

Right to Information

IN the present-day context, right to information is no longer an idealistic proposition; rather, it is essential for all practical purposes. Across the globe, barring a few irrationally conservative societies, access to information is regarded as a recognised machinery to ensure transparency and accountability to the activities of the government, the non-government organisations (NGOs), the corporate sector, the utility service providers etc. Well-informed citizenry actually acts as a watchdog against corruption and also a vocal proponent for improvement of quality of service.

Unfortunately, right to information appears to have little appeal, if not none, to our collective sensibility. Despite avowed commitment, successive governments in Bangladesh have conveniently pushed it down to the last rung of their governance agenda. The carte blanche is very much there — the Official Secrecy Act, which empowers the government to keep secret such information as they deem necessary on the pretext that it might, if divulged, be detrimental to national interest. In certain cases confidentiality is indeed worth maintaining. However, in reality, the act has largely been taken as a blanket cover to deny the people even the minimum access to information on state affairs.

In the age of information superhighway and with increasing expansion of global network, the Official Secrecy Act needs immediate revision and, if needed, amendments. The citizenry has the fundamental right to have cognisance of certain aspects of governance like budget spending. Influx of information must be steady and regularly updated, and also include activities of local government bodies like municipal corporations, union councils, etc. Private sector establishments must also be brought under the network. Information on private establishments, especially the ones listed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), as regards audit reports, annual general meetings, dividends should be made easily accessible.

Right to information is sine qua non for democratic governance. Deepening of democratic institutions in the society requires people's participation and to facilitate that the first step certainly is ensuring access to information. We propose a Freedom of Information Act obligating individuals or groups of individuals in possession of information to let people have access to it on a routine basis, especially when it is asked for.

Biman Offloading

BANGLADESH Biman will 'hopefully' offload 49 per cent of its shares through a 'strategic partnership' by June next. This was disclosed by the Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister in the Parliament on Wednesday in reply to a supplementary question from a JP member. The minister hoped that by doing so the national carrier would be able to offset its losses. The minister also admitted that irregularities had long been dogging the airlines but claimed that these have been reduced during AL rule. It is perplexing how Biman could continue to sustain huge losses over the years on the Dhaka-New York route while other airlines have been making profits. Despite claims of the minister of a reduction in the losses, they remain substantial. Inefficiency and irregularities in Biman are mirrored, by the minister's disclosure that around 3.5 crore taka is pending with the travel agencies on different accounts.

Against the backdrop of the overall dismal situation in Biman the move to offload 49 per cent of its share to the private sector may not be enough as an answer. What Biman needs is total privatisation to save this institution from ruin and also rid the public exchequer of the burden of this white elephant. If Biman retains 51 per cent of the share then it will retain administrative control over the airlines that may lead to overall mismanagement and consequent losses, which in turn, could affect the Biman's future as a whole. So what is of central importance here is an organisational overhaul that would convert the national flag carrier into a thriving, profit-making organisation in its own right. Disinvesting a minority share may back fire in the long run and the national airlines may plunge further into troubled waters. With its present track record of mismanagement and inefficiency we would rather have Biman totally disinvested and privatised in the greater interest of the people of Bangladesh.

Profit on Misery

PROSTITUTION in our society like elsewhere in the world, has a paradoxical presence. The conservative wants it weeded out, the progressive prefers a reality check, while others entertain uncanny indifference. According to Thursday's morning press, the government has prepared a confidential report on the brothel owners' financial gains from Narayanganj's two brothels, Tanbazar and Nimalti. Collectively, they earn Taka 1.25 crore — without any income tax deductions — by exploiting the 3,000 sex workers' miseries. Another report in yesterday's Daily Star says that the inmates of the two brothels are virtually starving for no client is visiting them since murder of a sex worker on July 1 and subsequent police raid. They are living in fear of eviction any time. But eviction is no solution. They need proper rehabilitation.

Majority of them were forced to take up prostitution as a means of living because of purely economic reason. Had it been a society free of poverty and exploitation, few of these women would have chosen this wretched life. But the ideal situation we sincerely crave for remains a far cry. Apart from the sex workers' drudgery, it is the subhuman atmosphere they live in, without any essential amenities, and the social ostracism they face even in death which call for some remedial action. Along with it, their progeny merit attention lest they become an added social problem.

We appreciate the government's recent move in allocating funds for the sex workers, but at the same time, it has to ensure that the sum is not wasted in any way. And as far as the brothel owners' profits are concerned, they should be made to divert that money into improving the living conditions in the red-light area.

The 'Health' of the Health Sector

To make the adage 'health is wealth' true, we need to embark upon supply side response in a more aggressive fashion so that patients remain indifferent as to whether to go outside or remain inside the country.

WE all know that health is wealth. Health helps the growth of human productivity and hence prosperity. The health status of the population partially reflects the status of human capital formation of a country. Unfortunately, as far as Bangladesh is concerned, the "health" of the Health Sector does not seem to be in keeping with what is needed for a productive population. Most people in Bangladesh live in an unhealthy environment, are susceptible to dreadful diseases and for most of their life, do not have adequate access to proper medical treatment. Those who can afford to spend a lot of money, can easily get their treatments or checkups done abroad. There is now a growing number of patients seeking medical care outside Bangladesh. But the vast majority with a low income have hardly any access to proper medical care.

As I said earlier, a growing number of people are now going abroad for treatment. Reportedly, most go to India and Singapore. From economic point of view, Bangladesh seems to be losing grounds on two fronts: giving way to Indian commodities to come into Bangladesh and letting Bangladeshis to go to India and spend money for treatment. The implications of these flows in terms of trade balance is quite obvious and make the bilateral trade

favourable for India. But the reasons for such inflows and outflows of goods and services are economic. Bangladesh cannot produce commodities or provide medical services at a cheaper cost than India. Cost effectiveness in the delivery of goods and services assumes an important determinant of outflow and inflow. The same reasoning also applies for education. India draws a large number of students from Bangladesh leaving very little scope for a reverse flow. The ominous sign for us is that India is growing as a major supplier of services Medical care, education) and commodities and thus tilting the trade balance heavily in its favour. Unless we find corrective policy prescriptions, the future could hardly bring fortunes for us.

According to Bangladesh National Health Accounts (1996/97), the share of health sector allocation to GDP is about 4 per cent. In per capita terms, this goes to imply Tk. 443 per person (1996/97). Of the total money spent on health, the public sector (including aid) contributes one-third, two-thirds come from the households and roughly one per cent from NGOs. From conscious

corners, there is a demand for allocating more resources to the health sector. Relatively speaking Bangladesh does not appear to spend less on health sector compared to the countries with more or less the same income level. For example, in the South Asian region, our level of expenditure as a percentage of GDP is higher than that in Sri Lanka (3.4 per cent) but less than that in India (5.6 per cent).



Beneath the Surface by Abdul Bayes

Even compared to China the figures do not seem out of line. But as far performance is concerned both India and China have laudable outcomes while Bangladesh continues to depict a deplorable condition. The differences lie not in the amount of spending but in the ways it is being spent. One only needs to recall that Sri Lanka stands out with better health indicators from Egypt although the former spends relatively less than the latter on health

accounts. Bangladesh National Health Accounts further tells us that the household level expenditure (accounting for two-thirds of the total in the country) displays the following pocketed by the quacks or incompetent, inexperienced doctors as consultants and (c) only 10 per cent is being spent on the purchase of medicine advised by experts. The fact that households appear

to spend more on medicines could, possibly, indicate high levels of self-treatment and self-medication. This also shows a loss of faith on the existing health care system. Another interesting feature of our health sector needs special mention. The share of expenditure on inpatient care is very low. For example, less than one-tenth of the expenses go to inpatient care at hospitals. The share is about 40 per cent in China and Sri Lanka, in a coun-

try where health insurance schemes are not easily accessible and where households face acute crisis in meeting hospital costs, inpatient care needs more resource allocation. The trend in health expenditure shows an urban bias in spending. This could possibly be due to the fact that the hospitals and healthcare centres are mostly located in cities. According to Bangladesh National Health Accounts, overall 17 per cent of total government health subsidies benefit the poorest quintile of the population while 25 per cent benefits the richest quintile. The poorer groups do receive a significant share of MOHFW expenditures and in comparison with their household income public sector health subsidies and considerably to their overall welfare." It would be learnt that Bangladesh does better in reaching the poor than, say, Indonesia or Vietnam, but lags considerably behind Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the Philippines in this respect.

A recent round table conference on the issue of treatment outside Bangladesh brought to the fore few important observations. Random samples of households in Gulshan, Banani,

Baridhara and Dhanmondi show that 56 per cent go abroad for treatment. The per patient cost is estimated to be Tk 1.5 million. Taking the queue from plan documents Dr. Binayak Sen of BIDS seems to argue that a total of Tk 100 crore is being spent each year for treatment outside. In other words, we tend to spend Tk 1000 crore each year on the import of medical services and thus adding to the debit side of the balance of payments account. The said causes for treatment outside. These are for example; lack of professional doctors in the country; lack of confidence on the available medicare system, lack of modern technology driven equipment etc. It may be mentioned here that of late, private sector participation is growing. By and large, the participants of that conference did not find the health sector to be in right order standing on a sound system.

The 'health' of the health sector needs to be improved. More budgetary allocation fulfills a necessary condition only but the sufficient condition is productive utilization of that money. To make the adage 'health is wealth' true, we need to embark upon supply side response in a more aggressive fashion so that patients remain indifferent as to whether to go outside or remain inside the country.

Kashmir Issue: US Not to Interfere

By dragging in Clinton on the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Kargil, Sharif has not gained anything except media attention. The joint statement makes it clear that America wants India and Pakistan to sort out their problems through dialogue.

PRIME Minister Nawaz Sharif must have anticipated the storm his unilateral withdrawal of forces from Kargil would create in Pakistan. Otherwise, there is no explanation for the meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet he called on the eve of departure to Washington. The three Service chiefs were present. Sharif's purpose for the meeting may have been to tell the public in Pakistan that he was associating the military with whatever he was trying to do. He may also be giving a message to the military that it was as much part of what was decided at the meeting as anyone else was.

The meeting reportedly approved a three-pronged strategy to deal with India: to have an all-time high military preparedness; military-to-military contact to find solution to the on-going conflict (including the withdrawal), and to pursue a high-level diplomacy to tell the international community that Pakistan would like to de-escalate the situation through dialogue.

How Pakistan deals with the situation which has developed to its disadvantage is its own business. The strategy adopted by the Defence Committee does not concern India. What bothers it is the view at the meeting that India should 'concede' to resolve the issue by pushing back its increasing infantry formation on the line of control. How does Islamabad expect any gesture from India? There is no trust, much less goodwill, left, Pakistani forces, including the mujahideen have to withdraw unconditionally and restore the Line of Control (LoC) before any talks on the future can take place.

Obviously, Sharif has not achieved what his government's Defence Committee thought he would in America. However, Pakistan may create difficulties on the interpretation of the Shimla Agreement. The Agreement signed after the Bangladesh war in 1971 was a pledge by both sides to settle their differences by peaceful means, respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, avoid interference in each other's internal affairs and refrain from threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other.

Annexes to the agreement, initiated by representatives from both countries, included detailed maps which delineated the LoC in all sectors, except for the Siachen Glacier area. This has been under India's occupation for more than a decade. And this may give Pakistan an opportunity to stake its claim. Its spokesman has already said that at the time (1972) no Indian troops were present in the Siachen Glacier area and India occupied that region in 1984.

The Shimla Agreement specified that "neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further should undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line."

In the wake of infiltration along the Kargil sector, the Pakistan authorities have claimed that the LoC around Kargil is not clearly defined. This claim is contrary to the Shimla agreement. But the Siachen Glacier was not demarcated on the maps signed by both sides. New Delhi's stand is that Siachen is well beyond point NJ 9842 where the LoC ends.

If America insists on the restoration of the 1972 position, it will mean that Siachen should become a no-man's land. The BJP-led government cannot afford the withdrawal of forces from the Siachen glacier for it will be seen by the people as a retreat. This cannot be a happy situation for the ruling group when elections are around the corner.

When the glacier was occupied in the first instance, it was done on the basis of reports that Pakistan was making preparations to take it over. The Pakistani forces were, indeed, surprised to see Indian army already camping at the glacier. America may be willing to guarantee no-man's

land status to the glacier. This is the impression I got from US Under Secretary of State Inderfurth in April at Washington when I met him. Still it is too early to say whether Washington would take up the Siachen glacier question with New Delhi. Sharif may have even discussed it during his three-hour-long talk with Clinton.

No doubt, the Shimla Agreements is the bedrock of relations between India and Pakistan. But the latter has never implemented it in the spirit it was signed. It has violated it even in letter by training, arming and pushing infiltrators into India.

What the agreement was expected to achieve was normalcy. But it never came. When P D Dhar, Mrs Indira Gandhi's personal envoy, went to Islamabad a few weeks before the Shimla conference, he told his counterpart Aziz Ahmed that India was interested in "a durable peace" in the subcontinent. He spelled it out in a draft he submitted. "One, renunciation of conflict and confrontation and both sides to adopt a policy of ensuring cooperation, two, non-interference in the internal affairs of each other, three, settlement of disputes by peaceful means; and four, non-use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other."

Of course, when the Shimla Agreement was signed the four points were amalgamated into the declaration as: "the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and both shall prevent the organisation, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations."

Had Pakistan followed the bilateral approach the two countries might have sorted out their problems. But Islamabad chose another way. It began to internationalise the Kashmir issue and it raised it at every conceivable forum. Sharif travelled all the way to Washington to tell what he could have conveyed to the next-door New Delhi directly.

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Nowhere has America fallen in the trap of involvement which Pakistan had supposedly laid. Washington made it clear that it was not an intermediary. Clinton in fact, rang up Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to inform him about the discussions he had with Sharif. The joint statement makes it clear that America wants India and Pakistan to sort out their problems through dialogue. Once again Sharif has been misled that Kashmir is an issue between New Delhi and Islamabad and that America will not interfere.

Alas, all this was reiterated in the Lahore Declaration. The question that Islamabad has to answer is why it violated the Declaration and sent its troops on the Indian side of the LoC if at the end it had to reiterate its faith in the Lahore Declaration itself.

Pakistan should realise that it cannot take Kashmir from India through force. It failed in 1948 and 1965. It has again failed in 1999. This time even the world opinion is against it. New Delhi's stand that Pakistan must vacate aggression has been vindicated.

Whether Islamabad admits it or not, the Pakistani forces have found the Indian army tough and dedicated. Its leaders said the Indian army could not fight. Even some newspapers made fun of it. The manner in which it wrested from the hands of Pakistani forces the heights on which they were entrenched shows courage and bravery of high order. Pakistani casualties have been rather high. An opposition leader, Khurshed Shah, has said in the Pakistan National Assembly at Islamabad that "at least 1300 mujahideen" have been killed.

United We Stand

This has to be a very public effort. All of us have to pull together for the sake of this nation which we love. This is not the time for recriminations but a time to close ranks and stand as one against an implacable foe having a distinct advantage over us.

NOBODY can deny that in sum Kargil has been a major setback of disastrous proportions. The tragedy is that not only were we in the right but what was won on the snowy heights with the blood of our youth has again been lost on the slippery slopes of the negotiating table. For the sake of national unity and the morale of the Armed Forces this is no time to indulge in finger-pointing and recriminations but to close ranks lest divided we fall. Let us first count the losses viz (1) we have never been so politically and diplomatically isolated in the full 52 years of our existence, even when counting 1971, (2) in accepting the "Mujahideen" we crossed the Line of Control (LoC) when in fact they were in no-man's land, we were stupid enough to tacitly accept "intrusion"; (3) by insisting that we were not aiding the Mujahideen when every child knows that we do (as we must) we shot our credibility into oblivion; (4) we exposed our "China Card" needlessly and lost psychologically on that count when they remained mostly neutral; (5) militarily we have unnecessarily jeopardised the morale of the Armed Forces when in fact they performed "above and beyond the call of duty" and (6) we have lost the media battle across the globe in a manner that could be devastating in the future.

Now count our gains, viz (1) whether anyone likes it or not, Kashmir has been internationalised by being taken to be a nuclear flashpoint by the world; (2) the action of a small force in tying down a much larger entity has exposed the vulnerability and weaknesses of the Indian Army and Forces in Kashmir and (3) we have discovered that when push comes to shove the necessary war-gaming and/or preparation for war was lacking.

There are real dangers here. By accepting US viewpoint about respecting the LoC, Mian Nawaz Sharif has tacitly accepted what Pakistanis feel he should not have, withdrawal from Kargil without a *quid pro quo* on Kashmir or those areas controlled by India in violation of the Simla Accord. Mature heads seemed to have decided to quit while we are still ahead and not get embroiled in a debilitating war in which we could (at some cost) do a Gibraltar-2 in Kashmir and thus win the war but could have lost out on many other issues that could threaten our existence as a nation. Given a window of opportunity by our historical blunder in accepting "intrusion" across the LoC, the Indians have proceeded to camouflage their own range of blunders and weaknesses, not the least was the demoralisation in the Indian Army. To counter loss of morale, they have mounted a tremendous war-hype for domestic consumption culminating in the "production" of the great assault on Tiger Hills, a non-existent feature that could have featured as "Pork Chop Hill" in any Hollywood movie. Yet for all practical purposes the Kashmir movement has had a rude setback and the Indians have managed to cover the inhuman atrocities on and "ethnic cleansing" of the Kashmiri people.

They have unleashed a barrage of propaganda against our Armed Forces, including full page Ads in the US print media accusing the Pakistan Army of being a "rouge army". Not the least BJP is well on the way of getting a massive landslide in the next general elections unless something dramatic happens between now and October to upset their second electoral march. At such a sorry impasse, we not only have to take stock of the situation but effect total "damage control". This has to be done on a number of fronts in the political, military, diplomatic, media and economic fields. In the political field, there has to be a mass contact programme where the ruling party members have to establish person-to-person rapport in their own constituencies to give a correct perspective of the facts.

Where is the massive political blitz? The PM has yet to address the nation what to talk of taking the Opposition into confidence. This is not a PML battle alone, this is a battle for Pakistan and nobody should think he or she has a corner on patriotism. Whatever views one holds of Ms

Benazir one cannot accuse her of being unfaithful to the nation. It is time for PML to indulge in constructive engagement to involve her in the "damage control" process. On the military front, we must eulogise our heroes and we certainly have plenty of them. Whether the General Staff was turning a tactical situation to strategic advantage or in the field situation whether the Kashmiri Mujahideen were bolstered by a handful of our boys or were backed up by our troops, it has been a battle of nerves for GHQ while on the ground the "Kargil Force" has taken a major pounding from the air and artillery and withstood it. Outnumbered 20 to 1 or even 30 to 1, they have taken a terrible toll of the Indians. While the Indians could well have taken some ridges, they have had no major success except on paper and rhetoric against the major Mujahideen positions despite overwhelming superiority in men and material. Even the Indians reluctantly acknowledge this while covering up their heavy casualties and high rate of desertion.

The Indians can make a "Hollywood" production out of non-existent victories, they cannot hide facts from the men on the ground and truth will out, sooner rather than later. We must publicise the heroes among our rank and file, for the sake of morale if nothing else. Our diplomatic corps has failed us at a crucial period of time, part of it is not their fault. We have a lot of stuffed shirts immersed in their own importance and a theoretically bankrupt concept of what we should have instead of a live, potent diplomatic effort. We have to send dedicated people in different slots important to presenting our point of view and countering India's. A major effort must be made to effect solid "damage control" over the ruins of our diplomatic policy. From diplomatic isolation we might come back to diplomatic contention. The best place to start is with the foreign diplomats in Islamabad, why are they not given an in-depth briefing by the Army followed by visits to the battle areas? This liaison with the Army would also dispel the misgivings in western

capitals that those who wear our uniform are ogres. Army personnel have a simple naivety about them that would disarm the most hard-bitten professional diplomat. This holds true also of the electronic and print media.

We must get media persons for unencumbered contacts with those in uniform, particularly in the field. One does not have to coach these people, the simplicity and patriotism of the Pakistani soldiers in the face of adversity will impress any hard-boiled cynic. Why have a visceral dislike for people like Meeha Lodhi, Nijam Sethi and Hussain Haqqani, why keep them under wraps? If they do not rise to the occasion for the sake of the nation, they are smaller beings than what I take them to be. Our economy is not prepared for war whereas war may yet come within the next 45-90 days. The most shameful thing was the tax protest by the business community this week. The only way we can gear for war is if people pay their dues. Our problem is revenue generation and we must appeal to those who can pay to pay their tax dues. At the same time there have to be draconian measures against, viz (1) those who still do not pay and (2) those who take bribes in allowing people to evade the tax net. We will be dead in the water unless we manage to generate additional revenues. Can one imagine a war effort in the present economic situation? As it is, our well-intentioned Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has had to take some unpalatable steps to generate more tax, unfortunately by burdening the salaried class. It is time the informal un-taxed sector came into the national mainstream.

This has to be a very public effort. All of us have to pull together for the sake of this nation which we love. This is not the time for recriminations but a time to close ranks and stand as one against an implacable foe having a distinct advantage over us. No sane person wants a war but let us be assured that if a war is forced on us we will not be found wanting, at least in unity.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

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To the Editor...

'Army vehicles from India'

Sir, At first let me thank our government for its three years 'fruitful' ruling. But the above-titled news astonished me. In this respect, the opposition leader conflated the vehicles as sub-standard which have not even been used by Indian army. So why for us?

If government thinks India is our friend, then I am unable to agree with this. Yes, India helped us in our liberation war in '71. But was it altruistic? Who doesn't know 'the enemy of enemy is friend'? After the war, India has purloined a huge number of machinery and arms, this issue can be set aside. But the demarcation of Tin Biga corridor, the repeated terrorism in border areas, a pronounced trade gap, illegal coercing in national market, the

ambivalency about gas, the Ganga water treaty and many others — can they be termed as friendly?

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The hell with others

Sir, According to our PM, within the last two months, 1,215 terrorists, 59,330 wanted persons, and 1,151 fire arms have been captured and recovered, respectively. With this outstanding achievement, the city of Dhaka or else where should have been virtually a city without any crime. Our PM must have been very pleased with this success. But what is the ratio of criminals, crimes captured and what is the success rate? Did she bother to

ask herself, 'Why the crime are still on the rise?'

I am not too enthusiastic about the "report" like any other concerned citizens in Bangladesh. Because we don't care how many fire arms are recovered or wanted criminals are captured, as long as the output does not produce any relief or peace for any civilians in general. Rape and murders are there and the culprits are walking (maybe) with an eye on his next victim, but I guess as long as they do not interfere with the policy makers' territory, their (policy makers) concept of resolution is "the hell with others".

Wasim Dhaka

Tip of political volcano?

Sir, It had to materialise — the pressure gauges inside the

political parties are rising, and the first rumblings can be heard and read in the media, judging from the utterances of the two Turks in the two major political parties. The lid to reduce the internal pressure through introduction of democratic procedures inside the political parties, so long thriving on charismatic leadership and proxy fame. There is a limit to props — of time and styles.

The generation change has to be noted and recognised. Elbow room must be allowed to the new generation of young leaders in the making (not only in Bangladesh, but everywhere). Some are mature enough to seek room at the top. The internal cohesion within the parties is coming apart, judging from the cult of terrorism patronised internally. The godfathers could be unpredictable at the wrong

moments. The two political figures who are seeking ventilation are not lonely figures, but represent strong, isolated, silent groups who wish to be noticed. The young Turks have to be kept engaged — diversions will not be tolerated.

Now the defence forces are involved in public criticism with some aspects of defence purchases. The strong-headed (may be misguided) CBAs are another group whose favour would be sought by vested interests. The foreign donor agencies are now talking directly to them (vide press reports). Another big sector is NGOs, and subversive attempts to politicise some of them have deeper implications in the ultimate balance of political power. Autocrat Ershad had to bow down when the bureaucrats and the armed forces backed

out. Now there are more critical groups. It is lonely at the top.

The political crosscurrents have started becoming more active. The changing flux densities have to be matched to contain the situation or maintain the status quo. The problem with politics in the underdeveloped countries is that the leadership at the top presume and assume mundane immortality decade after decade, defying the eternal laws of natural principles unless subjected to sudden and violent upheavals.

Urgency has to be introduced in the waiting game. The politicians pretend to know the situation better; this is an outsider assessment of the current situation.

A Z Dhaka