The Baily Star

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Stop this Cat and Mouse Game

The government has been adept in palming off dialogue offers to the opposition. But issued as these have been in the form of press statements rather than a formal written proposal properly made out to the opposition they practically meant nothing. At best these petered out as superfluous declarations of intent and at worst these amounted to playing to the gallery, if not hoodwinking the people as such.

Whenever the opposition mounts on any agitational programme, Home Minister Mohammed Nasim, who is also entrusted with the job of liaising with the opposition, hardly ever fails to reiterate the offer of talks to the opposition but with a pinch of tough talk in it. This time too, on the heels of Sunday's opposition-called hartal, Nasim waxed on his mixed mood. While reminding the opposition that an elected, strong government could not be browbeaten said he, "we are ready to sit with the opposition any time, at any place with an open agenda."

One wonders why for a change he did not send a written proposal to the opposition for a dialogue in what would have been a meaningful points-scoring strategy instead of the all-gimmick approach the government seems stuck with!

The real test of sincerity behind any dialogue offer !:es in refraining from vitriol once the offer has been made so as to avoid spoiling the environ for talks. But it is always the opposite that hap-

On the other hand the opposition's constantly shifting demands make us feel roundly muddled, baffled as to what their specific agenda for talks might be at this point in time. Originally demanding removal of the CEC and reform of the Election Commission they wanted all elections, local government ones and even bye-elections, held under a caretaker arrangement slightly down the road. Then on they pressed for cancellation of the Pourshava poll results followed by the one-point demand that the government either resign or face an ouster. All of these have at long last been scaled down to energy and water crises. What in truth is their agenda now?

The nation is badly fatigued by this cat-and -mouse game. How richly it deserves a break!

Fillip to Technical Education

Technical education has long been deprived of the attention it deserved in view of the truism that its expansion holds the key towards elimination of the country's unemployment problem and therefore, enhancement of its economic growth. The sorry state of affairs in the existent polytechnic institutes bears poignant testimony to the collective apathy policy-makers had shown towards this stream of learning. Inadequate curriculum, inept administration, frequent closures forced by political fending, etc., have rendered these institutions inert, thereby squeezing the flow of skilled manpower into the system. As put by the director general of the Directorate of Technical Education, more skilled manpower means more remittance but there is much more to it than that. Some recent developments reflected in the government plan to set up 20 new polytechnic institutes and to modernise some existing 20 indicate that an end to the inertia is forthcoming. The government's Tk. 2000 crore perspective plan which aims at spreading technical education across the country through establishment of polytechnic institutes in every district and providing need-based technical training at every educational institution certainly suggests that things are moving in the right direction there.

Launching a programme is easier than sustaining it. It has often happened in the country that an institution once launched has inevitably trodden down the road to degradation. Lack of proper management and poor maintenance have often contributed to their under-utilisation. Therefore, what the government needs to do before embarking upon the ambitious project is devise a fool-proof plan that puts accent on not only proper implementation but also proper management and maintenance afterwards. Identification of problem areas and formulation of remedial measures are imperative otherwise it will be history repeated, meaning the new generation of polytechnic institute will embrace the fate of the old ones.

Child-lifting at DMCH

Week-old twins were stolen from their sleeping mother at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital Gynae Ward Sunday and later rescued by a sardar of the hospital with the help of his colleagues and policemen. Conflicting stories have appeared in a section of the local press and police are investigating the incident. Born of a poor parentage the two girls were recovered from two ayas (maids) who had attended the mother and the twins for seven days during post-natal care at the hospital. The maids, who were not hospital staff, claimed that mother offered them her babies in lieu of the charges due to them, which she was unable to pay in cash. Another story is that the mother agreed to sell one of her babies hoping this would fetch her good money. This offer was alleged to have been made by one of the maids.

The babies have been restored to their mother and the maids taken into custody. Whatever may be the truth behind this sensational child-lifting incident we are flabbergasted by the huge lack of security at the Gynae Ward of DMCH. The authorities of the hospital have disowned the maids saying they were not hospital employees. They have also advised patients not to engage such maids 'personally'. If these maids are not the staff of the hospital then how come they are allowed to work there? DMCH is a government establishment and the administration of such an organisation ought to feel accountable to the people of the country. Health Ministry must take the responsibility for such unfortunate incidents and tighten security in and around the hospitals. Azimun is lucky enough to get her babies back. Another mother may not be that fortunate. There seems to be a racket working at the Gynae Ward calling for thorough remedial investigation and action into the affairs of the maternity ward.

Poll Signals—Warning for Chandrika

Praful Bidwai writes from New Delhi

Sri Lanka's public finances are a mess, with the fiscal deficit almost 10 per cent of GDP, export growth plummeting, and prices of essentials skyrocketing. After the fall of Killinochhi, there is no likelihood of a big change in the military balance. With political uncertainty looming, it might be best to call a damage-limiting early election.

(UNP) 17'-year reign. Her proposals for devolution of power formance marked a sharp deand replacing the overcentralised presidential system cline from the 1994 elections. From 62 per cent, its vote fell with a more democratic form to 45 per cent. This put it barely were good news. She enthused two percentage points ahead of the liberal intelligentsia and the UNP. The difference in the NGOs as no other political PA and UNP vote is only 126,000. The PA won 120 seats, Today, scepticism has rethe UNP 112. In only one of the placed hope. The shift to five PCs did the PA win an abopen, democratic, governance solute majority. The polls' stands arrested. The anti-LTTE conduct came in for criticism "Operation Jaya Sukurui" from independent monitors, (Certain Victory) ran out after especially after the end-Janannually costing 21 per cent of uary elections to the North-GDP. The time for new initia-Western (Wayamba) PC. These tives has passed. There is a rewere badly rigged, with 1,557 turn to manipulative politics.

> The PA was held responsible for two-thirds of these. Wayamba, much like Meham, became synonymous with electoral fraud. Even the Election Commissioner admitted that 212 polling centres (of a total of 1,160) witnessed serious malpractices. This time around, there was less violence. But it is sad that there was any in the Third World's first democracy, and worse that the

incidents of violence and

booth-capturing.

PA got into a confrontation with independent monitors, to the point of maligning them in the state-owned Daily News.

The PA is now on the defensive despite the UNP's poor leadership. It has lost most of its idealism, much of its appeal. It is exercising power delinked from a larger, universal, purpose. Recent developments highlight five trends. First, the ethnic-religious minorities, which swung towards the PA five years ago, are returning to the UNP, especially in Colombo (two-fifths of it Tamil-speaking) and in the coastal fishing villages.

Second, in the central highlands, with their Indian-origin tea labour, the influence of Mr S. Thondaman's Ceylon Workers' Congress, a PA constituent, is declining. In 1993, he won 12 seats. This time, he won only seven. This is due to the emergence of educated youth among the Tamils, which is unhappy with CWC leaders' conservatism and corruption.

vinist Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) has re-emerged as a major force. The JVP was crushed after its 1987-89 uprising, but has now tripled its vote-share to become the third largest party. This puts it in a strong position, for instance in the Western Council, where the PA needs its support. This

will involve a bargain. An understanding is apparently being reached, under which the JVP's exiled leader Somawansa Amarasinghe, an important former politburo member, would be allowed to return. It is unclear if this will "normalise" the JVP, or encourage an even harder chauvinist

A fourth trend is the emergence of Mr Karu Jayasooriya as a power-centre within the UNP. As Colombo mayor, he earned middle class goodwill by improving municipal services like an efficient manager. He won 250,000 votes. only slightly less than Ms Kumaratunga in 1993. Mr Thirdly, the Sinhala-chau- Jayasooriya is a businessman lieve that waiting will only

without a political vision. He is conservative on the ethnic question, but earnest and uncorrupt. His rise signifies middle class despair with the "normal" politician, and a preference for managerial

Finally, there is growing discontent among sections of the Left with the PA. The PA has failed to deliver

on most of its promises. Its

quick-fixes.

economic performance has been poor. Historically, the Sri Lankan Left has enjoyed high intellectual-moral status. It now faces a dilemma: push from within the PA for progressive policies, or quit and adopt an independent posture? Many leaders seem inclined towards the second. This will erode the PA. These trends mark a watershed. The PA faces a choice: should it call an early presidential election? or wait till August 2000? Some

leaders prefer to wait in the

hope that the UNP's internal

crisis will worsen. Others be-

mean further haemorrhage: they must call an early election before things worsen. The economy, which has

slowed down, could decelerate further. Sri Lanka's public finances are a mess, with the fiscal deficit almost 10 per cent of GDP, export growth plummeting, and prices of essentials skyrocketing. After the fall of Killinochhi, there is no likelihood of a big change in the military balance. With political uncertainty looming, it might be best to call a damage-limiting early election.

Whatever the PA does, one thing is certain. The phase of hope and change inaugurated in 1994-95 is over. Sri Lankan has entered a phase of turmoil. An Indian Postscript: Sri Lanka is delicately, precariously, poised. India must do nothing to upset it. New Delhi has recently done well to keep its hands off the ethnic issue. But it acted duplicitously on the free trade issue--first by promising tea imports and then reneging.

Along with the nuclear and missile tests, which underscore India's negative "Big Brother" image, this has bred resentment. New Delhi must promptly take corrective action. Deviousness on its part

LETTER FROM EUROPE

The Tragic End of a Civilisation

by Chaklader Mahboob-ul Alam

On September 22, 1609 and March 22, 1611 the king published decrees ordering the expulsion of all the Moriscos from the soil of Spain to Africa. Even those who had become devout Christians and publicly renounced Islam were not spared. Only the Morisco slaves, who were considered as personal chattels of their masters were allowed to stay.

ish painter Pablo Picasso. During our short stay there, we were invited by some friends to an informal dinner party at a Cortijo (farm-house), close to a nearby town called Frigiliana. Since night driving, especially on unfamiliar motorways, easily tires me, I was rather hesitant in accepting the invitation. However, on the insistence of our friends and Carmen (who,) admit is more sociable than I am), I reluctantly decided to attend the party. We were given precise instructions as to how to get to the Cortijo in less than half an hour. It was, I am afraid, easier said than done. It took us over an hour to get there. In the process we had to negotiate some dangerous curves and tortuously narrow winding mountain roads. Finally, when we reached the place, we found the narrow road leading to the Cortijo (which was literally located on a hilltop) was packed with dozens of

T THEN Ms Chandrika Ku-

1994, she kindled many hopes.

Her initiative on the ethnic

conflict came like a breath of

fresh air after the stale policies

of the United National Party's

Nothing shows this more

clearly than the April 6 elec-

tions to five provincial coun-

cils (PCs). The PA barely re-

tained the Western province,

Sri Lanka's largest, with 45 per

cent of GDP. It wrested the

other four from the UNP. But

its victory was uncertain and

slippery. It came amidst accu-

sations of electoral malprac-

are discounted, the PA's per-

E spent our last Christmas holidays in

▼ Malaga, a seaport

situated at the southern end of

Iberian peninsula, which is the

birthplace of the famous Span-

Even if the rigging charges

leader.

maratunga assumed Sri Lanka's Presidency in

and friends of the host couple. It seemed to me that most of the local dignitaries were present at the party. Our friends, who had given up hope of seeing us there, were delighted that we had finally made it and proudly introduced us to other guests. The dinner was excellent and the conversation pleasant. The whole atmosphere was indeed very congenial. After the dinner, over a cup of coffee, I struck of a conversation with a fellow guest, who happened to be a local government official. When I showed some interest in the past history of the area, he confided to me that he was an amateur historian and that he had done considerable research on the past of Frigiliana. After an hour's conversation with him .I reached the conclusion that Frigiliana had a tragic past and that many of its current inhabitants had conveniently forgotten it.

The house was full of family

automobiles.

Long before Adolf Hitler, in his madness, dreamt of the policy of final solution to the Jewish problem or Slodoman Milosevich launched his murderous campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Croats. the Bosnians and the Afbanians in former Yugoslavia, here in this tranquil corner of Spain, something similar took place approximately four hundred years ago against the Spanish Muslims, who had by then been forcibly converted into Catholicism and officially classified as the Moriscos.

By the end of the fifteenth century, due to the lack of a common purpose, internal dissension and chronic fratricidal wars, Muslim military power,

which had played a dominant role in the Iberian peninsula (modern Spain and Portugal) for more than seven centuries [General Tariq ibn Ziyad started the conquest in 711) had virtually become a spent force. So it was not surprising that when in the winter of 1491, the combined Christian armies of Castile and Aragon laid siege to Granada, the capital of the last Muslim kingdom in Spain (to which Malaga and Frigiliana belonged), Boad Dil, the last Muslim king had little power to put up enough resis-tance. Granada fell on January 2, 1492, which brought a long period of Muslim military and political presence in Spain to an end. This political change seriously aggravated the social and economic conditions of the Muslims there. Actually Islam as a religion was banned and the defeated Muslims were given two options — either be converted into Christianity or be expelled from Spain. The vast majority chose conversion because that was the only way out of a desperate situation. In Spain, the Muslims and

the Christians had known each other for many centuries as equals. But after the fall of Granada in 1492, the Muslims everywhere in Spain became a conquered people. Although for a short time, legally the Muslims enjoyed equal rights, soon the conquerors started treating them as serfs. The Muslims were denied the right to carry arms. Very soon they lost their right to acquire new land and properties. The tax system was revised to levy special taxes on them. In certain parts of the country they were forced to wear distinctive badges and live in specially designated areas. Even these humiliating measures were not considered enough by the king and the church. So in December 1499, a decree was promulgated authorising forced conversion of all the Muslims into Christianity. On October 12, 1501, instructions were issued to burn all books related to Islam. A series of other measures like the prohibition of the use of Arabic and Arab dresses, the banning of the Muslim ritual for sacrificing animals and the use of Arab baths, were taken to acculturate the community and obliterate the last vestiges of Muslim culture.

Although the vast majority went through the formalities of

mass conversion and accepted Christian names, in private they continued to practise Islamic rituals. As a result, further repressive measures were introduced. In many cases, good arable land in the valleys were confiscated and given to Christian settlers from the north. thus forcing the newly converted (the old Muslims) to migrate to less fertile land in the mountainous regions. Young children were separated from their parents and sent off to the north (Castile) to be educated in the Christian way but at the expense of their parents. In short, life became intolerable for the newly converted (legally identified as the Moriscos). They (the Moriscos) sent delegations to Madrid, petitioned the king as his loyal subjects for a change in the legislation and tried to hold discussions with the ecclesiastical and military authorities for some relaxation of these repressive measures. But it was to no avail. The clash of two civilisations had reached its climax. There was no desire to make any concessions from the militarily powerful Chris-

Everything came to a head on December 24, 1568. The Moriscos in the south of Spain rose up in arms (which they had secretly acquired) against this oppressive system and proclaimed Hernando de Cordoba y Valor (who retook his Muslim name Aben Humeya) as their king. The rebellion soon spread to other parts of southern Spain including Bentomiz to which Frigiliana (where we had gone to have dinner) belonged. The dice was cast - either win the war and live as dignified human beings or lose and perish. It was a desperate situation. Most of the Moriscos were ordinary people without any military training or even the knowledge of organised use of arms because since the fall of Granada, seventy five years ago, they had been deprived of the right to carry arms. Against them were arrayed the best trained soldiers of King Philip II (who sent his Invincible Armada to invade England). It was a hopeless case. Most of the Morisco leaders knew that death was in-

evitable. Alwacir, leader of the Moriscos in Bentomiz, while haranguing the assembled crowd of his followers, saidin my opinion, death is inevitable. But I urge you to em-

brace it fighting your enemies". In order to have better protection and put up a better fight, Alwacir asked his followers to leave their homes in the valleys and concentrate in the strategically situated fort at Frigiliana. So in May, 1569 thousands of Moriscos with their families left their homes for the last time (to which they never returned) and moved in to the Frigiliana Fort. Many, fearing the impending doom of the rebels, decided to stay back and sent messages of allegiance to the local civil and military authorities. They thought that in this manner, they would escape punishment. Philip II dispatched a fleet of twenty-five warships and authorised his brother Prince Juan de Austria [the future hero of the naval battle of Lepanto in 1571, in which the Turkish fleet was annihilated) to put down the rebellion as quickly as possible. After several unsuccessful attempts, a combined land and sea attack was launched on June 11, 1569 to which the Moriscos at the Frigiliana Fort succumbed. Thousands of them (men and women fighters) lost their lives in the battle as their leader had already predicted. Some escaped to the mountains to continue with their struggle. Some of the prisoners were condemned to the war galleys as enslaved oarsmen. All the women and children were sold

in to slavery. Those, who had stayed back and vowed their allegiance to the king did not escape the wrath either. They were rounded up, placed into concentration camps, their properties were confiscated and finally deported to other parts of Spain especially to the north, in small groups. In their long and painful journey many died of disease and exhaustion. All this was done openly in the name of ethnic cleansing (limpieza de sangre) and under the supervision of the Catholic church. Religious and racial prejudices had combined to create an obsession about the "purity of blood" in the Spanish mind. No one talked of Christian generosity or of human rights. So in this unholy act of forced dispersion of a helpless minority, the holy Church and the pious Crown played active and complementary roles. The objective was to eliminate the individual and collective identity of the Moriscos, who had been

converted into Catholicism by force but in reality with the exception of a few continued to practise Islam within the confines of their homes. Was this the end of the Morisco story?

Once deported to the north as serfs, were they left alone? In 1598 (more than one hundred years after the fall of Granada), Philip III succeeded to the Spanish throne after the death of his father Philip II. By that time, there was no one in Spain, who openly professed to be Muslim. The Moriscos had been defeated militarily, many of them had been killed, the rest had been dispersed all over Spain. Still two questions nagged the Crown and the Church. Were they really good Christians and did they pose any threat to the established order? The sad truth (from the point of view of the king) was that after so many years and after so much suffering, the Moriscos, with some exceptions, secretly remained faithful to Islam and were proud of their heritage. This was also true that they (the Moriscos) on their own could not pose any military threat to the king. But the Christians continued to consider them as fifth columnists in the service of the Turks

or the North African Berbers. They were considered as a danger to the national security. So a combination of factors such as the obsession about the "purity of blood" and a possible threat to the national security persuaded Philip III to reach a decision on the "final solution" to the Morisco problem. On September 22, 1609 and March 22, 1611 the king pub-

lished decrees ordering the expulsion of all the Moriscos from the soil of Spain to Africa. Even those who had become devout Christians and publicly renounced Islam were not spared. Only the Morisco slaves, who were considered as personal chattels of their masters were allowed to stay. The expelled Moriscos had to leave all their material belongings behind. Some resisted and were massacred by regular troops. Others tried to hide in the mountains but were hunted down. Many mothers with little children committed suicide by jumping to their death from mountaintops. Most left with barely what they had on, when the king's soldiers came to collect them. Many died of disease and violence on their way to the ports (Malaga being one of them). This was a clear case of genocide. Thus ended an Eastern civilisation which had flourished on European soil for almost eight centuries. Did it leave any mark on the Spanish civilisation? Did it make any contribution to human knowledge? If so, what? How did the mass expulsion of such a significant sector of the population affect the Spanish economy? These are some of the issues which will be addressed in my next letter.

OPINION

Ambiguous Telecoms Policy

Alif Zabr

The telecoms projects were ness or less business? What is reviewed by the government on April 7 as reported in the press the next day. There were hardly any new items as such information and data had been released earlier on several occasions; since it was a routine operational and project review.

What is needed occasionally for public consumption is a policy review of the slow and dragging telecoms sector, as the potential new users are feeling frustrated at the long waiting period for a low-cost new telephone connection (not the costly mobile cellular for one per cent of the potential users).

Here is a partial list of some of the sensitive and hanging policy issues for public clarification, to enable those in the business to draw up future strategies to cope with the changing market conditions. The IT sector needs heavy longterm investment, hence the long-term national policy guidelines must be clear, and not subject to abrupt changes by

new incoming regimes. Continuity in national con sensus is an essentialelement in this game. Uncertainty and loss of confidence are deadly deterrents for the investors.

* The government is keeping mum over the high installation charges for a new telephone basic connection. This silence is not transparent. What are the options available for reducing the installation charge? Modular additional options may be charged for separately, to lessen the initial load of expenditure by modest subscribers (fixed income groups, homes, retired and old-age groups). The supply must match the demand in this high-growth sector, and there are many shady groups and vested interests in the game. Official monitoring must be strict, to protect the users from

the unscrupulous sharks. * What percentage of the telephone business will continue to be retained under state control. now, and in the near future? Why? At present the government is providing service to the majority of the existing subscribers through the traditional line link; and also planning to introduce cellular service in sector. The government policy is to get involved in more busi- with too little.

the slope of the curve? The 'facilitator' image has to be im- What is the national policy on the use of fixed cellular (wireless) telephone service in Bangladesh, to supplement the existing landline system (overhead and underground cable system)? Any pilot project

in the offing? What experience has been gained in the other countries on this now feasible technology? The government's experts, advisors, and consultants should speak up and keep the public informed. There are hardly any seminars and workshops in the telecoms sector (why hush hush?).

* Where is the Independent relecoms Authority, since the BTTB is doing business? An operator cannot be the Regulator (the situation in broadcasting is similar). The ITU can provide the guideline and technical assistance in setting up this independent body (policy making is the job of the Ministry, but ITA is to implement and monitor the official policy in a neutral

and independent manner). * At what rate the waiting period for new connections is going to be reduced each year? Even the current waiting period is never leaked out officially. Truth is bitter, still let us hear

* How satisfied are the operators in the private sector over some of the rigid stands by the government inopening up this lucrative market? What new incentives are being contemplated to encourage more private investment in the telecoms sector? In India, there has been a sudden chain of relaxations af ter years of tight-fisted policy How GOB is becoming more market-oriented?

There are similar nontransparencies in the broadcasting, power and energy sectors. This negative pattern of keeping decisions pending will not do with fast changing open market economy. The policy makers have to do their home work and be on their toes to face a barrage of questions, any time; simply because it is the survival of the fittest in the competition with the private long run. The old style of governance has to go. We are too slow

lotic dition.

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

Measuring failure

Sir. It's bewildering to read the sweeping statements made by politicians. In April 9 issue the leader of the opposition condemned the government for failing in all sectors, which is akin to the pot calling the kettle black.

The opposition should bear in mind that they will be judged according to their actions (or inactions). So far, they have failed to address the pressing issues of the day in parliament. the legitimate body for airing the people's grievances. They have failed to press for action or put forward their plans to improve the law and order situation; to demand improvement of basic utility services; to address the worsening environmental situation in the country; to remove illegal encroachers destroying natural lakes and vegetation; to improve the chaotic traffic; to renounce hartals as a means of unconstitutional protest -- to basically BE the opposition.

When there are so many

fronts to act on, why are they beating empty cans? It would be advisable for the opposition to get its act together, or spend the next five year term shouting from the sidelines.

Sadat Omar Dhaka

Harmless local fangs

Sir. The regimes in the third world countries have little protection these days when the UN system is subject to hostage treatment by the big powers under the leadership of the lone super power (Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq). Where to seek redress? Nowhere. A lot of spine-banding demonstrations can be detected by the critical observers. Bangladesh enjoys no exemption; and there should be no il lusion about it.

The local regimes, however powerful internally, may wield a lot of influence at local levels through politics and other means, but ultimately, the WTO

is threatening to become more powerful than the UN system. The motivation is powerful and recognisable: the urge to survive (by the disintegrating western

civilisation).

The self-survival instinct cannot be faulted morally or philosophically; but the means unleashed to achieve the end have generated non-stop controversies in the affected capitals. The poor nations have to take it; and cannot leave it. Democracy is based on the availability of options. How to live a life without options? It is a terrible dilemma adversely affecting the philosophy of collective or individual life.

Therefore the local leaderships have to build up a common platform for decent survival, to serve the people under demanding, distressing, and humiliating foreign and global conditionalities. Bangladesh, there are signs of disintegration, and the point of no-return may reach soon, unless the errant leaders press the brakes, and take a look around on how to serve the oppressed and poor people; otherwise those who dare to stand in the way would be removed by means fair or foul, by forces local and/or foreign (one of the tools is the use of communal forces through pawns).

Abul M Ahmad Dhaka.

Drugs in the New Market

Sir, I went to New Market to buy a book on the 14th April (Pohela Bhaishak). It was around 9 pm.

While I was coming back from one of the book shops, I saw some 5/6 young men, sitting in the open place in front of the book shops, were gossiping. I was astonished seeing that they were taking preparation to take drugs. I could not believe my own eyes. In fact, this is first time, I have seen drug-taking scene in a public place like New Market. It tells us how cheap and available the drugs are and state of the law and order situation have become.

Ahmed Imtiaz Dhaka

Utshab

Sir. We would like to thank BTV for telecasting the magazine programme "Utshab" on 9 April, 99. In the midst of the socalled magazine programmes of same nature in which own culture and heritage are mostly neglected, it was nice to see that BTV has at least one magazine programme to present the nostalgic tune of "Dotara" and "Conch-Shell" (Shankha).

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