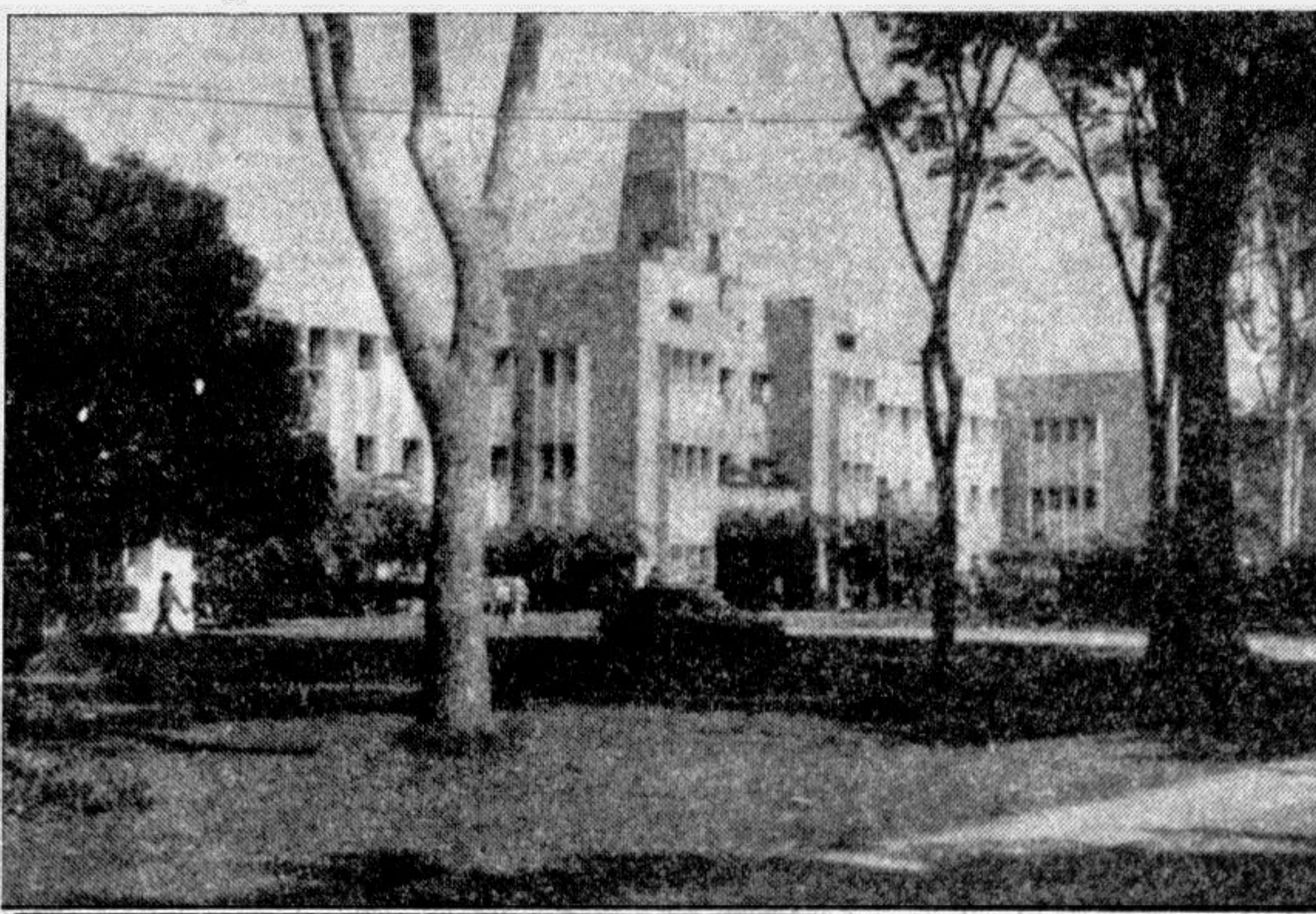


Rajshahi University: Seat of Learning in Barendra Bhumi

by Shahabuddin Mahtab

RAJSHAHI University was a dream, which came to its fruition through the vision and untiring efforts of Dr I H Zuberi, a scion of a noble family from Uttar Pradesh, in India. Prof Zuberi was the respected Principal of the then Islamia College in Calcutta. A scholar in English, by his own right, he was educated in India but did his doctoral work in Edinburgh. The Princess Street (Edinburgh) is reported to be one of the finest streets in Europe. Any city or university prints its own markings on a young soul, in flowering of his mind and spirit. The beautiful city of Edinburgh must have inspired Prof Zuberi when he looked into the lush fields of Motihar. The untiring efforts of the Prof Zuberi, in the fifties, made it possible, the Rajshahi University, what it is today.



It is the great universities of the world, that have made possible the giant strides of human progress. The University of Rajshahi and all the other academies and research centres have now to play a far greater role than ever before.

It has been my good fortune to trudge the Motihar plains, occasionally trying to pick up the companionship of some friendly students, who often told me of their hopes and aspirations. To my own mind, I found them to be excellent human materials, waiting only to be guided by teachers of the highest moral principles, which is very sadly lacking today. Knowledge and scholarship, if not rounded off by humanity, truth and unselfishness, can be a very destructive evil. Atomic energy can be the generator of power, lighting the towns and the cities, but in wrong hands it can destroy the mother earth. A teacher who is not committed to his student, but is only looking to the flights of fancy of sycophancy, the very negation of an academician.

A teacher has to earn his promotion by publishing papers of standing in the international journals, and books of the highest quality. Let the dreamy city of Rajshahi be a home to the scholars of the world. Unlike any other city, Rajshahi's excellence will be in the quality of the people that the university of Rajshahi attracts.

The University of Dhaka, once known as the Oxford of the East, is already besieged with accommodation problems, burgeoning slums and the lure of tainted money. All Universities need playing fields, safe roads, and areas free of hoodlums. Many scholars and people of great eminence have passed through the portals of the Rajshahi University. It would be fair on my part to embarrass them by naming them. Their scholarship and sacrifice have enlightened the

university. The blood of the martyrs have hallowed the grounds of Motihar. Some few years back Prof ANM Shamsul Huq was extremely kind to invite me to a small seminar at the Department of Political Science. It was beyond my competence to talk on political philosophy, or on the theories, and exposition of the present day public administration. But being forced to be attached to the then Bangladesh Administrative Staff College, I learnt something pertaining to administration from the 'maestros' of the art, though quite often these were neither public, nor service. Each of the 'maestros' speaking of his great achievements, or the great decisions that he had to make. My own seminar lasted for about an hour and a half. It was the graciousness of my host, Prof. Shamsul Huq, and the politeness of my captive audience, that steered me through those ninety minutes.

There is to the best of my knowledge no separate department for Public Administration at Rajshahi which is rather unfortunate. Public Administration itself is branching out in many directions, and in all humility, I would request the authorities to rectify the

present omission, if my assumption is right.

Again, after a lapse of many years, I had the rare fortune of being invited to Rajshahi by Prof. Anisur Rahman in the early part of December 1993. Professor Mahmud Shah Qureshi of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies, and research scholar Abdul Majid were all kindness during my three days' stay at the Zuberi, House, which has a wing for guests. May the hallowed Zuberi House be a temporary home to all who seek peace and knowledge in a tumultuous world.

In my modest talk on Public Administration in Bangladesh, I tried to explain what public service means in the present context of Bangladesh, where it is needed most. Public servants are paid by the poor peasants and the ordinary mortals, to bring some changes in their lives. One thing should be very clear to us, and this is, we cannot, and never can, achieve good governance unless we fulfil the five 'basic needs' of public administration namely honesty, integrity, commitment, simplicity and service before self.

Public management and policy does not mean a few mantras propounded by Peter Drucker to Tom Peters, but public service means a way of life to be followed by the servants of the Republic. Fear and torture must be replaced by a genuine concern for the people, whose poverty and other problems are beyond count. All of us have to believe in certain values in life, and to look beyond ourselves. The path to our human and dignified existence lies with us and with no one else to find and pursue. Our elected representatives have to believe in the true culture of democratic ideas in their homes, in their parties and in their lives.

It is the great universities of the world, that have made possible the giant strides of human progress. The University of Rajshahi and all the other academies and research centres have now to play a far greater role than ever before. The dark and overcast skies are surrounding us. The judgement of history can very often be very cruel. The false prophets will all be consigned to their due places. Let our earnest prayers to that we have more and more of patriots, and less and less of the band of self-seekers. And above all our earnest prayers are that peace and security return to the campus in Motihar.

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Light Rail Transit in Dhaka

by Dr. Md. Masud Karim

BANGLADESH is a populous country and Dhaka, as the capital of Bangladesh, has to accommodate a large share of this population. There are 18 Special Planning Zones (SPZ) in the Dhaka Metropolitan Area, where population has already crossed 10 million. With a rate of increase of population at about 7% per year, Dhaka Metropolitan Area is expected to become one of the largest cities within the early next century. The city centre of Dhaka is located on the bank of the river Buriganga. The city is growing at a rate of 4.5 km² a year. As of 1992, there are about 8567350 daily trips by different modes (walk, road, and water transport) and 2397926 working places in 18 SFZs. The contribution of Bangladesh Railways (BR) to urban public transport is very small. The main inter city line entering the city from the north carries a small share of commuter traffic. The line to Narayanganj recently handed over to private management shows a greater efficiency in carrying huge back and forth commuter traffic. Rehabilitation and improvement of north main BR line and some new routes of rail transit can accommodate the growing traffic demand in the near future. This article is going to make discussions on the feasibility of Light Rail Transit (LRT) network for Dhaka Metropolitan area.

about 43% are made using rickshaw and have been increasing continuously over the last 20 years. The cost of transport represents about 10.8% of total household incomes.

In Dhaka Metropolitan Area, as of 1992 about 3094813 trips are made by public transport daily. Of them, about 1636898 trips are made with rickshaw, 251303 with auto-rickshaw, 69310 with auto-motor, 2752 with existing rails, 284634 trips by water transport, and 693163 with the buses. The number of passengers in public transport has been increasing continuously over the last 20 years. However, there is a clear difference in the share of public transport trips to the city according to the corridor in question. The shares of public transport trips are higher from the south than from the north. The main reason to this is the socioeconomic status of the inhabitants of the areas. The people in northern part of Dhaka have higher income and higher car ownership than the people in southern part of Dhaka.

The Problem

From the experience of other megacities, it can be said that road network alone can not satisfy the need for transportation of such a large city. However, the road network of Dhaka City is non-lane basis and all transport modes (motorized and non-motorized) use the same lane. Even at very small percentage of motorized vehicles (less than 5%) the city dwellers are experiencing severe congestion everywhere in the city in all the working hours. There exist severe air and noise pollution caused by motor vehicles and a very high accident rate. Overcrowding, air and noise pollution, adequate nutrition, and other deficiencies in the physical environment frequently represent the most obvious manifestations of environmental health problems. However, there are less visible problems of the social environment, which should also be identified such as: differentials in mortality among urban residents from non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and cancer are related to social rather than the physical environment within the society.

Besides being the capital of a

highly populous country, Dhaka has a major role to play in the era of regional and sub-regional cooperation, which are being contemplated recently. However, the existing transportation system may become bottleneck for the development of the city. To maintain the economic viability of this City and to keep its environment sustainable, an efficient transportation system is imperative.

Traditionally it was argued that transport exerted a strong positive influence on economic development and that increased production could be directly related to improved transport. Transport can release working capital from one area, which can be used more productively as fixed capital elsewhere (Button 1993). The inadequacy of transport facilities is one of the major bottlenecks to socioeconomic development of the major cities and a national integration. Often the lack of transport makes it difficult to introduce other social infrastructure such as education and medical service. Transport investment forms a major component of the capital formation of the developing countries and expenditure on transport is usually the largest single item in the national budget. Up to 40 per cent of public expenditure should be devoted to transport infrastructure investment with substantial supplements coming from outside international agencies such as the World Bank, UN, and other development aid agencies.

To cope with the problems of increasing transportation demand, traffic congestion, deteriorating environmental quality, and inadequate traffic safety measures Light Rail Transit can be a probable solution. LRT is a modern and somewhat modified version of the traditional tramway. It has been introduced in some developing cities on the ground that it can offer a high capacity service with an appealing modern image. It is less expensive than full subway system, and it is environmentally friendly.

Considering its potential, LRT may be proved a suitable solution to the present transportation need of Dhaka City. The government of Bangladesh is taking positive measures for commuter rail in Dhaka. It is now a matter of gearing up on an agenda to a sustainable transportation system for the

next century.

Dhaka's Traffic Pollution

In recent years, the frequency of environmental problems in Bangladesh and other countries has increased substantially, causing serious damage to lives and property. The most crucial questions that need to be addressed are: what really causes the havoc-creating environmental problems, the economic estimates of pollution effects on society, the possible solution of air pollution, and the social and infrastructure development to improve the quality of the city dwellers.

In whole Bangladesh, the number of motor vehicles per 1000 people rose from 1.4 in 1982 to 2.28 in 1991, and 2.72 in 1995 (BBS, 1995). Nearly one third of motor vehicles are operated by diesel (truck, bus), which contribute a greater portion of urban SPM, SOx, and NOx, sometimes private cars are energized using a proportion of (3-2) gasoline and diesel. Pollution severity occur due to the high content of lead in gasoline, large number of high polluting vehicles, impure fuel, inefficient landuse, and overall poor traffic management (Karim et al. 1997). Major issues are the heterogeneous flows of traffic and two stroke engines moving in Dhaka's street which emit greater proportion of black smoke. Another dominating factor of Dhaka's traffic pollution is the number of auto-rickshaw and tempo. Their increase is most remarkable in Dhaka where the proportion of such two-stroke vehicles in the total vehicle population rose from 2.2% in 1982-83, to 18% in 1990-91 and as high as 23% in 1996-97 (Karim et al. 1997). It is not out of subject to mention here that the two-stroke engines (auto-rickshaw) moving in Dhaka City are simple modified forms of an Italian model of 1960's which emits 30 times more pollution than a normal car (Karim, 1997).

It is quite difficult to imagine that basic transport services can be provided for a metropolis with 10 million people without reliable mass transit system. Changes in transport technology, have over time, exerted a strong influence upon the shapes and forms of the urban areas.

Football is No Longer Goodball

by AMM Aabad

THE ever popular game of chasing a ball by 22 players may never be the same again, after witnessing the downfall of the leathery art during WC the France-98. The loss of sleep was genuine, and the waste of time colossal (in this part of the world). The indifferent French must have been a bit surprised at beating Brazil so 'easily'. The South American rhythm lost its beat; and, as in cricket, the bodyline play dominated the TV screens, leaving the lonely ball to step-motherly negligence. The male models put up a uniformed fashion show, in these unisex days. The elusive spirit of natural football was missing. Technique prevailed, the real motivation: scoring a goal. That is the beauty of football. After the goal, what? The question is taboo.

Commercialisation and monetary glamour is spoiling this popular sport (recall the days of the amateurs), and mega bucks have turned the stars into black holes within the confines of the football pitch (such is the power of money!). The players were reeking with too many zeroes of the mega dollar; and resorted to 'injury aerobics' to attract the whistles, not of the admirers, but of the referee.

What happened to Brazilian Ronaldo just before the final match was confirmed by the great Pele in a Doppler Effect observation. Mammon also stilted the genius of Maradona, and drugged the life out of the game. How good is professionalism in sport? It is a background question, but a big one, and loaded.

The referees responded with a worst record of performance of piling up the infringements and waving of the coloured cards, to the dismay of FIFA. Now the experts are thinking aloud about employing two referees per game, assisted by the line-men. TV replay is not yet needed, although some of the spotkicks approach 90 miles per hour. Eleven players now have support services of a team of more than a dozen off-field staff. It is all show, no display. The peripheral effect is greater than what is happening at the centre stage.

Safety first produced dull midfield showmanship, as brilliant as small talk at the big parties — the art of talking about nothing in particular, and to depart without any commitment. Diplomacy does not win football matches — the negotiating skill was limited to close encounters of the local kind, while the spirit of opportunism withered away. The thrust was missing, but the push was very much there. Defence ruled over offence. The goalkeepers enjoyed more philosophical time to stand and stare, watching the puppet show at a safe distance.

Now football is played by the body, not the foot. While the bodies wrestle or nestle, the neglected ball feels lonely, and waits to be patted back into action. There is too much circulation of the ball, and too little direction and finish. Several games had to be extended into

penalty shoot-outs (the players' feet are based on per-minute formula).

Football is facing the danger of turning into a power game, like tennis and European field hockey, although there is disparity in tennis in the number of players involved in a game (2/4 : 22). If this prowess for bodyline antics continue, FIFA may have to think seriously about putting up a net (as in tennis) at the centre line of the football field to stop the BO (body odour). Then football will turn into the Malaysian version of the net ball game, using a net, and playing the ball with the feet and the head. Football is a natural game of instinct and team work, leading back to the Cave Age.

Information technology is changing social mores almost instantly. Satellite television relays of the football matches demonstrated the potentiality of world brotherhood, so long confined to the printed pages and pious wishes. In contrast the Thomas Cup badminton matches and the WC hockey 98 hardly stirred the over one billion football fans in the drawing rooms. My four and a half years old niece also got infected, and memorised the names and flags of many football teams (some flying over the neighbours' rooftops) and gamely participated in dummy discussions with the family members. For once, people forgot the traffic jams of Dhaka. Football is played by more than 22 players.

In contrast, I cannot help recall witnessing those golden years of the Calcutta Mo-

hammadan Sporting Club, who won the League Championship five times in a row; led by the formidable trio of three Rs, Rashid, Rahamat, and Rahim, plus Saboo, who effortlessly moved down the field to find the target again and again. What was remarkable was that they were 'untouchable'; played clean football, and played the game barefoot. About the legendary Samad, there was the story that once while playing in Rangoon for a visiting team, after taking a couple of corner kicks, he requested the referee to have the goalpost bar measured during half-time. The bar was found one inch short in height! I remember (while I was a school student) Lee Wai Tong, forward of a Chinese XI playing in Calcutta, take the ball from near the centre-half line right into the air using only his head to control the ball, without letting the ball touch the ground even once!

Such magic is not seen these days (Maradona's 'hand of God?'); but ZZ's two headers into the net at the final against Brazil will be as rare as approaching comets.

The whole of Dhaka (in those days) resounded with the goal scored by Pakhi Sen when the local team beat the Islington Corinthians from England in the late '30s. The then East Bengal region was the hinterland for recruitment of footballers for the Calcutta League (Mohan Bagan, East Bengal).

Our football in Bangladesh today has roots, but the plants will need some gardening for the flowers to bloom.

Death Wish in the White House

Naeem Mohaiemen writes from New York

The latest revelations have certainly increased the perception that, Bill Clinton will say and do anything necessary to preserve his Presidency, regardless of who gets wounded in the cross-fire.

SEVERN months ago, I wrote a short piece for The Daily Star called "Death Wish in the White House?". At that time, the Monica Lewinsky accusations had just been made public. While politicians reacted with puritanical zeal, the American public seemed to have a much more sensible attitude. The most commonly repeated refrain was, "We don't care that our President is a lecher, but we do care that he is a liar."

Here now is a sampling of the wide variety of opinions that have been published in the last two days, following Bill Clinton's live "confession" to the nation.

The Newspapers
New York Post: "I misled people: the president said. No, he didn't mislead people. He lied to them..."

"I was," he said, "very concerned about protecting my family." The man who allows his wife to go on the "Today" show to defend him against the charge that he had an extramarital affair he did have was not concerned about protecting her. He was concerned with protecting his presidency."

New York Daily News (Column by Lars-Erik Nelson): "Do we not care that our president lied to us for seven months and allowed his closest friends and administration officials, unwittingly, to lie for him?"

USA Today: "The core of the president's argument is the tired White House refrain that independent counsel Ken Starr's investigation has gone on too long, cost too much and hurt too many innocent people. Yet if anything was obvious Monday night, it was that Clinton could have brought it all to a quick close in January simply by telling the truth then rather than having it dragged out of him now."

The Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia): "President Clinton has told the American people too little too late. Months of lying, of stonewalling, of trying to shift the blame and of spinning the truth have damaged his credibility beyond repair. In a ghastly four-minute session, the president told the nation no more than he had to. It was a calculated, carefully calibrated effort at damage control."

The Politician
Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California: "I was present in the Roosevelt Room in January when the president categorically denied any sexual involvement with Monica Lewinsky. I believed him. His remarks last evening leave me with a deep sense of sadness in that my trust in his credibility has been badly shattered."

Tim McCown, candidate for House seat in Maryland: "It is not the sex thing, that's between Bill and Hillary. It's the honesty thing."

Sen. Fred Thompson, Republican chairman of Senate Governmental Affairs Committee:

"This episode, however it turns out, will be listed along with Watergate and the Vietnam War as another benchmark of our cynicism toward our institutions. It's another one of those public, traumatic events, whatever or whoever's side you are on."

The Government Officials
William M. Daley, Secretary of Commerce: "We believed the president in January, as did the vast majority of the American people, according to the polls. He has now come forward and stated the facts. His apology and his statement are enough for me. The facts turned out to be different from what we were told and believed. But there is no reason for us to dwell on something that was said seven months ago."

Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of State, in Tanzania: "This might not be the time or place to have this kind of discussion. I have come to Africa on a mission of help and healing, but I would like to state that I have complete confidence in the president, and he is doing a terrific job for the United States, both domestically and in terms of our foreign policy, and he has urged all of us to put this behind us, and for all of us to do our jobs, and that is what I think I am doing here."

The Public
New York Times (August 19) interviewed a cross-section of "average, working Americans" in Milwaukee: Jeff England, 35-year-old stock trader: "We don't have a right to know who he's sleeping with. It makes government so frivolous."

George Ziedonis, 41-year-old warehouse worker: "The facts turned out to be different, never tells the whole truth. He lives in a fantasy world where he thinks he can go by his own rules."

Reverend Ralph Gross, 54-year-old Catholic priest: "I'm troubled by this hunger for details. We must be very careful about making judgments. People struggle with different parts of their lives. For some people, it's lust. For others, it's racism or sexism. Let's be forgiving and leave the judging to God."

Media Commentators
SLATE magazine reported on the media feeding frenzy on the day after the speech, in an

article called "D-Day Minus One": "Are the Media Pundits Excited about this Lewinsky Thing? Yes they are. No show besides Late Edition even pretended to care that 28 people were killed in what is being called the worst outbreak of Irish violence in recent history."

Also in SLATE, Robert Wright wrote: "The Solution? Vote for Women. Evolution has made them more principled politicians. During evolution, the whole Darwinian point of male power-lots of sex, lots of offspring—didn't compute for females."

Robert Dallek, presidential historian, also concurred with this view: "In the long haul, I think this is all going to enhance the possibility that we are going to see a woman as president. I think the public is tired of all this tawdriness and macho business, all these stories about Kennedy's womanizing and Johnson's philandering, and even the lust in Jimmy Carter's heart."

In SALON magazine (August 18), sharp-tongued neo-feminist Camille Paglia wrote: "It's here! It's now! It's hot! Superchannel USA presents 'Dallas, D.C.', the 24-hour soap opera starring Bill Clinton, the JFK wannabe who tried to leech but could barely unzip... Watch Hillary Clinton, last seen as the brutally ambitious cyber-bitch Alexis Carrington Colby on 'Dynasty', masquerade as the long-suffering wife. See the hapless Chelsea Clinton, used as a silent pawn to extort sympathy for the beleaguered first family."

Barbara Ledeen, policy director of the conservative Independent Women's Forum: "As for Hillary, there's only two possibilities. Either she's Lady Macbeth, who's made a deal for power, or she's a classic abused wife, that is to say, she knows what her husband does but she keeps coming back for more, she makes excuses for him, she blames everybody else but him."

Kellyanne Fitzpatrick, president of the Polling Company: "When the ship is sinking, people try to bring everyone down with them. The problem for Clinton is that so many people have already jumped off his ship, the USS Clinton, like his top former aides Leon Panetta, Dee Dee Myers and George Stephanopoulos..."

Every time he's asking us for a second chance, he's really asking us for a 20th chance."

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THE LAYOUT WON'T BE UNGUARDED—THAT'S FOR SURE! LET'S FOR WHAT I CAN FIND OUT!

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