

Warm-up to BDF Meet

The Bangladesh Development Forum meeting in Paris next month is going to be held on a new format...

This is for the first time perhaps that a WB report has been so elaborate on the role of the police force in Bangladesh.

It is unfortunate that the indictment on things going wrong in our country has to come from the World Bank when we as the perpetrators and sufferers should have known better...

There cannot be any second opinion on the World Bank's observation that 'problems created by weak institutions are being compounded by a political environment that is increasingly confrontational.'

A broad public support should be readily available to any government serious enough to be tough and effective against the law breakers.

Skeleton in the Cupboard

Several days have gone by since the decomposed corpse was recovered from an overhead water tank at the Detective Branch office Thursday last...

Police commissioner AKM Shamsuddin reportedly said that without police help this could not have perhaps happened.

This incident surely comes as a severe jolt to the already-battered police image.

In Fool's Paradise

Bangladesh cricket team have brought disgrace to the nation, not so much because of the margins by which we were humiliated in the triangular series...

In any civilised country the persons responsible for the dismal performance would have taken the blame and resigned their posts.

We have been waiting for 50 years to be somewhere near the top. We have talked too much and done little to improve the standards of the game.

Return of Star Wars and its Likely Repercussions

RECENTLY THE US House of Representatives, closely following a Senate approved missile defense bill, has passed its own version.

As the cold war drew to its end the reasons cited by the Democrats were not only convincing but desirable as well.

Would the missile defense system touch off a new arms race as warned by Chinese Foreign Ministry's arms control and disarmament division...

Jefferson Clinton promised a new era - an era of peace and prosperity led by the only superpower of the world.

But ironically, only two years of his reelection as the second term President of the United States, the same President, who propagated national security measures based on disarmament, arms control agreements and building of less weaponry, sent a military budget of the Congress which was to allocate \$6.6 billion so that the Pentagon can build the very system he had so far opposed and thought unnecessary and expensive.

The question is why does the United States - the most powerful state in the world - need such a system? And why is this volta face by the Democrats and the Democratic President, especially during post-cold war era?

built and eventually be deployed for the alleged threats of missile attacks from the rogue states like North Korea, Iran and Iraq, it's a perception.

impossible. Then one has to consider about the fate of 1972 Anti Ballistic Treaty on which subsequent arms control treaties were signed between Washington and Moscow.

Washington-Beijing bilateral relationship has been uneasy and sprinkled with accusations and counter accusations. At the same time there were also some positive and mutually beneficial development, especially on the disarmament agenda.

other countries are forced to develop more advanced missiles. Will Beijing be one of them? If so what then would be future scenario of a nuclear South Asia?

One may argue that all these reactions are unnecessary as the actual development of Star Wars and its potential deployment is at least eight years away and the technology is highly improved.



Dilara Choudhury

First and foremost would be its possible negative impacts on disarmament and arms control agreements. Already the Russian Foreign Minister and a spokesman of Chinese Foreign Ministry have termed Washington's planned development as counterproductive for international agreements on arms control which were painstakingly worked out for years, and it, adversarial effects on global strategic balance.

Second, besides Russia, the impacts of Star Wars on Sino-American relations, which have been rather turbulent since the formal opening between the two countries in 1972.

Indo-Pak Relations

Encouraging Omens Shouldn't be Avoided

Arguably, the Lahore Declaration, outcome of the summit following Indian prime minister's much-talked and highly publicised bus trip to Lahore, has certainly laid a basis of a scope for tangible improvement of the hostile ties between India and Pakistan.

rather impressive even a few months back. The former Punjab offers a lot of commonality between the two countries.

Islamabad has, for the first time, given permission to the filming of an Indian film on Shaheed Udham Singh at certain locations in Pakistan.

two neighbours who have been mostly at daggers drawn since their independence in 1947. Not that their ties have always been belligerent and no form of co-operation took place during the last 52 years but hostility and mistrust have characterised their relations throughout this period.

generated by the summit further ahead. It is in this context that the gestures coming from two sides are not only being largely welcomed in two countries but also by the peace-loving people in South Asia.



Other South Asian leaders are not only supporting the peace moves but also encouraging them.

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The government in both countries always remain under domestic compulsions not to shift from their known stance in such a critical dispute.

summit has also upgraded the level of bi-lateral talks on political issues ranging from foreign secretary to the plane of the foreign ministers.

the summit in Lahore. The Indian remarks, in the meantime, seem to clear the air and to vibrate the potentials to vitiate the sober ambience.

Peace between India and Pakistan - as far as possible in the given situation - is a matter that the entire South Asia look forward to and the current encouraging omens must not go fully utilised in that direction.

The Culture of "Cheating"

The guns roared in this month of March and people died proudly for the sake of their country. None cheated and thus we silenced those enemy guns to snatch victory. Now, talk to the "real voter," the "real people," and all they say is - "politicians come and go promising all big things for us, but nothing changed for us in 27 years."

subjects they had to study during 10 years of schooling. There has been recommendations year-in and year-out to stop the breeding of new frauds, but it goes on unabated.

We journalists sometimes have to file such stories. The International Herald Tribune, which usually carries only briefs about Bangladesh, some years ago published in details the story of students cheating in their school final tests.

The problem here also involves the EXTRA news - the teachers who are 'obliged' to their private students, also dish out 'techniques' to help them pass the tests.

And when we look at cheating or forgery in other parts of our national life, it does give a very gloomy picture. It was during our childhood that most of us learned about a place called 'Jinjira'.

One such Jinjira-made canned milk powder sent a child to near death. The one-year-old was attacked with di-

arrhea soon after taking the milk. The mother so carefully prepared it with so carefully sterilized bottle. Then skin lesions appeared and doctors fought a battle with an unknown disease, they thought so at that time.

In personal relationships, news items and letters in different magazines and newspapers speak of high tendencies of betrayal that leave thousands broken heart or maimed by acid burns.

In Dhaka, now one can get perfumes of all brand names within an envious price range. One really has to be an expert to differentiate the false from the real.

In officers, specially government ones, one is given different lessons from time to time just to make a pocketful if possible.

meat. The fruit vendor does that too. Imagine, even some of the people you think have beautiful hearts as they home deliver flowers for your loved ones, are cheating you!

And talk about politicians, how many of them lie, creating a new debate in national history and then say 'we have failed to keep our promises to the electorate.'

What does all that mean? All the promises and failures are the result of the acts of politicians themselves. I am glad that at least one politician admitted he had done wrong to the na-

tion. Of course, being in the opposition now, he has time to remorse - that's what I thought. No, it is a good start to put his mind against the regime to say 'now rape, hijacking, ... people are screaming for help ... to be saved from this situation.'

And history says, it was that politician who introduced a new controversial episode in the country's usually volatile politics in the parliament six or seven years back. Did that controversy help him, his party or the nation? Lastly, but not the least, does he have a new agenda for healthy politics or ready to quit the politics that has failed to deliver.

Recently a tabloid daily published a letter from a former minister where he calls for giving up 'politics of hostilities.'

Now, talk to the 'real voter,' the 'real people,' and all they say is - "politicians come and go promising all big things for us in 27 years."



by Nadeem Qadir