The Baily Star Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

Dhaka, Thursday, October 29, 1998

Spare the Farce

We warn you this is becoming a farce, if it already hasn't. Will Mrs Sajeda Chowdhury care to find out what her previous two sincere attempts to catch the smoking vehicles came to? And she is again trying the same tack. Again, her intentions are all right but her ways about accomplishing her mission is a study in confusion. You do not need any gadgets to measure the emissions of Dhaka's vehicles. You see it, you smell it.

As long as one vehicle belonging to your ministry smokes vilely, please don't come threatening others. How many vehicles do the government and its many agencies and accretions own out of Dhaka's 174,000 registered motorised ones? As long as any one of these tens of thousands emit foul air, there is no reason for Dhaka to have clear air. Madame Minister, please ask your government to obey your edicts. If it doesn't, nobody else will. There are chances that the donor dollars will all be spent out with Dhaka's atmosphere continuing to be as foul as it is now — the world's worst. Want to prevent that? Make sure no smoking government and semi-government vehicle gets on the road. Can you? If not, don't expect others to abide by.

Dhaka's air must be clean and clear or we shall be criminals pushing ourselves and our posterity into unhealthful lives shortened and filled with suffering by our inaction. The Department of Environment knows what one more day of this unclean killing air means. Doesn't the government — the PM and all other constituents of it, share in this knowledge? Why not? It is the government that is wholly responsible for Dhaka's unclean air and sky — through its irresolute postures to face the problems. Please, do not try to pass the buck and make pollution a subject of other people's conscience. Cleanse yourself and make the hell out of every smoking private vehicle from the very next day. People will be with you.

As we have earlier pointed out, ridding Dhaka of smoking vehicles is not possible by a minnow like the DoE or even by a stalwart like Sajeda Chowdhury alone. The government of Bangladesh as a whole must address the task. Anything less, we are doomed to witness the farce further.

Welcome Schroeder

Gerhard Schroeder's parliamentary confirmation as Germany's new chancellor and his formal swearing in to the office constitute a path-breaker for the Rhineland with reverberations likely to be felt in time across much of Europe.

The European integrationist view has taken on a new dimension with the left-of-centre sweep across the continent embracing Germany into its fold as Schroeder comes to power on the social welfare state plank. Germany being the largest and most powerful economy in Europe has decided to be led by someone who is not wedded to free market economy to the point of absolution at the expense of legitimate welfare interests of the society. Yes, his business-friendly image struck a rapport with centrist voters but he has definite plans to usher in a social welfare state, so that he seems poised for the adoption of a new blend of political economy comprising leftist agenda and pro-business concerns, the latter being a dictate of the massive German market itself. Schroeder is well-placed in a palpable way to disprove the conventional theory that a dichotomy exists between free market operations and equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities.

Schroeder's Social Democratic Party having formed a coalition government with the Environmentalist Greens, issues of not just German interest but of world ecology, including the concern for shuttering down nuclear power plants, are automatically put under the spotlight.

The SDP and the Environmentalist Greens have come to power introducing such new elements into the German national agenda that one cannot but effusively compliment the country's electorate on making, what for others is still a distant dream, come home and true. The whole world is optimistically looking forward to the German leadership's redeeming it all.

Our hearty congratulations to Schroeder and his team. May he lead the friendly German people into a rewarding next century!.

Set the Birds Free

No matter how big or small is the consequence of our indiscretion and insensitivity, we simply refuse to learn from our mistakes. The report published in a section of yesterday's press on the thousands of cute, little, colourful birds now crammed in a cage at the Mirpur Zoo once again reminded of this trait. About nine thousand munia birds were recently rescued from the airport when sought to be smuggled out of the country. The law enforcers did their job of foiling the evil design of a business concern to make money illegally by hauling rare birds from their natural habitat and exporting them but the good work looks destined to go down the drain unless something is done immediately. From airport these beautiful creatures were promptly sent to the Mirpur Zoo — most unlikely and unbecoming of sanctuaries one can think of for these tiny, tender things. And they were all put in a terribly small cage for a population over eight

thousand. Some bird lovers and ornithologists have witnessed the miserable plight of these birds and aired their concern that unless they are allowed to fly around the places of their origin they would not survive. They have even named the places where these birds are likely to survive.

Hundreds of birds of the same variety were rescued from the airport some time ago and a similar silly arrangement was thought of then, too. Only after the birds in confinement started dying in dozens that the zoo authorities woke up to the necessity of listening to the people in the know. We denounce the zoo authorities' ignorance and insensitivity and call for an immediate transfer of the birds to their original, natural habitat. And yes, we want proper legal measure against the business concern that organised this huge theft.

Apres Deluge General Scenario

If the government allowed the BNP to hold their proposed peaceful hunger strike in the suggested venue, which was away from the cricket ground and much before the holding of the international tournament, no hartal would have been called and none would have died of conflict with police and counter demonstration by the ruling party.

moi, c'est le deluge" (after me, there will be all devouring inundation) does not hold good comprehensible for the ordiin Bangladesh, despite the most long-standing and devastated nary public. As a result, an opportunity for a combined nafloods in the living memory of tional endeavour, which is a its people. What appears more appropriate in our case is "apres dream of patriotic people, could le deluge, c'est moi" (after the not realise.

HE oft-quoted remarks of

constituting an all party relief

committee at various levels to

deal properly with this na-

tional catastrophe. This was

unfortunately rejected by the

government. Strangely enough,

on the contrary, the Prime Min-

ister also came out with public

statements, urging the opposi-

relief. Such contradictory posi-

tions of the government is in-

HE Kosovo holocaust will

simple reason: when one cuts

through all the crap, the

fundamental goal of Serbian

President Slobodan Milosevic

and the West is the same - the

prevention of another Muslim

entity in Europe. Most Muslim

commentators who take their

cue from what is published in

the Western Press, sadly, are

unable to decipher this truth on

On American television,

very often two versions of the

same news are presented. The

official, bland version, and the

unofficial, true version. The

TV reporter would say, "The of-

ficial White House line is that

it has been a good day for the

President in the Monica Lewin-

sky affair. But privately, White

House officials, who insisted

on anonymity, told this re-

porter that it's a disaster!"

Most Muslim commentators

are unable to penetrate the fa-

paper in the West admitted the Muslim angle for Western inac-

tion in Bosnia. Privately, for-

mer British Prime Minister

John Major on down, every one

shuddered at the thought of a

Muslim majority state "in the

heart of Europe", and let the

mayhem continue. In early

1995, NATO chief made a stun-

ning announcement: one of

NATO's aim was to fight "Is-

lamic fundamentalism." This

at a time when Muslims of Eu-

rope were being decimated be-

cause of Orthodox Christian

terrorism. The same scenario

is being played out in Kosovo.

Once again, the West is putting

cept the real one, on why NATO

and the West have been made

fools of by Milosevic. Once

again. Muslim commentators

thousands of excuses, ex-

Publicly, no leader or news-

their own.

continue for the

foreseeable future for one

the legendary king of France Louis XIV, "apres

The single most infamous floods it will be me). incident that has shaken the The people are quite persociety terribly in the recent plexed at the intra and post past is the rape of several feflood politics in the country. male students at the Jahangir-Nothing would be more desirable than to expect all political nagar University by fellow stuparties to have joined hands dents. It goes without saying and to unitedly promote efforts that such a heinous crime committed by a section of the for relief and rehabilitation of youth, who should otherwise the distressed people. It was in-teresting that leaders of major have constituted future of the political parties also made pubnation, must be condemned in the strongest possible term. But, lic and vociferous statements to the more disturbing aspect of it that effect a number of times. is that the culprits have not Yet, is did not happen. been brought to books in a court Leader of the Opposition at the very outset of the floods of law, despite their offence being heavily punishable under came out with a proposal for

country's penal code. Even more dangerous is the fact that all those criminals belong to the ruling party and enjoy its patronage and protection. That is why they could evade justice and only had to subject themselves to an investigation by the University Syntion to work together to provide dicate. This has set a dangerous trend. It would not be illogical to assume that parents are now

apprehensive of sending their daughters for education to that University.

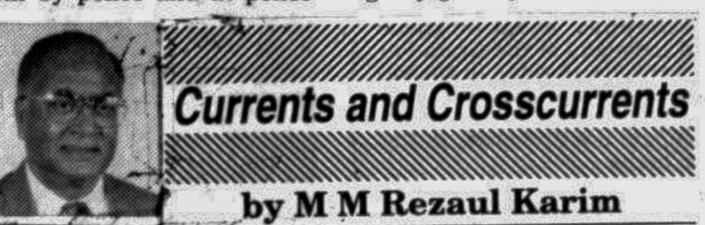
The law and order situation repression, child abuse and other crimes are on the rise and assumed a proportion never witnessed before. The most no-

has been continuously deteriorating. Murder, rape, women torious crime of torture and death by police and in police

the accomplice police officers and constables. It appears a stark failure on the part of the Awami high command to bridle their unruly elements, who otherwise get encouraged to domi-nate the criminal scene unabated.

succeeded and how? Thanks to

Simultaneously, some members of the law enforcing agency get impetus and engage



custody reached the zenith when Rubel, a University student, met his tragic end. He was brutally tortured in public and before his close relatives after having been taken in police custody on an apparently false charge. The incident took place following an alleged desire of a female Awami League activist's determination to teach Rubel a lesson on a personal score. She

themselves more in unsocial

and criminal activities. The BNP claims that the government policy of holding opposition leaders and workers behind bars on false or flimsy charges are being carried on in full jest. The arrest and detention of Obaidur Rahman, Nurul Islam Manzur and Shah Moazzem Hossain as well as Anwar Zahid and others are

shining examples of such foolhardy act. Government's discrimination and policy of according undue protection to its party leaders, involved in similar circumstances, do not escape people's attention.

The claim to allow the opposition to hold rallies, stage demonstrations and even conduct a hunger strike is being persistently denied by the government. This has driven the opposition to call hartals, much against their own will as they are well aware of its adverse effects on the public by way of causing avoidable inconvenience and economic loss If the government allowed the BNP to hold their proposed peaceful hunger strike in the suggested venue, which was away from the cricket ground and much before the holding of the international tournament no hartal would have been called and none would have died of conflict with police and counter demonstration by the

ruling party. A new and highly controversial method introduced by the Awami League of defying the efforts of the opposition to put up demonstrations and to stage

right to belittle Islam.

a procession is to match them with counter demonstration and counter rallies with a view to thwarting opposition's action by way of force. Such method is likely to result in conflict, promote violence and cause bloodshed. The BNP during its rule refrained from staging counter processions during and before opposition hartals mainly for the purpose of allowing the opposition to protest peacefully. The ruling party should, therefore, shun this policy to try to exhibit a show of force on or before opposition

Finally, it becomes quite incomprehensible for people to understand government claim that the opposition has resorted to hartals and demonstrations in order to thwart the trial of the murder of Bangabandhu. Hartals, demonstrations and fasting in protest are of the making of the ruling party as a reaction of government repression, the opposition claims. Furthermore, nobody made any public statement in an attempt to jeopardise the trial, as the matter is sub-judice. The oppo-sition would father like to gear itself up in a bid to force a midterm election on account of what is termed Awami League's gross mis-governance, inefficiency, corruption and various other elements of mis-rule.

hook. "Not only should Mr.

Holbrooke have demanded that

Mr. Milosevic restore Kosovo's

provincial autonomy, which he

unilaterally withdrew in 1989,

but he should also have ex-

tracted a promise to rebuild all

destroyed or damaged villages

and compensate the Kosovars

for all losses. For good mea-

sure, he could have demanded

that Mr. Milosevic extradite

indicted war criminals

LETTER FROM AMERICA

West's Empty Threats Will Not Stop the Killing of Kosovar Muslims

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton

The only way to bring peace to Kosovo is to grant the province its independence from Serbia. That is the demand of not only the Kosovo Liberation Army, but of their moderate elected President Ibrahim Raguva as well. That will happen only when the cost of holding on to Kosovo is too prohibitive for Milosevic.

are buying it, and dutifully parroting those explanations, word

If only one judges the West by their own dictum - "actions, not words" — the situation becomes crystal clear. Indeed, if Western words could kill, by now all Serbs would be dead! Instead, the Muslims die because of Western double talk. At least we now know what it takes to draw the West's attention. In Bosnia, over 300,000 Muslim civilians were murdered by the Serbs; over 2 million uprooted, before the West acted. The Serbs were "punished" for their crimes against humanity with a republic of their own! In the 90 per cent ethnic Albanian province of Kosovo, the Serbs have driven 500,000 ethnic Albanians nearly half the population - out of their homes into forests. murdered tens of thousands; yet the West insists that Kosovo is Serbian. This in spite of the fact that if Milosevic had not arbitrarily revoked their autonomy in 1989, Kosovo would have been an independent nation like the rest of the former

Yugoslav provinces. Nothing worthwhile is accomplished without clear goals. The West's goals in Kosovo are fundamentally contradictory. Yes, they do not want the Koso-

vars — who have taken to the forests to escape certain death at the hands of the Serbs — to freeze to death in the coming winter; but no, the Kosovars cannot have independence. even after the brutality with which the Serbs have savaged them. The West is asking the

rape victim to go out on a date with the rapist! NATO, for its own dubious credibility, is taking the lead in confronting the Serbs, because the United Nations Security Council may not authorize air strikes — thanks to threatened vetoes by Russia and China. Why would Russia veto? Because they do not want their Slav brothers to be punished even when they rape, murder and maim other ethnic groups. Besides, some stupid diplomat may blurt out, "Hey, you too persecute Muslims in your Chechnya province!" Why is China, hitherto a champion of

the third world Muslims, indifferent to the suffering of the Kosovar Muslims? Because, they do not want to be called hypocrites, who persecute their own Muslim minority in the Xinjiang province. So much for the integrity of the permanent members of the UN Security Council

Muslims have things stacked against them. Would

the West have hesitated a minute if Muslims were murdering Orthodox Christian Serbs? Let us remember that the West killed 100,000 Muslim Iraqi civilians and pulverized the nation for the crime of attacking another Muslim nation. Wouldn't nuking Serbia has been a possibility if Jews were the victims in Kosovo? The Israeli lobby in the US is clamoring for action not against the Serbs, but against their enemy Iraq. "Saddam must not be allowed to violate Security Council resolutions with impunity", say the agents of the Israeli government, which has violated most UN resolutions with impunity. Earlier this month, the Euro-

threats separate the Kosovars from the Serbian thugs, no Albanian family in their right frame of mind will dare to return to their bombed out homes. Holbrooke, who acquiesces with the Serbian tyrant's de-

mand for more time to "with-

draw", let Milosevic off the

rauding Serb soldiers come out

and shoot at the Albanians

hiding in the forest. As long as

only the unarmed monitors

and the unfulfilled Western

Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic." That is assuming, of course, that Mr. Holbrooke has solely the interest of the Kosodefend to the hilt Rushdie et al's vars at heart. The only way to bring peace American diplomat Richard to Kosovo is to grant the Holbrooke's "deal" with Mileprovince its independence from sevic would leave 19,000 of the Serbia. That is the demand of current 29,000 Serbian milinot only the Kosovo Liberation tary and security forces in Army, but of their moderate place to carry out terror in elected President Ibrahim Kosovo. The Serb soldiers re-Raguva as well. That will haptire to their barracks during pen only when the cost of holdday, when the 2000 unarmed international monitors roam ing on to Kosovo is too prohibitive for Milosevic. At night, as the monitors rest What are Muslims to do? their body and soul, the ma-

Never underestimate the power of outrage. Scream and holler. (The supporters of Israel in the US have transformed this into an art form to the benefit of Israel.) Let the perpetrators know that Muslims fully understand their game, although they are unable to do anything about it - yet. And most importantly, pray for-those hapless Kosovars. Do not underestimate the power of prayer ei-

Holocaust." Yet the same people

pean Parliament authorized

Germany to criminally prose-

cute the leader of France's far

right National Front, Jean-

Marie Le Pen, for "belittling the

OPINION People are Not Confused

In his write-up captioned "People confused as political leaders trade charges" appearing in the Daily Star of Oct. 15 issue the correspondent has analysed the ethos of our political leaders that be. When piqued they can stoop to any depth to proclaim themselves angels and calling others devils. People for sure know who is what. I would assure Mr Kabir (the correspondent) that although few of us may be confused about the leaders' real credentials, people, by and large, know them for what they are worth; they are not confused at all. The fact of the matter is that this overwhelming silent majority has no platform where from to shout and become audible. But that does not deter them from evaluating leaders in their true perspective. They gave a try to each party to hold the rein of the country fondly hoping that things would change for the better and that lessons of history will shape their course of action. Alas! The silent but powerful majority got frustrated before long. They discovered to their dismay that leaders professedly of different hue are but two sides of the same coin. Leaders make tall promises and announce lofty agenda on the hustings, to, inter alia, allevi-

M Gholam Mostafa ate endemic poverty, remove illiteracy by such and such year, eradicate corruption from the body politic, ensure rule of law, establish democracy et al. They shed river of tears for their less privileged compatriots to whom their hearts seem to go out, and save whom they have, as if, no

other thought With the passage of time the silent majority sees through the gigantic bluff. To their horror they discover that once catapulted in the corridor of power by votes cast by the former, they are ignored, abused and exploited. They also find that often ticket of an MP-ship empowers a killer, an extortionist, a rapist, a swindler, a looter of people's money to be above law. Post-haste leaders more than meet the expenses of electioneering (it is ridiculous that the Election Commission set a mandatory budget for Tk 3 lacs, whereas a child in Bangladesh knows that expenses incurred amount anything between 50 lacs and a crore taka. It is a pity the Commission did not find a single deviator of the fixed budget of 3 lac taka).

Giving a damn to the laws of the land the great leaders devote themselves solely to pontificate on the floor of the parliament,

turning a blind eye to the wellbeing of their constituency. Many get busy greasing their palms and lining their pockets. Patriotism and welfare of the people, on whose votes they become leaders/ legislators, are thrown to the wind. Interest of the country takes a back seat. Examples are galore — wasting and misusing tax-payers' hardearned money, pressurising banks' board of directors to shamelessly bail out die-hard loan defaulters, trying to import 5000 three-wheelers flouting environmental restrictions, fixing hartal days either on Thursdays or Sundays so that

grand success. It is the general public who bear the brunt of the baneful effect on the fragile economy. To overcome ill effects of leaders' wrong-doing the party in power devalues currency at routine intervals (to spur economy and to give it competitive edge!) which makes this overwhelmingly importing country's goods dearer. We bleed through our

employees are lured into stay-

ing back home to make hartal a

nose: we are not confused For five years the silent majority is not reckoned with, but may be, on the day of reckoning they won't repeat the mistake. They will drive the nail in the coffin unmistakenly.

Concrete Jungle

I looked wistfully out of my window; a light breeze was playing with the leaves and petals of the blooms. How I longed to open up my windows and let the fresh, cool breeze rush into my room. But alas I couldn't! I am a prisoner in my own room; I had to convert it into a prison cell by shutting tightly all the windows throughout the day. I have no choice; I have no other way out but this. Thanks to our neighbours, that I have to go through this torment day after day for God alone knows how

years, of course. This kind of torture is being inflicted on many innocent neighbours of many residential areas. More so in the posh areas of the city, where the house rent is high. It is only because of the sudden greed that has gripped our people, who are already rich enough to own a plot and a house in one of the best areas of the town. Added to that they mostly have highly paid jobs or good business, but still they want more. Satisfaction, nowadays have absolutely left

Dhakaites, or rather

long - not less than a couple of

Bangladeshis. We have got this unsatiable hunger for more and yet more! Three or four storied houses constructed only six or seven years back are even being demolished with not a thought

Dr. Sabrina Q. Rashid

given to so many neighbours getting the brunt of it. Owners conveniently rent a house a few blocks away, not to suffer what they are making their neighbours suffer - atmospheric pollution because of the dust, noise pollution because of endless hammering from early morn till late eve.

The sound is so loud and harsh that it is like hammering away one's brain! What a torture! These people should be made to compensate their neighbours for so much of discomfort and even ill health. For air and noise pollution are both detrimental to heath e.g., one of the neighbours had an attack of asthma from the dust. Electronic goods and engines of all type are damaged too, even if you keep the windows closed, as the dust is so fine that it is carried everywhere. Demolishing six flats and then constructing twenty in their place is not a

matter of joke. This is going on in every next plot. The government should immediately pass an order to forbid demolition of houses not older than 20 to 25 years. In western countries the houses to be demolished are first covered by a huge poly-

thene sheet and then demol-

ished in one go by using a new technological skill. Not hammering away for days and weeks like here. They don't even have the courtesy to put up screens of jute or polythene for their neighbours' sake.

This maddening rush for flat construction is leading to make a concrete jungle of Dhaka city. All the trees in the plot are cut down savagely as the plots have to be constructed upon from wall to wall, not leaving an inch for greenery This is also increasing the population of a residential area ten times, thus leading to scarcity of water, electricity and traffic jams in the streets of the locality. Strangely the taste of our people who always loved greenery has also changed, for the flats go for more rent than bungalows with lawns.

People seem to prefer cement to grass! Though psychologists now say it is better for children to be as near the mother earth as possible. Growing up in upper flats have shown some adverse affects on them. In Aberdeen when oil was first struck there was this mad rush for apartment construction. But then they overdid it and couldn't get those rented or sold! People of Dhaka city are most likely have the same fafe the way multistoried flats are being erected in every inch!

Reviving our city

Sir, I am grateful to The Daily Star that I was able to avail the opportunity to participate in a conference held on 12.10.98 at the British Council Auditorium. It was organised by Young Entrepreneurs and Professional Forum and initiated by the DS in association with the British Council in Dhaka. The subject matter was very nice and time-transcending no doubt. But I have been partially frustrated to hear the deliberation of the speakers and their suggestion seem to have been secondary to me at this critical juncture of the nation being ready to jump over the 21st century. Personally I oppose to the expansion of urbanisation and making paradise-like housing project. I am also opposing to the expansion of the suburban town surrounding the capital city because of abusing the fertile agricultural land. In the name of urbanisation and modernisation (though I am not against modernisation) of Dhaka City, are we not doing the following?

. We are against the decentralisation process. 2. We are against the nature

(environment) 3. Are we not inviting the rural influx indirectly to the urban area by constructing housing under the shadow of the

housing project? 4. We are indirectly encouraging city dwellers and employers to purchase a piece of land for constructing a house in Dhaka city at any cost to live

permanently in the city. 5. We are indirectly creating some scope of work for the labour class who are being migrated daily for having job in the urban areas. Are we not indirectly and directly responsible for establishing slum for their living in or around the

city?

However, I am suggesting some specific alternative measures to reduce this tendency for influx from rural areas. These measures, if implemented, can also encourage all non-permanent city dwellers and employees to go back to their home villages. These are —

i) Each and every village should be provided with electricity for ensuring modern facilities and amenities.

ii) Each and every village home should be rejuvenated with natural beauties and green vegetables.

iii) The destitute women, landless and the marginal farmers must be provided with interest-free loan as also to small scale cottage industry, poultry farms and locally feasible small industrial unit.

iv) Soft loans on simple terms and conditions must be distributed among them for construction of their houses for living and for purchasing a piece of land for farming. NGOs can assist best in this regard.

v) The government should ensure technical support to them in all respects.

Engr Mahbubur Rahman Resources and Environment Management Services (REMS) Ring Road, Shyamoli, Dhaka

Fuel price-hike

Sir, It has been almost a year since the government has increased the price of fuel (petrol and octane) to about 60 per cent of its original retail price, claiming that the fuel price throughout the world has increased to \$30 per barrel. But I read in an international magazine that it is \$ 23 per barrel.

For this price-hike, every vehicle owner suffered a lot and to mitigate their sufferings the government introduced CNG which could be use instead of petrol at a lower cost. But it was a failure for the government as due to shortage of parts, gas stations began to close down one after another. The CNG-used car owners also found that by using this, it damaged their vehicles severely (e.g. cylinder, gasket). Therefore they began to go back to petrol and octane. Recently the price of gas has fallen to \$13

per barrel. Our country has recently suffered a devastating flood that has almost ruined our economy. Every citizen's earning is at stake. So I would request the government to reduce the petrol and octane price and mitigate the sufferings of the vehicle

Rupert Mirpur, Dhaka

"How to become free" Sir, I read the letter under the above caption written by Syed Waliullah which was published on September, 3. It was a letter with surprising presumptions. If I am not mistaken Mr Wal-

iullah, in the first place, endeavoured to criticise the Budhigibis in general. Then, he has mocked personalities like Shamsur Rahman, Sufia Kamal, Kabir Chwodhury, for he thinks (he has not told it but implied rather explicitly) that they have miserably failed to

become a sort of "Bangladeshi edition" of Voltaire. He has ironically put the question as to who we should turn to for the lesson "to become free".

However, I don't know whether or not any of these four has ever claimed him/herself as the Voltaire of Bangladesh. Even if they claimed so, I can tell with complete conviction that their write-ups contain at least some elements to teach us how to become free.

Besides, we can't blame one simply because he is not like someone else or did not try to be like somebody else. We can't hold Shamsur Rahman responsible for his not being like Voltaire. Is it not enough only to be Shamsur Rahman? Shamim Ahsan 64/M RK Mission Road

Amartya Sen — the universal genius

Gopibagh, Dhaka-1203

Sir. Prof Amartya Sen, the 64-year-old Indian economist whose name was short listed for the Nobel Prize on a number of occasions, could not be eluded this time. He is the first Asian to get the Nobel in Economics and is the second Bangali to get it after Tagore, in long 85 years. Prof Sen though an Indian, his root' is in Bangladesh. He passed his early years at his vilage Sonarang and Dhaka up to the age of twelve years. His analysis Famine in Bangladesh opened a new vista for the economists and the Royal Swedish Academy of Science stated in their citation that Sen was being awarded the Nobel Prize for economics for his contribution in Welfare Economics which helped to understand the economic mechanism underlying famine and poverty. Prof Sen was a born genius who got his PhD at a surprisingly young age of 21 from Cambridge University and this was the same place where he taught the same subject in later years.

Prof Sen was conferred Doctorate by many countries. A genius like him cannot be confined within the boundary of any country as he transcends all physical limitation because he belongs to the whole world which is the beneficiary of their intellectual products.

In view of the above, I would like to suggest that Prof Sen be conferred with a Doctorate from Dhaka University as was done in the case of Prof Salam a couple of years ago.

Syed Abu Saleh 170, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217