

Outcome of Delhi Visit

It will be sometime before the true import of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's whirlwind trip to New Delhi on Tuesday starts unfolding.

Bangladesh leader's visit to New Delhi in partial fulfilment of the trouble-shooting mission undertaken by her which is to take her to Islamabad on June 24.

How has she fared with the first part of her mission? What inputs is she carrying to Islamabad for a productive round of talks with Nawaj Sharif?

The shared realisation in New Delhi and Dhaka that the bilateral relations are on a sound footing and that these should now be consolidated and furthered is a good augury.

The Indo-Bangla Foreign Secretary-level talks scheduled for June 29 in Dhaka will be a focal-point of attention.

Thoroughly Poignant

It has been almost a year since we commented on this issue in this column after a national daily first broke the news.

The jeremiad of Champa, Tumpa and Rina shows that the taboo against mentally unbalanced people reigns too powerfully for a civilized society to shrug it off.

Under the circumstances we feel the human-rights organizations are doing a tremendous trail-blazing job by freeing these fettered souls.

Train on a Mad Run

It was past ten on Wednesday night. The Surma Mail was running towards its Sylhet destination.

Dhaka and Narsingdi got in touch with Amirganj and made the latter stop the Dhaka-bound local from Bhairav.

And the mystery of the jinxed train gone berserk? The drivers of the Surma Mail took tea at Tongi.

What lesson can the railways take from this? They should perhaps prepare a code of conduct for all their engine drivers.

FRIDAY morning is a wonderful time of the week. I laze around in my age-worn rocking chair sipping my third cup of coffee and reading The Daily Star.

So far so good. I enjoyed the rather free usage of terms like 'drab' or 'hapless reader'.

So, why should one worry about the indices? After all, that is natural selection or in more impolite words, a bitter murderous survival struggle.

"Hapless readers" will forgive me if I am a little concerned.

To the Editor...

Please practise what you preach

Sir, I cannot thank the Prime Minister for her tough talk 'do your job properly or quit'.

Campaign for nuclear disarmament

Sir, The recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan have become a matter of great concern to the conscious and peace loving people of Bangladesh.

But it has been noticed with great regret that there has been no significant voice of condemnation either from our government or from the opposition political parties.

India says, since the super powers, like USA, UK, France, Russia and China have their own atom bombs.

The blasts before the millions of hungry mouths in both the countries proved to be sheer luxury on the part of the two governments and a cruel mockery with the people.

Pakistan said they had to go for it because of internal pressure and to defend themselves against Indian threat.

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To Love is Two, Always Two

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To the Editor...

AV equipment in schools

Sir, A press report from Pabna has pointed out that audio-visual equipment worth Taka 80 lakh donated many years ago by UNICEF to different schools are lying unused.

All the three parties should feel satisfied — the schools, the authority, and the technical staff. A supplementary source of servicing or supervision are the technical schools or polytechnics.

Fight unfairness and wrongs

Sir, Lately a strange thing has been noticed in the developing countries. Whoever can, uses power and position to his own likes and dislikes.

Deplorable state electronic media

Sir, The present regime talks about transparency and points to the mole in the eye of the opposition.

Shadow budget

Sir, The government has just presented its annual budget. Almost instantly, demonstrations have taken place against the budget.

Uttara — the model town!

Sir, I would like to thank Morshed Ali Khan for his timely reporting on land-grabbing in Uttara and on other problems of Sector-5 of this residential area.

PM's pre-election pledges....?

Sir, Had not the PM Sheikh Hasina promised the primary school teachers or any section of teachers they would not have to take to the streets in order to seek her government's sympathy towards them for any just cause.

What's the hurry?

Sir, Some 'great' personalities are rather impatient and in unseemly haste for fame, honour, award, recognition and glory.

Shameful servility

Sir, The antics of our foreignophile politicians sometimes makes me wonder whether we are a true sovereign nation or not.

Just not done!

Sir, As you wondered in your editorial (June 9), I was also wondering how a foreign diplomat could be invited to a political party public meeting.

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One good sign: we seem to be getting more inventive.

Only when we establish an empathy with all creation, recognise the cosmic integrity and the beauty of our planet, we can, perhaps, approach a life with meaning and fulfillment.

I also plead guilty to the dry seriousness of my form and content. The only defence I have is to paraphrase from Notes on Poetics and Ethics by the Greek Poet C.P. Cavafy (1863-1933).



A Z M Obaidullah Khan

Dropping names for respectability. But as the accused I have a right to self-defence. Since some of the terms used by the poet-essayist are rather harsh, I shall quote verbatim.

Let me explain what I mean. I like seriousness only in serious things; i.e. 1/2 hour or one hour, or two or three hours of seriousness a day.

With that my defence rests. But there is another charge. Why do I flit between times? Why can't I write something topical, about the instant, the now and here?

To the Editor...

Defence Expenditure and Related Debate!

Sir, I enjoy reading the columns of Brig (ret'd) Hafiz in your esteemed daily. However, I felt disturbed reading his above article in DS on 1 June, 1998.

Why do you forget, guys?

Sir, What is happening to the young men and teenage boys of our country? The horrific stories of rape and violence have reached unbearable proportions.

Where have the buses gone?

Sir, Suddenly Route No 46 bus service (Tongi to Gullistan) has stopped. I don't know why. We have been going to our college by this bus.

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into the future. But a feature writer must concentrate on the contemporary, the current, the present. I have to be a little personal.

Again I call poet Cavafy as my defence witness. He writes: The time of the year I love is summer: the intense sunlight, the triumphant mid-day, the exhaustion of August nights.

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satisfied. A feature, or a news paper column is not a literary form. It must seize the moment, seize the hour. It must disturb and provoke.

When I started writing this column I invoked T S Eliot: I grow old I grow old I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled...

do I dare to part my hair behind? Do I dare! Perhaps, in my twilight years when the hazel wind of dusk blows gently for me I do not dare.

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