive manner have resulted

in repeated crises; even after

well-tested democratic system

was introduced in the early

tics? Is it ideology standing in

the way, bifurcating the nation?

Is it elusive charismatic

leadership, past and present,

haunting the nation? What are

the options? if there are any,

why these are not being exam-

ined, and some workable alter-

native tried? The nation cannot

afford to pass years in uncer-

tainty, violence, bitterness, ha-

tred, facing the muzzles of guns.

The goondas, terrorists and evil

activists are holding the lead-

ers, the citizens, and the society

the general elections.

the scapegoats?

hostages.

## Whither Politics?

#### A Husnain

questions have to be faced and answered, first by the politicians themselves, and then by those who support them. The President himself is concerned, and his messages to the leaders of the society are clear and noncontroversial. Who are listening, and who are responding? The politicians owe some re-

sponsibility to the nation. If

masses is much higher today

1990s; followed by the neutral they cannot solve their own caretaker form of government professional problems themfor the interim period between selves, others cannot solve it for them. In fact, the politicians Thus the nation is hostage to would be unwittingly inviting two maladies: the transparency 'outsiders' to fish in the trouof the elections, and transbled waters. The people have parency in good governance. witnessed such exercises before, The '90s have been turbulent, and, hopefully, grown wiser. and there are no signs of nor-The people cannot be fooled all malcy returning soon. Who are the time. The general political consciousness among the -What is wrong with our poli-

> than at any time in recent his-The politicians are building up a negative image, and it will be difficult to erase it quickly. The public mood is unpredictable, especially in a society not very sensitive to overtures of discipline and sense of duty. The times are sensitive, bad, and ominous. One triggering action may be enough to render the situation uncontrollable, as it happened in 1990 and resulted in the fall of autocracy.

backed by experience.

The developmental progress of Bangladesh was nipped in the bud when it was nearly on the way to take off. The private sector is flushed with the taste of success and money, and would not brook delays and negative politics (the BGMEA is in a very hostile mood vis-a-vis the banking sector). The economy can be turned around with united leadership. But, everywhere, people face the political stalemate, day in and day out. Patience should not be allowed to reach the point of no-return; it is not good for anybody.

Merely party leadership is not enough. All-round statesmanship is the need of the hour. What we witness in contrast are continued bickering and the play of divisive forces, right from the campus onwards. Nonpolitical workers are being used for political work. Is it fair? Who pays the price of this type

of substitution? Have the politicians realised that the present situation is very nearly at the point of going out of their grasp and control? Then what? Let us spend some time on perspective reappraisals, than remaining busy and working overtime on the petty day-to-day problems. What is the value of party consolidation when the country's political stability is at stake? Nothing new has been pointed

#### This time it may be quicker, out in this petition of protest. For whose benefit? These Patience is Running Short...

#### Politics in Bangladesh is hostile confrontational passionate and brittle. Tough politics of hard politics? The latter is brittle, and breaks up or disintegrates. Since there cannot

be a vacuum, new environmental situations grow up where the time is ripe. At present, there are two major political parties, with ado-

lescent democratic background. Maturity is not even hiding round the corner. The projected scenario in the very near future reminds us of the 'mancha' days the nation witnessed prior to the last general election. The mood appears to be ominous: "What you can do, we can also do; and, may be, do it better". In India the Congress ruled

### An Observer

for half a century since the independence of the country. In Indonesia, two leaders successively ruled the country for a similar period. Lee kwan was example in Singapore. In Bangladesh, a similar rhythm could not be established, as the creation of Pakistan intervened in the historical process.

Perhaps the two major parties have missed the chance, and the day dreams will not turn into 3-D reality. Chasing dreams might be dangerous in some cases, and hurt a lot of people, unless statesmanship

intervenes. A minister have frankly

warned that the present bureau-

cannot deliver the goods, to enable the tired baby nation to take-off. A former finance minister saw no political consensus during the next decade. Break bones, or be supple by

cratic set-up and mentality

yielding (malleable)? Our political leaders are still in the mind-trap of building up a superstructure without the proper base or foundation. In a deltaic region, jowar-bhata (flow/ebb tides) is the rhythm of life. How to make the democracy of the temperature zone harmonise with the local currents?

Few lead, but many wait. They have seen enough fruitless years. Patience on all fronts is running short. It is a trying period for the nation.

## Electrical Power: The Human Side

#### The government is desperately trying to grapple with the severe shortage of electrical power in the country (partly technical and partly artificial and human), and the press is fed constantly with certain angles of information to assuage the public. But some key weak points in the whole system are not being spotlighted ade-

The whole publicity cam paign is based on the technical side, the generation, the repairs and maintenance, and on transmission. There are several areas for improvement in the operation, management, and distribution side, about which awareness campaign is neces-

The human systems loss is a term now well understood in this part of the world. Inefficiency is not a mysterious bug or virus, and its presence can be analysed and explained, and corrective action taken through management expertise; unless of course, the policy-makers are not above board.

The best technical system in the world will not work properly unless run or operated in the right manner (known as standard practice). It is not merely a matter of having trained and experienced staff. The sense of duty and professional loyalty have to be inculcated and so in-built. The question of bribery and corruption. malpractices and nepotism have to be faced squarely in the open; otherwise the overall effi-

Alif Zabr ciency will not increases even with the installation of additional generation units (what is the point in outputting the new sets with one-third human systems loss?).

The human problems the DB is facing have to be faced boldly, and the solutions found and applied firmly. Instead, the public is fed with stories of the bungling of the previous regime. It is neither here nor there. The predecessors were facing similar human problems, and the present regime has not yet been able to tackle it firmly, remembering that the social background is the same - undesirable cultures should not be allowed to lurk here and there. Double standard will not work

for all the time. In some parts of old Dhaka. it has been alleged that onethird of the connections are illegal. The government has started a field campaign to prosecute the offenders (disconnect the illegal lines). but the publicity is not enough; nor is the deterrent punishment on both sides, the users and the suppliers. Why the defaulting

staff is not being punished? There is no news on the internal disciplinary action. There are groups, cliques, and vested interests inside the organisations, who have not been exposed adequately. Mere exhortation and publicised visits to sites will not increase operational efficiency. Bad people must be spotted, prosecuted and

punished, in national interest The indifferent administrative attitude is not confined to PDB and its empire, but is also prevalent in other sectors bank loan defaulters, Rajuk and its notorious land management in the urban areas, the rent-seeking in the BTTB empire, the SOEs, and the corruption-ridden departments (the names are familiar to the pub-

The mismanagement of the electrical sector is a part of the general sickness prevailing in the public sector. All are aware of the shortcoming, but few can tackle the situation successfully; because dealing with a large mass of bad and corrupt persons cannot be carried out in a simplistic manner, as is done with a piece of machinery remove the unserviceable component and replace it with a new one. Increasing the internal efficiency is always an unpleasant task for any management and to policy team, because the whole establishment has to be shaken up, including the platform in which the reformers are standing.

More than the technical problem the corrupt personnel have to be tackled first, and that too firmly. In the private sector, there is accountability at the lower working levels (the companies cannot run at a

There is a simple initial choice, but the result is not guaranteed: start with the big fish or with the small fries?

# It was the people

Lothe Editor...

Sir, I have been reading Dr Fakhruddin Ahmad's 'Letter from America' and respect his right to his opinions. However he is factually off the mark when he says (the 16 June issue that "Pakistanis grabbed Abdul Ghaffar Khan's NWFP through coercion.

HERE is considerable

concerning South Asia's

recent spectacular turn of

events. Between India and Pak-

istan, a dozen nuclear detona-

tions have irrevocably altered

the status quo and our compla-

cent assumption of continued

"peace in our times", in our re-

gion. Was the world taken to-

tally by surprise? How could

Western intelligence fail so

blind eye part of the global game plan, perhaps to contain a

stubbornly defiant communist

emergent superpower in the

Asia Pacific rim? And did In-

dian leadership completely dis-

count even the remotest possi-

bility of a Pakistan quid pro

quo? The postmortem is aca-

demic, and all the wisdom of

hindsight, simply water under

the bridge. The burning ques-

front yard and India and Pak-

istan are equally villains of the

peace. Pakistan pleads "no al-

ternative" as a consequence to

Indian chauvinism, while India

cries scantimonious "justifica-

tion" after having taken the ini-

tiative in the culture of the

quick fix. Pakistan's response

to Indian exhibitionism was

swift and in equal measure.

Five blasts, one for every decade

of independence, with more to

flamboyance.

follow in characteristic Muslim

for every easy solution (or in-

escapable alternative), and

history takes its pound of flesh

in more ways than one. The

price is paid in the cultivation

of a political culture devoid of

the human touch, where every

issue is evaluated regardless of

its cost in human lives, effec-

tively divorcing the electorate

from decision making and any

semblance of power. It takes its

toll of socio-economic and cul-

tural norms, redefining the

vardstick of normality beyond

recognition. In the aftermath of

the Second World War, twenty

years of "peace" in the shadow

of the nuclear threat, bred the

psychedelic escapist children of

the swinging sixties. An entire

generation of social dropouts

disdained the mainstream of

civilized conduct. Their

counter-culture found self-ex-

pression in 'far out" music

came a dirty word, and the sex-

ual revolution the holy scrip-

ture of a fatalistic morality.

These were a people not sub-

jected to economic sanctions

such as the people of Iraq

rather they were the inheritors

of the earth. Despite every af-

fluence, they could not escape

the despair of impending doom

But this was the most harmless

outcome of the Western nuclear

arms race. Increasingly, might

was right and callous arrogance

orchestrated an epidemic of se-

cret wars throughout the third

world from Latin America to

Indo-China. The world stood at

the brink of the Third World

War, more often than it realises

Deprived of hope, God be-

manners and fashion.

But there is a price to be paid

The bomb is back and in our

tion now, is what next?

miserably, or did it? Or, was the

debate, post facto,

The statement is wrong historically as well as in principle. NWFP was as much Ghaffar Khan's as Punjab was Khizar Hayat Tiwana's or Kashmir Shaikh Abdullah's. It was the people who decided and NWFP became a part of Pakistan in the same manner as Sylhet is today a part of Bangladesh through referendum.

Karam Elahi High Commissioner of Pakistan to Bangladesh

#### Thinking about the people?

I fully endorse your views regarding our politicians both in power and in opposition over their style in reacting to the national budget. Every year budget comes and goes, common people find little interest and meaning in it, superfluous comments made by our politicians within minutes of its announcement it becomes cheaper. Thus the whole budget affair becomes a farce and trifling matter. This is unfortunate and shows the moral bankruptcy of our front line politicians.

This year also the defence quota is the highest, and to defend it the Finance Minster had to bring the example of Britain. I wonder why he had to jump so far, could he not find any other country similar to our geographical situation and eco-

nomic standing? Let us not make our budget so cheap in front of our people, after all it is the people who have to pay for all these. It is a tool for economic development and social justice, we have to be more serious about it.

Abul K Shamsuddin 535 East Mall Etobicoke, ON M9B 4A4 Canada

### Helping humanity

Sir, It was with great satisfaction that I read the DS report of the High Court ruling against the reprehensible practice of "safe custody". This terrible practice is completely opposed to all notions of human and civil rights, as it results in the jailing of people who have not been charged with or found guilty of any crime.

Furthermore, it leaves innocent women at the mercy of the police, which is unallowable if we have learned anything from Shima Choudhury's rape and

What I cannot understand is why this ruling did not rate inclusion in the first page? Certainly this is one of the most important human rights law developments in Bangladesh in recent times. And certainly putting it on the back page does not benefit anybody.

Zeeshan Hasan House 54, Road 2A, Dhanmond R.A., Dhaka

### **Budget 1998-99**

Sir. We read the article by M A Kalam Mazumdar titled "Budget 1998-99, Will it be Up to the Expectation"? on 28th May, 1998 in the DS. He has pointed out in details about SROs, tax base. VAT, tariff structure, no export tax, tax administration, tax rate, tax payment etc. We would like to add here some other points as :

The exemption of one storey building up to 1600 sft should be deleted from the order of inception. Because, due to this order, luxury apartments which costs up to Tk. 30 lakh for 1600 sft will try to get such exemption, withdrawal will save huge for

Any payment both in purchase and sale above Tk 2 lakh. should deduct advance tax irrespective of status. This will earn a lot of tax from the car market as found in Dhaka and

Chittagong. Sale of state-owned enterprises should be done quickly to get remedy from huge losses this should be done by Privatisation Board as early as possi-

Weekly holidays should be one day. The last but not the least point is to appoint sincere and honest persons in important

M Ali Dhaka

positions.

#### Why Kosovo is in a curse?

Sir. The conflict in Kosovo is now turning to a full scale war. More than 1/3 of the territory of Kosovo is involved in war operations. Many civilians are being killed everyday, many villages are being burnt. The re-gions that are being attacked by Serbian aggressors are in a total blockade. There is a lack of food and medicines and there is a risk of a humanitarian catastrophe.

Another category of people who need help are students from attacked areas who study in Prishtina and that either cannot get back to their homes or don't have where to go because their houses are ruined

cial help or a place to stay. Dur ing last three months the SIUUP has helped thousands of these students financially and has distributed tickets for free meal in restaurants of Prishtina. But in the meantime the SIUUP has also ran out of its funds. We appeal for any kind of

and/or burnt. They have ran

out of money and need finan-

help you can offer. We also appeal to you to urge the Government of Bangladesh to create pressure on Belgrade regime to let the humanitarian aid get to endangered regions. Bujar Dugolli President SIUUP

#### Prishtina, Kosovo The poor's pie in the sky

Sir, While I have total abhorrence and condemnation for the authority responsible for the supply of electricity, and full sympathy for the hardship for the letter writer (It's Dark Age, I'm sure, Salma B Aanam, May 30, 1998), I will ask her to spare a thought for another group of resident of Bangladesh those who are homeless and

has to live on the streets. Electricity (loadshedding or not) and a share in the nation's wealth, including aid from foreign countries which are specifically given for them, remain for them a pie in the sky.

#### Why more autorickshaws?

Sir, Thank you for your first leader on the above subject published on the 20th May '98. With an utmost sense of unmixed joy and satisfaction I go for applauding the Prime Minister for accepting a hard fact that like previous government, her government also could not do anything good in the electricity sector during their two years of governance. This type of soulsearching is sure to bring positive to the people.

is the gigantic government programme to import 5000 twostroke three-wheelers popularly known as baby taxies with 50 crore taka loan from four. And that too by an organisation which has already been defaulting a very big amount of 31 crore taka as bank loan for years together. Are they not working

But what has struck me most

against the avowed environmental government policy of planned phasing out of these pollutant-releasing demons from the city streets?

Tasiruddin Ahmed Kallyanpur, Dhaka-1207.