The Baily Star

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Why Hartal Then?

WITH the controversy over the transshipment issue heating up, a sobering thought comes right across the political divide to debate the subject at length. Mr Saifur Rahman, finance minister in the preceding BNP government, has called for public debate in an interview with this paper while commerce minister Tofail Ahmed has given an assurance at a press conference that there would be a national debate on the question.

The prospect for debate on such an issue of vital concern to the nation, though belated, is highly welcomed by us, but we feel that there has been insincerity on both sides so far in dealing with the question. This is not a subjective deduction but a matter of record.

To the BNP one can ask a very pertinent question: why call a hartal on an issue with a long history of which you have been a part? Whether it originated in 1973, or 1980, or 1990, or 1993 is not the material question here anymore, what is indeed very much so is the fact of its evolution through successive governments, both in India and Bangladesh, under bilateral trade protocols and eventually under the SAPTA umbrella. BNP did sign something concrete, and the adherence to the continuity element meant that there has been a certain underlying convergence on the issue cutting across party lines. Obviously, the common denominator has been the economic consideration and not the political one.

Why is the BNP then politically equating transshipment with 'corridor' which one has only known in relation to East and West Germany in the context of access to Berlin under exceptional post-war circumstances?

The Awami League can be equally faulted for the way it has handled the issue. This does betray a lack of transparency. After having agreed in principle to transshipment of Indian goods through Bangladesh, the party now opts to have a public debate on the same. This, together with the fact that AL has been attributing most things of sensitive nature with India to their initiation during the BNP rule, means that the ruling party is being either hypocritical or unconvinced about what it is doing.

Begum Zia is not opposed to transit, but wants it on a multilateral basis under the SAARC. As an opposition leader she did not have to call a hartal to prove her point, she has all the opportunity in the world to use other avenues to be doing so. It is too important a matter for irresponsible handling on either side of the political divide.

Hole at the Heart

THE latest episode of violence at the Secretariat, perpetrated by lower-level government employees, strongly suggests that the situation there has gone way beyond control. The nervecentre of the government appears to have turned into a battle-field with heavy deployment of armed law enforcement personnel across the complex, and sniffer dogs at the entry points for security checks, not to speak of intermittent clashes and acts of destruction. With the government deciding to crackdown on the agitating employees, speedy resolution of the problem looks highly unlikely at this point of time. However, one cannot but wonder why it has let a set of apparently innocuous and negotiable demands spark off a major crisis in the first place. Moreover, without any pronounced government initiative for a negotiated settlement, its ostensible bellicosity can well be construed as an extremely irrational behaviour. On the other hand, supposing the option of talks had been tried out, why was it not made public? True, the protesting employees have taken a wrong route to pressing home their demands; however, the government doesn't seem to have taken the right path, either. Anyway, whether the government has realised it or not, turbulence at its heart, so to speak, may well send a wrong signal across the country, thereby making it imperative that the situation be immediately addressed and resolved.

The tense situation at the Secretariat, in our view, has definitely arisen from a communication failure between the government and the employees over the latter's professional grievances. No one should try to trace any political motive behind it as the PWD Sramik Karmachari Union had attempted at a press conference viewing the agitation as "being used as a tool for BNP's political objectives". Such an effort would only do more harm than good. The best thing for the government to do, at this point, would be to take the initiative towards holding a dialogue with the aggrieved workers and be candid about its intentions. In that case, even if talks fail, we hope it wouldn't, the government would certainly enjoy the moral support from the media and, for that matter, the conscious section of the citizenry to its subsequent actions.

Looks Like an Eye-wash

TTOME Minister Mohammad Nasim has been I presiding over the much trumpeted and publicised 'surrender ceremonies' in the southern district of the country.

The amnesty, which ended on 31 July '99, was in fact a blanket offer for all kinds of anti-social and anti-state elements to come within the fold of law. This prompted the meanest of killers to surrender before the authorities along with the most uninitiated ones. This is a clear indication of what actually has been happening in the surrender drama.

A Daily Star report from Khulna on Sunday said that only 'five' listed criminals out of a total of 110 actually surrendered to a state minister. 'Over a hundred listed terrorists' are at large - thanks to strong backing from the ruling party stalwarts. These include many who were mentioned in FIR for different murder cases.

There is a lot of discrepancy between the number of 'terrorists' surrendering and the number of arms deposited by them. Most of the time the criminals outnumber arms. And most of these arms are obsolete and home-made junks. How can this happen? Are we to believe that most of them commit crimes with bare hands? This is utter nonsense. The police must find out where they are hiding their weapons. Unless that is done these people, supposed to be absorbed in the Ansar, may come out again and commit greater crimes than before.

Basically, why do they have to be inducted into a disciplined force?

World Politics and Global Energy Scenario

What Should be Our Role?

There is a renewed interest now for exploration and drilling of natural gas (possibly oil as well) in Bangladesh primarily because India is emerging as a huge energy market and that market is getting increasingly liberal and welcomes foreign investment.

late domestic energy demand ing its military-industrial The Kosovo war is over after technology. It is big enough to do so. India is the only other a total victory of the NATO country which matches in size to China with comparable

7 HILE our energy policy

should take into

account emerging

patterns of world politics and

its reflection on the global

energy scenario, we cannot de-

pend entirely on foreign in-

vestment for our own energy

development if we wish to iso-

forces who suffered no casual-

ties whatsoever. It was for the

first time that a war was fought

using tremendous amount of

firepower but no injury or death

for the victors. All human suf-

ferings belonged to the van-

quished. Although Serbia had a

fairly sophisticated air defense

system, a modern well equipped

air force and its ground troops

enjoyed complete ground con-

trol, its army left KOSOVO after

the conquered territory after

the war was over. The job was

entirely done by vastly superior

air power and technology. If Sir

Winston Churchill was alive

today, he could have altered his

own writing to say: "Never in

the history of human conflict

was so much won by so few with

no blood spilled on the ground".

would have probably main-

tained complete silence and

been extremely worried since

the victory for NATO was only

in name. The US air force and

American technology played

the amazing role which even

dumbfounded other NATO

partner countries. Since the

Gulf War in 1991, the progress

in both air offensive and defen-

sive technologies have been

tremendous. No other country

can come even close to the sole

superpower we have in the

tinue for too long. China is

rapidly gathering its economic

strength and at its present rate

of growth, may surpass all

other countries except United

States in terms of the total GDP

or economic strength. Simul-

taneously, it would be develop-

However, this may not con-

world today.

Actually, old Churchill

NATO forces marched onto

total defeat.

from external influences.

technological capabilities. No doubt, India has to go a long way in terms of modernization of its economy as well as defence forces. But with the gradual emergence of China as the next superpower, it is likely that in the long run Indian space technology, long range missile warfare capabilities and other such achievements would not be left far behind. In this endeavor, India is likely to receive increasing American support - simply for the purpose of countering China.

What would be the position of Bangladesh in the context of this future pattern of global politics. It is obvious that Southeast and East Asia will constitute the direct sphere of influence of China. India would aspire to strengthen its ties with countries of South Asia. Conflict in Kashmir therefore presents a big constraint. Of particular significance is the fact that India lacks one major resource, energy, to join the big power league of the future. Bangladesh is next door to India and it is not unlikely that we are sitting over a huge reservoir of energy. Herein lies our critical importance keeping in view future world politics and the global energy scenario.

Of course it is true that at the present state of our knowledge. we cannot definitely conclude that Bangladesh possesses a huge reserve of natural gas. But certainly, there are enough indications of such a possibility. Otherwise international oil companies would not be interested to invest in exploration and drilling. Our domestic de-

mand cannot be large enough to generate such foreign interest. We are too poor to rapidly enhance consumption of natural gas, while a large market awaits next door. It is rather naïve on the part of Bangladeshi experts to assume a developed country standard per capita consumption figure, multiply it by the huge projected population number and jump to the conclusion that our existing reserves as well as possible future discoveries are likely to be exhausted by ourselves within one

Bangladesh.

The most important issue is the new initiative to strengthen India-US cooperation which is manifested in the current American position with regard to the Kashmir problem. During cold war days. United States supported the role of Mujaheedins in Afghanistan and Pakistan's deep involvement in it The same is not true when it comes to Kashmir. United States wants an end to Indo-Pak rivalry and would possibly support a permanent settlement along the existing cease fire



ergy consumption is largely dependent on our rate of manufacturing expansion and such expansion relying on cutting and making of garments constitute a rather primitive approach to

modernization. We need huge investment in infrastructure development. Donor countries in particular are insisting that we do not possess enough resources to pay even for our own natural gas bills and domestic investment resources for development are still a far cry, unless we export natural gas to the most conve-

nient market across the border. We are not sure. Government is hesitant. What do we do under the circumstances? First, we should take into account those issues of world politics and global energy scenario which most relevant to are

line. In the context of the new power game, 50 years of continuous occupancy of the respective segments of the disputed territory may now be considered to be final and absolute. This is because India has to rival China as a military power and a grave continuing dispute with one of the neighbours stands as a stumbling block to achieving that objective. It is also in the interest of United States that India should equal China and American sway as the supreme power would be

Within this game plan, as I have mentioned before, India's energy needs should be fulfilled. There are proposals to import gas both through the western and eastern frontiers of India. Central Asian gas can easily reach India via Iran and Pak-

istan. There were even newspaper reports that an Indo-Pak agreement has already been reached to this effect. However, until the Kashmir dispute is finally settled, the huge pipeline investment will be reckoned as madness par excellence. Since global energy business means largely American companies. their vital interests also get reflected through the Kashmir

policy of the United States. On the Eastern front, Myanmar with its 20 TCF natural gas reserve is interested to pipe it to India. Americans are insisting that Bangladesh also sells its gas to India. On the other hand, it may be recalled that there was a proposal from a consortium of European oil companies that they would invest in the development of gas fields offshore from Chittagong provided they are allowed to build a pipeline to Myanmar to export gas to Thailand. It was rejected outright.

American interest in Myanmar is rather thin because of the human rights problem. And China has already established its strong influence over that country. There are even rumors of Chinese military bases in SLORC's Myanmar. The central Asian gas is still a far cry for India. Iran is still out of bounds for the multinationals while the strong rivalry on the western front of India is yet to diminish. Bangladesh gas is the easy option for meeting a large part of India's energy requirements.

India is also one of the world's largest importer of Ammonia fertilizer. Our natural gas is ideal for manufacture of such fertilizer. In fact, I recall a scheme prepared as early as 1973 to set up such fertilizer plants and import iron ore to

feed a large steel mill using natural gas. A new industrial complex was proposed to be built somewhere near Chandpur so that cheap river transport could be used to export fertilizer on a cost and freight basis while importing iron ore as freight on board, thus reducing the cost of the basic raw material for the steel mill.

There is a renewed interest now for exploration and drilling of natural gas (possibly oil as well) in Bangladesh primarily because India is emerging as a huge energy market and that market is getting increasingly liberal and welcomes foreign investment. Obviously, big oil companies will be attracted and US foreign policy will always support them. Flag still follows the trade unless it is a serious human rights issue, as in Myanmar.

Given the nature of current world politics and global energy scenario, we cannot remain isolated on the simple plea that we must have enough gas for ourselves. Thereafter, we may decide if we should export or not. First let us establish what is the minimum level of reserve that we need for our own use and for how long? Second, how do we promote exploration and drilling in order to secure enough gas for our own use and then the excess for export? Third, how do we self-finance gas development? I think the third issue is most critical. We are seeking foreign direct investment for exploration and

drilling. Donors have refused financing since private sector funding could be made available. Government's own investment is practically zero for the purpose. This is one instance (perhaps the only one) where public sector agency like Petrobangla should be strengthened.

Why can't we cut down subsidy to loss-ridden public enterprises by, say 20 per cent, and invest Tk.500 crore per annum for oil and gas development in the most promising block?

Politicians 'Prepare' for Polls in India

sustained.

Janata Dal's Meltdown: Socialism's Loss, Not BJP's Gain

Praful Bidwai writes from New Delhi

Politically, what we are witnessing is not just a party split, but the virtual demise of India's

Socialist current. This is a setback for progressive causes; but strangely, it may not be a big

gain for the BJP. The Socialists first found organised expression in 1934 as a pressure-group

O the Janata Dal has split again — for the ninth time in as many years. many years. Singleton leaders without a base, such as Messrs Ram Bilas Paswan, Sharad Yadav and JH Patel, have decided to join the BJP's National Democratic Alliance.

The JD has been likened to the self-dividing amoeba. The analogy is both scientifically and politically inaccurate. The amoeba divides to multiply or reproduce itself, not to vanish.

as the JD seems to be doing. Politically, what we are witnessing is not just a party split, but the virtual demise of India's Socialist current. This column argues that this is a setback for progressive causes; but strangely, it may not be a big gain for the BJP. The Socialists first found organised expression in 1934 as a pressure-group within the Congress pushing for land reform, women's education, decentralisation, and secularism. The CSP's role in the 1942 "Quit India" movement was vi-

The Socialists had a limited but healthy impact on the Communists. Critical of Stalinism, they argued that democracy is central to socialism. In parts of semi-urban and rural India, they were the only Left current in existence. the sole source of modernist ideas. They inspired two generations of educationists, kisan activists, scholars and parliamentarians.

The Socialists were set to emerge as India's main Opposition in the 1950s - when they split between the Praja Socialist and Samyukta Socialist Parties. Splits became endemic to their movement. But it had great strengths. It produced some of our tallest intellectual-politicians and humanists: Lohia and Narendra Dev in the North, Jayaprakash Narayan and Samar Guha in

within the Congress pushing for land reform, women's education, decentralisation, and secularism. The CSP's role in the 1942 "Quit India" movement was vital. he East, Madhu Limaye and NG Goray in the West. These leaders made us aware of social and

caste injustice as few others did. The Socialists were perhaps too preoccupied with lofty goals and neglected nitty-gritty political and organisational matters. But they provided a healthy moral contrast to cynical, increasingly corrupt, Congress realpolitik.

Many Socialist leaders showed exemplary courage, conviction and eloquence. Rare was the politician who could match Lohia's brilliant social insights, HV Kamath's parliamentary skills, JP's dedication to Sarvodaya, or Goray's lucid writing.

Without such leadership, people like Karpoori Thakur, a barber by caste, or Placid D'Mello, Bombay's great dock unionist, or Ram Dhan, the Dalit leader, would not have found a voice. A historic tragedy of the Socialists was that they could not relate positively to the Communists, even within the available parameters. This in part derived from the Socialists' - largely justified - distaste for Stalinism, and in part from their not-so-justifiable - refusal to explore and expand the com-

mon ground. The Communists too were hostile to the Socialists' "pink" ideology, and suspicions of their connections with Western states and parties which had given up challenging capitalism. These differences became progressively irrelevant as the Communists increas-

ingly practised Social-democratic politics and gave up on insurrection. But a historic chance was lost.

In 1977, the Socialists, scattered between different groups. finally merged into the Janata Party. This meant abandoning their distinct identity. Their main partners then were the Jana Sanghis. In merging into the Janata, the Socialists acted in good faith, and expected the ex-Jana Sangh to merge fully too, by severing its links with the RSS. This never happened. The RSS was unyielding. Not a single Vajpayee-style "liberal" had the guts to defy it.

"Dual membership" killed the Janata. The history of the Socialists thereafter is a story of confusion, drift, demoralisation, disintegration. Many Socialists betrayed everything

they stood for: e.g. Messrs Chandrashekhar, Fernandes, and Nitish Kumar. They had no compunctions about collaborating, with rank communalists. Some others, like Mr Mulayam Singh and Laloo Prasad Yadav, have practised limited, largely secular, OBC

But many, like Mr Madhu Dandavate, Ms Mrinal Gore and Mr Jaipal Reddy, carry on the legacy, albeit on the margins. Now the worst of ex-Socialist individual operators are joining the NDA: Mr Sharad Yadav (without base or constituency), Mr Patel (discredited and directionless). Mr Paswan (long compromised with Samata). They are all electionlosers. This continues the disintegration of flotsam and jet-

The NDA merger is unlikely to make a huge electoral difference. But it is a setback to the cause of secularism. Three years ago, the BJP could find no allies and had to quit the Centre within 13 days. Now, many centrist parties are doing business with it. However, the entry of ex-Socialists into the NDA may not make things easy for the BJP. The merger is an initiative of the Vajpayee faction. After the Kargil "victory" - a questionable claim, as this column has argued this faction is waging a fierce internal power struggle.

Until recently, beginning 1984, Mr Vajpayee took no interest in party matters. Now he is messing with them. He approached Mr Patel over the heads of BJP central and state leaders. He decided to with-

draw support to Mr Bansi Lal. He promoted the Janata opportunists' NDA merger. Mr Vajpayee is exercising power without responsibility. His moves have caused deep resentment in BJP state units. which see Mr Patel and Mr Paswan as their rivals. They have aroused suspicions that he is trying to strengthen his own factional position by increasing the weight of non-BJP elements in the NDA. Mr Vajpayee isn't about to transform

it would be no surprise if the old sanghis gang up against and sabotage the newcomers. Mr Vajpayee has proved one thing: he is not above the BJP's petty factional politics. He is creating a personality cult around himself.

He is not above coterie raj run by fixers like Messrs Pramod Mahajan, NK Singh and Ranjan Bhattacharya. Nor is he above crony capitalism witness the telecom scandal. Mr Vajpayee has promoted totally narrow personal interests, thus aggravating the BJP's internal crisis. What course that crisis will be interesting to watch.

OPINION

Not MiG-29s, Buy F-22, if You Can!

'There is no such thing as an inevitable war. If war comes, it will be from failure of human wisdom." - Bonar

To the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, I have one earnest request: For heaven's sake, scrap that order for eight MiG-29s; instead order right away only one F-22, which is the state-of-the-art stealth fighter plane. There are ample reasons for my plea.

We were told by erudite military expert through the pages of Bangladesh's premiere news daily that to guarantee the sovereignty of Bangladesh and to deter any external threats we need to upgrade the aerial fighting machines of BAF to improve our combat readiness and do the job right. We were also sermonized by the retired Air Vice-Marshall Mumtaz Uddin Ahmed that \$ 115 million or \$125 million is the price tag for such guarantee. War machines are costly, he told us, and we have to accept the reality of the situation. In other words, the intelligentsia should mind their own business and leave the guarding and defending of the nation to the defence establishment. Quite a convincing

gestion here to the defence

Dr. A.H. Jaffor Ullah sovereignty of Bangladesh and to keep the azure sky above our head free from intruders. Mind you that our people may have to tighten their belts to defend the sovereignty of our country for

which an estimated three mil-

for the past month or so concerning the cost overruns of F-22 warplanes. The defence establishment of America, especially U.S. Airforce wants badly those F-22 planes. They want at this time about eight F-22 planes at the cost of \$ 1.2 billion. But guess what did happen. The U.S. Congress who had to approve the manufacturing of these planes through earmarking \$ 1.2 billion in nation's budget just said no. The defence contractor Lockheed Martin was stunned by this decision of the Congress. They have rarely faced this kind of opposition to a military programme of weaponry development.

velopment in the U.S? I think improve the educational infrastructure or say dredge the river beds to mitigate flooding due to over-siltation of Bangladesh's

major river system?

In this respect, I take a note of Professor Amartya K. Sen's thesis on poverty alleviation. He has always asserted that the poor and indigent of the world has no lobby to the body who allocates financial resources. Thus, every time, they lose out to get their fair share out of the national budget. This is so true for Bangladesh. Look at this MiG-29 purchase by Bangladesh. Who will be benefited by this purchase? Not the indigent of this impoverished nation. The defence community will be the absolute winner in Bangladesh. Of course, Russia will get their share too. The poor will lose out one more time to extract any amount from the exchequer's account. Thus, they are pitching the concept of "National Security" at the expense of the welfare of the poor and meek people who have no lobby whatsoever in Bangladesh's citadel of power. How pathetic it is that the politicians pay attention to the poor only during Is there any lesson for the election time. Once the elec-Bangladesh from this latest de- tion is over, the winning political party simply forgets them.

Isn't that true? Now that the purchase of MiG-29s became almost a contentious issue in Bangladesh, some political analysts are coming into the fore and giving free but spurious advice to Bangladesh's defence planner to purchase SAM (Surface to Air Missiles) instead of the combatready warplanes. These experts also subscribe to the idea that a country's sovereignty should be guarded with life; cost shouldn't be a factor at all! May I remind them that the general welfare of the masses should be the prime reason a country is carved out in the first place? When Bangladesh was established in 1971 at a colossal cost of three million human sacrifices it was done because Pakistan was dictating economic, cultural, political lives of our people. At the core of Awami League's Six-Point formula, which became the blue print for provincial autonomy movement during late

1960s, there was the issue of economic freedom of Bangalees. How can we now forget the welfare issue of our general masses? These free advice givers — practically give a damn to the welfare issue of our com-

Our politicians and the defence community leaders should come to their senses. They should follow the lead of the U.S. Congress. If, they have realized that spending money to develop faster and meaner warplanes is of no interest for the world peace then, why can't our Prime Minister see the light

of the day? It is about time Bangladesh should scarp this idea of beefing up defence (for how much can you do; in fact?) To gobble up the hope and aspirations of 125 million by annexing any part of Bangladesh by our neighbours from three sides is a farfetched idea of a fertile brain. The country should focus on building the human capital. We should never forget for a moment that Bangladesh's biggest asset is her people. Let us develop the human skills let us improve the lot of common people as opposed to the lot of a few chosen

Finally, the intellectuals of the nation should become the vanguard of our struggle to improve the economic conditions of our masses. If they have proved that they can stop chopping down of a single tree in Usmany Uddyan by the government forces, then this time also they can come into the fore to establish the democratic rights of the common people. Bangladesh is going through a transition at this time. The ordinary folks are realizing the power of participatory democracy. They are showing extraordinary courage and tenacity. The politicians and the groups with personal stake are realizing that their power is on the wane. The progress in Information Technology will empower common masses with knowledge never seen before. We are already witnessing a sea change in opinion polls

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Mig is big!

Sir, A big fight over MiGs is going on in the local press. There are several streams of thinking. One is 'Mig is big'. While those whose empathy lie with the poor (economically impoverished, if you please) are more at home with the option 'reduce the big poor to small poor' (if that is the right expression), some say get the missile message, and keep up with the Joneses, that is compete with India and Pakistan (on the side, and through the back door, if you can). One MiG 29 down and it is \$15 million (or more) gone; but to replace a trained dead pilot (the HR factor) takes 15 years. The price of quality is priceless, while the price for peace is also nearly priceless.

Where to get the dollars? Through fuel pipelines across South Asia. We do not have enough gas to export. Doesn't matter. Pipe Myanmar gas to India (gassing must be popular there) via Bangladesh through a Bangladeshi company, and earn huge commission. If it is too much to swallow, sell off and get a fatter price (as Shell bought up another foreign operator working in Sylhet). It is globalisation at work, through the micro(scopic) end.

What is the difference between a micro and macro power? The two ends of the same equipment (a telescope become a microscope, and vice versa). We have the infrastructure to go out armed with sticks and clubs on the streets and demonstrate the might of the people - the cake has to be cut

into too many thin slices to meet the huge demand for power at the people's level. The Finance Minister did not dare to impose VAT or Development Surcharge on processions; then we would not have been amongst the last ten in the list of HD Index, and buying MiG 29s would not have been protested.

Arming for peace would be easier if we strike oil. There is plenty of oil in the corridors of power, but it cannot be fed into metallic machines. But the pollution caused is worse, as the poison spreads even to those who do no. . "take of it. Some foreign experts advised us that we can build a Jamuna bridge every year if we reduced our combined systems losses in the country to 10-15 per cent. That means we could have squadrons of MiG 31/33s.

According to one-ended economic pundits, the effects of MiG could be mitigated through empowerment of women; where the system loss is running 49 per cent down (one per cent have earning power?). These are high-flying theories, at heights where MiG 29s fly. We at the flooded and muddy levels down below expect the MiG sonic booms would not spoil our daal-

It is suspected by a section of the local press that the naval frigates we are buying also smell fishy. Should not be surprising, as our per capita consumption of fish (not expenditure on purchase of fish) is very Alif Zabr

logic, isn't that right? However, I have a small sug-

planner of Bangladesh. Why do you go for a military technology that was developed in the 1980s? Why not go for the latest and best aerial warfare technology when money is not the issue? Mind you that a single F-22 stealth bomber might cost Bangladesh a hefty \$ 200 million, which is about 20 per cent of the national budget. This, however, reminds me an incidence in the early 1970s. In 1974, when India blasted an experimental nuclear bomb for the first time ever, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, proclaimed to his nervous countrymen that Pakistan will develop nuclear bomb technology even if it means eating grass. I suppose, the PM should come forward flanked by Army Chief of Staff and Air-Vice Marshall

on her side to tell the nation

that it is time to invest in war-

planes to safeguard the

lions have given their lives in 1971. Do you think our common folks would go along with this notion of country's top military brass and the Prime Minister? Like Bangladesh, in America also, a debate has been raging

that there are plenty of take home messages for us. For one thing, there is a growing realization in the world community that we have entered a New World Order where each country - small or large - has to respect each other's territorial rights. Then, the major weapons developer of the world, the U.S., is also keenly aware that this quest for new and improved war gadgets needs to be moderated or else the world will become a dangerous place to live in, if it had not become so already. The chief weapons developer of the world, the U.S., has realized that the money earmarked for military weapons development when diverted to other sectors of the economy may pay a big-ger dividend in the long run. Bangladesh should also think likewise. Imagine for a moment what would happen in Bangladesh if \$ 120 million were infused in the economy to