The Daily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

Dhaka Friday, June 19, 1998 **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. The immediate gain to accrue to both sides, however, has been the rapport built between Sheikh Hasina and Atal Behari Vajpayee. Bangladesh Prime Minister has come back from New Delhi with first-hand knowledge and understanding of how the new Indian leadership's mind works in matters of bilateral and regional concern following last month's nuclear slanging match between India and Pakistan.

Bangladesh leader's visit to New Delhi was 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? Bangladesh's strict and assertive neutrality on the nuclear issue would be her prime asset in persuading both India and Pakistan to step back from nuclear brinkmanship. As signatories to the NPT and CTBT — whatever their imperfections — Bangladesh has clearly made her choice against nuclear tests as distinguished from the position both India and Pakistan had taken by keeping out of the two instruments. To both New Delhi and Islamabad we must express our legitimate concern over possible neglect and regression of regional cooperation and poverty alleviation programmes presaged by the rising spectre of nuclear militarism in South Asia. Both India and Pakistan have decided on unilateral moratoria on nuclear tests but not on weaponisation and deployment as

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. But in specifics the problems relating to sharing the waters of common rivers and equitable trade need to be addressed urgently.

The Indo-Bangla Foreign Secretary-level talks scheduled for June 29 in Dhaka will be a focalpoint of attention. For these would not only cover the entire gamut of bilateral relations but are also slated after Hasina's visit to Pakistan. Whereupon Raghunathan, the Indian Foreign Secretary, would be in a position to know what happened in Islam-

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. We hoped ten months was some, if not enough, time for things to change for the better. Unfortunately as the follow-up report informs us, the poignant reality for the cured patients of the mental asylum in Pabna has not changed one bit. Love and carelorn, these patients look forward to rapprochement with their near and dear ones with wistful eyes. Champa took only six months to be cured of her problem but remained in the hospital for 26 years because none of her relations claimed her back. Were it not for the human rights watch body life for Champa and Tumpa, another victim to have rotted in a state of unclaimed neglect for many years, would have meant prolonged imprisonment at a place they long ceased to have the right and reason to belong to. No less tragic is the case of Mymensingh's Rina, whose parents assumed to be alive and financially able to defray her living expenses have continued to turn a deaf ear to the repeated communicative efforts of the hospital authorities.

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. Pagol (insane) is a frightening epithet in our society. Once a pagol is always a pagol. Worse is the process in which the near relations like parents abandon the wretched individual out

of the fear of social stigma.

Under the circumstances we feel the humanrights organizations are doing a tremendous trailblazing job by freeing these fettered souls. We hope their efforts gain momentum and spread over the whole gamut of society. Society has to live up to their right of living as respectable, responsible and productive citizens. We believe the Social Welfare department of the government has a great deal to do by way of campaigning for awareness among people on this issue and also in improving the treatment and rehabilitation facilities for the mentally unbalanced people in the society.

Train on a Mad Run

It was past ten on Wednesday night. The Surma Mail was running towards its Sylhet destination. Besides passengers, it also carried a casement containing 2.5 crore Taka from BB to its branch and secured by a posse of armed police. But the train started accelerating without rhyme or reason and, like one dead drunk, crossed the Narsingdi junc-'ion where it had to stop, disregarding a red signal burning unmistakably on the approach. It was su, rely jinxed. By the time it passed the red signal at Am, rganj station, the guard of the train panicked and released the vacuum braking system, considerably slowing the train.

Dha, ka and Narsingdi got in touch with Amirganj and made the latter stop the Dhaka-bound local from Bhairay. Some accounts say the driver of the local, seeing the mad train rushing towards his on the san'e line, started backing his charge and had gone so me kilometers when the unstoppable one crashed into his. Both locomotives and some bogies were de railed and 50 including nine police-

men were hurt. And the mystery of the jinxed train gone berserk? The drivers of the Surma Mail took tea at Tongi. And perhaps mouthfuls of betel leaf and nut too. It is said that as soon as they had departed from Tongi, both losi consciousness. They did not recover until the crassh. If some people had conspired to loot the money, the plan was an effective one. The police party was badly hurt.

What lesson can the railways take from this? They should perhaps prepare a code of conduct for all their engine drivers — to be adhered to from one hour before their mission to the end of it. And then, the guard and drivers must be in constant contact during a run. Signals and communication are of paramount value for the trains system.

To Love is Two, Always Two

"Hapless readers" will forgive me if I am a little concerned. I always thought that the glue that binds human kind together — the family, the society, the nation is compassionate care and the willingness to share.

RIDAY morning is a wonderful time of the week. ▲ I laze around in my ageworn rocking chair sipping my third cup of coffee and reading The Daily Star. That day my weekly column appears. I have a habit of revisiting my own writing. As I read and re-read, I was assailed by self-doubt. Have I been too abstruse? What did I mean by the epithet, 'ontology of existentialism? Have I been incoherent, a flitting between past and present and sometimes taking tired fancy into the future?

Uneasy with all these imaginings I was idly flipping through the Star Weekend Magazine. And there, I found an objective reader, who happen to be a regular contributor, confirming all my doubts. He is terrorised by dull bored "ex-bureaucrats, discarded diplomats and grubby academics whose writing is guaranteed to induce deep and tranquil sleep in one

Bemused as I was, I thought back about myself. I have been both a national and an international bureaucrat. I have also been an interloper in the domain of diplomacy. To top it all after I left the government and before I became a senior international civil servant, and even before I intruded into the pasture of the academia. I was a Fellow of the Centre for International Affairs at Harvard in the mid-seventies and in the very late eighties, a Resident Scholar in the East-West Centre at Hawaii. So, I have all the dubious qualifications for spewing out columns that are "invariably dry, lumpen and pompous", sometimes all three at one go. No amount of name dropping like those of Nietzsche, Huxley, Sartre and Kafka can "dignify this sort of rubbish". So far so good. I enjoyed the rather free usage of terms like 'drab' or 'hapless reader'. What concerned me was the punch line: Do I dare? Do we care? First, I thought, it must have been meant as black humour

that rhymes. Then I went back to my own column. Could it be the manifestation of an irrational mecentered psyche or to put it mildly, "the crafty rationalisation of a turbulent ego"? If so, why not? After all, self-interest is the cardinal faith of all dynamic entrepreneurs. Sly disinformation in the guise of the rhetoric of freedom is the vogue.

So, why should one worry about indiscriminate decimation of species? After all, that is natural selection or in more impolite words, a bitter murderous survival struggle. As long as I survive I can laugh at the weaklings. They must give way to the strong. In the process if the old and the disabled, the poor, the women and the children get eliminated, that is what is fated for them. I recall a cartoon in the Newyorker Magazine. An acolyte economist is talking to another of his ilk. "Why get worried if the poor gets poorer, and the rich gets richer. In the end it all averages out."

"Hapless readers" will forgive me if I am a little concerned. I always thought that the glue that binds human kind together — the family, the society, the nation is compassionate care and the willingness to share. As biological beings we are only half finished, the other half is reverence for earth and all there is; the quest for "being" rather than the rat-race for

"having". Only when we establish an empathy with all creation, recognise the cosmic integrity and the beauty of our plant, we can, perhaps, approach a life with meaning and fulfillment. If that disturbs

someone, I plead guilty. 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). The discerning contributor of Star Weekend Magazine may sneer again: "There, you see!

drollery, the well-turned irony, humbugging. But it's just not practical. It makes it harder to get things

Because for the most part you are dealing with fools and ignoramuses. Those sorts of people are always serious. How do you expect them to joke around, when they don't understand? Their serious faces are an outward mirroring. Everything is a problem and obstacle to their untutored minds which is why like oxen or sheep (animals wear utterly serious



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. Otherwise, I may be misconstrued as an angry old man indulging in vituperation. Here is the quote:

"I know that in order to succeed in life, and command respect one must be a serious person. But it's hard for me to be serious, I don't value serious-

Let me explain what I mean like seriousness only in serious things; i.e. 1/2 hour or one hour, or two or three hours of seriousness a day. Often, to be sure, almost a solid day of it. Otherwise, I like jokes,

expressions) their features are so steeped in seriousness. A funny person is generally looked down upon, or at least

doesn't inspire a lot of confidence. That's why I go out of my way to present a serious mien to most people. I have found that it makes my affairs go much more smoothly. On the inside I do a

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? Stream of consciousness is fine for a literary

form or even crystal gazing

ing around."

into the future. But a feature writer must concentrate on the contemporary, the current fad. In reply, I have to be a little personal. When I started my working life, I used to teach romantic poetry to my captive audience in the university class room. And some images may haunt one for a long time, like Wordsworth's dictum regarding emotions recollected in tranquillity. What that means to me is that a person is unable to write without enthusiasm and sometimes rage. In the midst of enthusiasm, however, he or she cannot work well. The enthusiasm must cool down before one can accomplish anything. But even then - in a collected state — the things she or he creates have their origin in the period of enthusiasm. "Someone who is always enthusiastic does inferior work; likewise someone who never is."

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 paid not so much attention; he exhaustion of August nights. The shapes and feelings of summer supply me with a wealth of impressions; but I have never noticed that I have transposed or translated them directly into literary form. say, directly, because artistic good deal of laughing and jokimpressions sometimes go unused for a period of time; they bring forth other thoughts, are reshaped by fresh influences, and when they crystallize into written words, we have difficulty remembering which of those moments was the original cause, the source from which

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. Well, I don't know. My work tends towards refection, may be, that is as it should be. Then it could be like the amphora that permits a variety of interpretations. If a feature can be a trivia game, why exclude the literary genre from the fun

When I started writing this column I invoked T S Eliot: I grow old I grow old

I shall wear the bottoms of

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. That is why the question mark. But I do care and shall continue to care. I am disturbed by the ideas of ruthlessness, the rightful domination by the strong, the supposedly selection process of strife which eradicates the small and the weak. To me these are insanities. They will lead to annihilation of human kind. "Not ruthlessness: but Mercy, Compassion, Toleration, kindness fall of course in due measure. without excess) contribute Strength as well as Wisdom.' And, above all "Love".

reconciliation with the Great All

and with the others, the small and endless

So I end with the incantations of Octavio Paz: to love is two.

always two, embrace and struggle, two is the longing to be one.

Io the Editor...

Please practise what you preach

Sir, I cannot thank the Prime Minister for her tough talk 'do your job properly or quit' (PM's Tough Talks, 17.05.98). However considering the inefficiency and resultant chaos exist in public utilities departments, law and order, education, health etc., I hope the PM apples her ebullient injunction to her government and to her cabinet. After all as the leader of the country, we want see her practice what she preaches.

Aator Aali

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 as well as those of the other SAARC

countries 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 or from the conscious section of the masses. Even the newspapers of our country have not come up with a decisive role to oppose or condemn it. Both India and Pakistan who have blasted their nuclear devices have justified their respective positions in

two different ways. India says, since the super powers, like USA, UK, France, Russia and China have their own atom bombs. India being a country of 1200 million people must not lag behind. They further said that they would not use nuclear weapon unless they are attacked. On the other hand

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. It is quite clear when somebody does something wrong, there is no dearth of any excuse.

Whatever may be the excuse behind this, the two governments have definitely acted irresponsibly and in total madness. 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. Are they aware of these weapons? What will happen, if it is misused or wrongly used? Even the question of accidents cannot be ruled out. In that case, where do we stand? We are under the threat of nuclear madness in

South Asia. Now the question is: can't we do anything? Certainly we can We can condemn this insanity in the strongest voice. We can start a campaign for nuclear disarmament in South Asia. We shall have to make people aware of the consequences of this nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan.

We can impress upon the people and the governments of both the countries to denounce and renounce nuclear weapons. If we are committed to the campaign for nuclear disarmament and want to see South Asia as nuclear-free zone, we shall have to be united to raise our unequivocal voice against it.

I believe a day will come when sanity will prevail over insanity.

AKM Bart 804 Eastern Corner 10/A Circuit House Road Dhaka

A/V 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 due to lack of scheduled mainte-

A pilot project may be considered : get this servicing done or supervised by the engineering staff posted at the different stations of B Betar/BTV all over the country, on district or division basis. This staff is highly trained, and at the relay stations there is time on hand during the transmission hours. The earnings from this servicing charge (excluding the cost of parts and expenses) may be partly used for local staff welare or amenities.

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, providing the students with practical training under the teaching staff.

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. Nobody cares one bit for justice and fairness or rules and laws. How strange indeed! Are we back to the Medieval Age when the King or the Lord could do any wrong or injustice but his subjects were to accept all his tyranny with a bowed head and never

dare to protest. It is strange that even nowadays there are people who think nothing wrong of this system and accept it as normal, that some can do as they like, and nobody should point it out to them or protest. Maybe because we had 'Jamindari' system for so long that we are used to it! Those of 'Jamindar' family think that the powerful can use or misuse his power as he wills but the weak must obey him meekly and timidly. Those who belong to peasant family sadly enough, forget the sufferings of the weak very quickly when they themselves become rich

and powerful. Suharto came from a peasant's family but he forgot them and his own origin and ruled like a king, for decades, pushing his country down the drain for his dictatorship. 'Power corrupts a man and absolute power corrupts him absolutely - so goes a saying. That is what happened to Suharto and will happen to anybody who is given unquestioned power. That is the end of democracy and the beginning of dictatorship. What is our education, civilization and advancement all about, if we surrender meekly to all injustices and wrongs inflicted upon

One must not let these 'Cobras' raise their heads or all rights and fairness in the society will be struck to death forever. This is not expected of a proud nation like ours who raised their voice against injustices of the Pakistani rule and fought for fairness and its rights, so gallantly. It is a common feature nowadays that most people think of themselves first, then of their party and lastly of their country. That is why our condition is getting from bad to worse, while other nations are moving ahead

So we must all change our attitude. We must challenge and fight unfairness and wrongs done by the powerful to the weak, so that they do not dare to repeat this offense and will remain fair to all. This is of course their sacred duty, but they sadly prefer to forget or ignore it, to the detriment and suffering of the whole nation. If we want to progress as a nation we must learn to fight injustice in every sphere of our lives. Only in this way we can root out all the evils of our society. which are so prevalent now, as never before. With unfair means taken in the examination centres and violence too. we seem to be back to the postliberation period, when such acts were rampant. Why are we back to where we were after 26 years of improvement?

The unfairness and injustice must be fought from inside the buildings to the streets where in broad daylight people are murdered, abducted or terrorised. Wrongs of all kinds if not trampled, will trample us all in due time. Do we all want that? If not, lets fight it!

Dr Sabrina Dhaka.

Where have the buses gone?

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

But now we can't. Because now there are very few buses in this route. But every stand has a red notice board saying: "BRTC 46 No Bus Stops Here".

Ironically, there is no bus to stop at bus-stops.

Salahuddin Sultan H-4, R-4, S-7 Uttara, Dhaka-1230

Deplorable state

electronic media Sir, The present regime talks about transparency and points to the mole in the eye of the opposition (eyeball-to-eyeballcontact?), but the state electronic media is nakedly aggressive in publicising the tilted party line propaganda in all the news bulletins, without allocating proportional time slots for the major or mini activities of the political parties in he oppo-

sition in the Parliament. Let us not forget the plain and simple data that AL got only 34 per cent of the votes during the last general elections (but got more scats), and the rest of the listeners and viewers comprise 63 per cent or twothirds of the citizens of the country, who are certainly not enemies of the country, and can form their own judgement

without prompting by others. Why the AL is so scared of BNP? If the opposition parties talk foolishly without any rhyme or reason, let the people know about it. Ultimately it is of advantage to AL, as the image of the irresponsible opposition would go down in the esteem of the public. Publicise the negative activities of the opposition through the horses' mouth. AL should not sit over judgement and tell the people what is right and wrong about the opposition

(and vice versa). In this connection, a news item from the northern region is relevant. The radio and TV stations outside Dhaka badly need BMRE, but the donors are not parting with the foreign exchange unless the electronic media was free and transparent. So the funds have to come from the current account of Bangladesh's foreign exchange budget. Regime after regime have faced this boycott from the foreign donors: free the electronic media and the dollars would pour in for modernisation and expansion.

Three is another catch. Less than 10 per cent of the adult population buy newspapers (basic literacy 30 per cent, and the vast majority cannot afford newspapers, especially the 80

per cent who live in the villages). Hence it pays to monopolise the electronic media (there is nothing secret or objectionable about this analysis).

Lately the regime have decided to allow broadcasting in the private sector, but the processing is understandably too slow (first strengthen your own fort). Who is afraid of the opposition? Not the voters, listeners and the viewers! What's wrong in getting some of the flak?

A Husnain Dhaka

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. How have our boys forgotten that the mothers who bore them and have raised them with extreme sacrifice are just as vulnerable as the girls they think fit to rape? Have they no sisters whose help and soft, sweet companionship leads them to think of girls with affection? Have they no daughters whose gentle care helps ease all

their troubles of the day? It would almost seem that the men in our country do not consider the females as humans with a mind and a soul. In DS of April 12, there was a letter holding all of us responsible for the social evils that are affecting our men. The letter stated that we think that a male child is God's gift and we shower all our affection and care only for the male child. I do not think that we can fail to agree with the views expressed in the let-

For the majority of our masses, the girl in the household is not only neglected; she is treated as if it is her fault that she was born.

Zeba I. Seraj Department of Biochemistry Dhaka University

Shadow budget

Sir, The government has just presented its annual budget. Almost instantly, demonstrations have taken place against the budget. The business community, however, has given more considered reaction, so too, some academician and

researcher. Instead of politicising the issues, it will be a good idea for the main opposition, who has experience, to offer a complete and alternate budget. The government, on their part, should allow the opposition to present their shadow budget in national electronic media, as it

Let the people then be the

Ahmed Ziauddin Catholic University of Brussels,

Shameful servility

Sir, The antics of our foreignophilliac politicians sometimes makes me wonder whether we are a true sovereign nation or not. Their fawning approval seeking from the peoples of yonder lands belittle us all. How must the foreign dignitaries suffer from swelling of

Our opposition must realise that before they convince the foreigners of the justification of their agitation programme, they must convince the citizens. And the government must know that no amount of foreign endorsement can prop up a government that has lost the confidence of the people.

Shafiqur Rahman 1\6 Lalmatia, Dhaka

Defence Expenditure and Related Debate'

Sir, I enjoy reading the

columns of Brig (retd) Hafiz in

the written words truly spring.

But the prosecutor is still not

your esteemed daily. However, I felt disturbed reading his above article in DS on 1 June, 1998. It reminds me of my encounter with a very close Austrian friend of mine in 1970s. When we were going to work at the FAO/IAEA Laboratory outside Vienna by bus, we could find the Austrian defence forces doing their exercises with tanks and artilleries. My question to my friend was: What a small force of a small nation of about six million people could do against a mighty force of USSR (former) and allies in the eastern border? Was there a need for a modern force for a neutral country like Austria? The reaction of friend was very strong and affirmative: It is a deterrent to adventurers. If the attackers could be halted for sometime, some one might

come to rescue. It is needless to mention that as an independent nation we must have an adequately equipped defence force. When we find the smugglers and other miscreants are using more sophisticated weapons than our law-enforcing agencies, how could we go all the way to cause harm to one of our trained manpower? Yes, we need transparency and also we know if someone wants to write an article or thesis can get all information concerning our defence forces. But do we have to open it for everyone's discussion? We have done harms to many of our institutions, let's not do the same to our defence forces which have credibility even

with UN. I was pleased to read on the following day (2 June) in DS the announcement of PM to modernise the defence forces. It is reflected in the budget. I think it is a right decision for an independent and self-respecting nation. Why do we not look for poverty alleviation, indeed a nice term for the downtrodden, elsewhere in the system losses of our public sectors?

Dr Mainuddin Ahmed 49/1 Dhaka University R/A

Fuller Road, Dhaka 1000 Uttara — the model

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 resdential area.

town!

When I moved in here with my family as a permanent resident, I was really disappointed to see the unplanned look of a model town. I had a very different idea of a model town with all civic amenities and well-designed plans for housing, shopping centres and roads. In reality it is quite the opposite. The lake which could be a beauty, has turned into a polluted one. There are latrines in the vicin-

ity of the lake. No doubt RAJUK has failed the residents of Sector-5 badly but what about the residents' duties as good citizens? Who are making those latrines and polluting the lake? I would like to request the lakeside inhabitants to look into this matter.

Yasmin Zaman House#23, Rd#5 Sector-5 Uttara Model Town

What's the hurry?

Sir, Some 'great' personalities are rather impatient and in unseemly haste for fame, honour, award, recognition and glory; and a few of them utilise the service of vested groups for publicity and lobbying.

Greatness flowers in its own time, and needs no props. Moss clings, but good reputation is elusive and slippery. Respect

and esteem cannot be demanded. Honorary recognition comes from honorary service. What's the hurry? Hankering is a state of the mind.

A Citizen Dhaka

Long pledges for the Long March

Sir, We do not understand what transpired Begum Khaleda Zia to go for a Long March? Would this help solve CHT crisis and various problems in the country? Would this help Begum Khaleda Zia return to power in the next general elec-

ions? The Awami League asseverated their good intentions but their action proved otherwise. In a public meeting held in Paltan Maidan Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had declared that government would not in-tervene in Begun Khaleda Zia's Long March programme. Home Minister Rafiqul Islam said that the opposition's Long March programme was a political programme and the police would not resist such a move in democracy. And Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad briefed the foreign diplomats in Dhaka

that the government would not

create any obstacle in the Long

March. We are surprised who, how and why put barricades at Kanchpur Bridge, Porshuram, Maizdi and Chhagalnaiya? We are puzzled why Major General (Retd) Shafiullah MP, Shamin Osman MP and AL leader Najma Rahman addressed a public meeting at Simrail crossing creating congestion that halted normal traffic for hours together. We also wonder what encouraged Commerce and Industries Minister to tell the BBC: "The opposition had not dared to suffer two days of plight. They (BNP) conspired to create the traffic jam in a bid to make the government responsible and finally return to Dhaka

and exactly it had happened." We also fail to understand whether we have a democracy or 'democrazy' in our country.

O.H. Kabir 6, Hare Street, Wari, Dhaka-1203

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. Oh! That was all before

the elections! Now that she heads the government and has vowed to serve the people for 5 years, she exercises all the severity and uses the iron rod as and when required. After all, teachers are supposed to be in their respective institutions and not on the

They cannot even meet the PM because she is too afraid to face them! She could have dared to come out on the streets and meet them to prove that she has not changed and has the same feelings towards them as she had before becoming the head of a government and when she herself often took to the streets

Keya Chowdhury Lalmatia College, Dhaka

for the just cause.

"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: and, in addition, address the

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

A Sinior Citizen Dhaka