The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali Dhaka, Wednesday, December 1, 1999

Black Smoke Gets Deadlier

TX/E are breathing poison in Dhaka's streets ev-VV eryday like environmental prisoners condemned to a packed death cell. The ministry and directorate of environment, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Dhaka City Corporation and the traffic police authority give three hoots to public curses because they can blame each other indulging as they are in an act of collective irresponsibility. This is a new disease afflicting whatever little we have had by way of environmental concern. The authority at the apex seems to be the ministry of environment and the nodal agency the directorate of environment (DOI); but because they need assistance at the operative level from BRTA, DCC and the police who belong to different ministries it has basically been a question of interministerial coordination that has remained unaddressed. Then we should have had a coordinating task force at the field level with a clear-cut division of duties, so that responsibility for any fatlure could be promptly fixed with no agency eluding the accountability grip. But all these basic requirements were overlooked because of the fact that tackling environmental pollution has been at the bottom of the government's list of agenda.

Let's go over the bunch of decisions forgotten or pushed to oblivion almost as quickly as these were taken to reduce environmental pollution in the city. The DOI's campaign against black smokebelching vehicles to phase them out remains a non-starter after a year and a half since its launch. There is no further news on conversion of twostroke engines into four-stroke engines, stoppage of import of leaded petrol and improvement in the supply of gas cylinders to car operators. What has happened to the ADB-funded project for five Vehicles Inspection Centres taken up two and a half years ago? The idea of having 18 mobile vehicle inspection teams has fallen through as well. The instances of criminal neglect of minimum environmental standards can go on and on. In our considered view, the best starting-point for a change in the situation would be to phase out the defective and polluting vehicles in the government sector first to set an example for the private sector to follow.

It is getting lethal with the approaching winter as the smoke and dew spread out blankets of five poisonous gases — Carbonmonoxide, Hydrocarbon, Sulphurdioxide, Nitrogen and Lead. Either we act now or we perish.

A Dangerous Crossing

I EGLIGENCE of the gateman at one of the I capital's busiest railway crossings has once again led to a serious accident. Yet again it was sheer stroke of good fortune that none got killed after the express train had hit the two private cars and a BRTC bus involved in the mishap. Monday's incident reminds us of a similar accident that took place only a few months back, incidentally just a few paces away at the level-crossing near Kawran Bazar. On that occasion, a Unicef official miraculously survived after an express train had rammed against the front of his car. In both cases, the gateman on duty forgot to pull the barrier down to the busy flow of traffic when the trains neared the crossings. Two successive accidents of a similar nature raises serious concern over the way Bangladesh Railway has been discharging its

Railway authorities were very prompt to launch a probe into the incident and the police, on their part, detained the gateman, too. The measures, however, inspire very little confidence in us; for we have hardly seen an investigation of this nature reach any conclusion and the authorities meting out punishment against the guilty. To our knowledge, no measure has been taken as yet against the person responsible for the previous accident at Kawran Bazar crossing. While we would like to be proved wrong on this, could we ask the authorities to review the structural design of the railway crossing that seems to be so accident-prone?

responsibility at that railway crossing.

Admittedly, Bangladesh Railway is beset with multifarious problems, ranging from sagging revenue return to dilapidating carriage and tracks to pathetic on-board services to what not. As we understand, redressal of these problems requires a time-consuming infrastructural overhaul. However, at this point of time, we are faced with a situation which needs immediate administrative intervention. Next time, such a slip may entail heavy casualty and we might have many dead bodies to count.

Gas to the North

A T long last natural gas supply has started, in a Avery limited way though, to the western bank of the Jamuna. Sirajganj, once a vital and thriving river port and an important trading centre of Bengal, has had the honour of lighting the first gas burner.

Since the discovery of natural gas in abundance in the eastern region of the country and creation of the first gas company for its sale, transmission and distribution in 1964, it has taken long 35 years to get this cheap and clean fuel to the northwestern region of the country. If Titas Gas could be brought into Dhaka and its surrounding areas in three years, why should it have taken such a painfully long time to offer the benefit of nature to the people of the northern Bengal? The answer is very simple. There was hardly any sincere attempt by successive governments to ensure that gas reaches those backward parts of the country. It was an irony of fate that when towns like Sirajganj and Pabna had street lights and regular power supply to domestic and industrial consumers, many of the towns east of the Jamuna were virtually plunged in darkness and using kerosene lanterns. These towns and many more gradually reaped the benefit of natural gas while the once more advanced towns in the west suffered in silence.

But taking gas to the northern region alone will not change the life of the people there. A planned strategy is needed for a proper and fruitful utilisation of this valuable natural resource to improve industry and trade and, most importantly, power generation capacity in the region. That's what we must now concentrate on so that the gas supply can fuel development in the region. We congratulate the government on taking gas to North Bengal.

WTO Conference: Issues at Stake

Launching a successful trade round would be a powerful way to reinvent the WTO's authority and viability in a complex world. For this to happen, the two biggest partners in the WTO — the US and European Union — must show some flexibility in their attitude. The developing countries must be convinced that they would gain from a trade round.

round of trade negotiations. Both the World Trade ing a ruckus in full view of the Organisation (WTO) and city of local and foreign media. Seattle are bracing themselves

Although the protesters from different organisations have different agenda, they have two things in common - one is their determination to stop or delay the launch of a trade round; the other is their conviction to achieve their goals by any means necessary.

For its part. Seattle is hoping to come out of this conference with its image as a rapidly growing friendly city intact. The WTO, on the other hand, is trying to break the stalemate over the agenda for the new trade rounds and thus present a positive case for itself and the future of trade liberalisation.

Among the contentious issues that are likely to be discussed in Seattle for the next round of trade talks, the following deserve special mention - agriculture, implementation, industrial tariffs, anti-dumping provisions. and textiles.

Bitter conflicts over these issues pit the US against its own allies, rich nations against poor. and sometimes neighbour against neighbour - all in

complex ways. On agriculture, the fifteennation Cairns Group of farm producing countries, along with the US, would like to set a time frame for ending all subsidies aimed at boosting agricultural

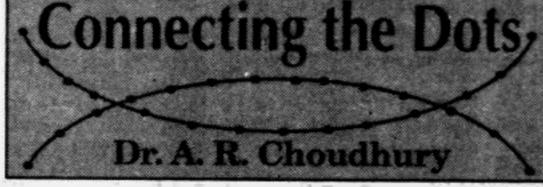
production. The European Union, backed by Japan, Korea and several other European nations are ready to talk about subsidies but refuse to make

any advance commitments. On implementation, most developing countries would like to have more time for implementing market opening accords and reforms on intellectual property and investment in export industries that they took

expected on issues relating to dumping. Japan, Mexico. and a number of other big emerging economies want to reopen the Uruguay Round's anti-dumping agreement to tighten rules governing how WTO countries can react when they fear that others are exporting goods to them at prices below production

Japan and Brazil, among others, are accusing the US of





on at the end of the Uruguay Round. But the developed countries flatly refused to grant any additional time.

Regarding industrial tariffs. the European Union wants a full-scale review of all tariffs on manufactured goods. On the other hand, the US, Australia and New Zealand want a quick agreement on an "Accelerated Tariff Liberalisation (ATL)" initiative on eliminating customs duties on eight specific product areas, from toys and glass to

timber and fish derivatives. Hard negotiations are also

abusing these rules by unjustifi ably imposing anti-dumping measures to protect its own industries, especially steel, from

competition. The US obviously denies these charges and refuses to renegotiate the Uruguay accord. The US is taking the stand that the Uruguay accord is a "single act" package and cannot now be picked apart to renegotiate the anti-dumping provision or the time frame provision for implementing the accord.

The developing countries, concerned about the effect of

China's apparently impending admission to the WTO, would like the US and the European Union to open up their markets for clothing and apparel exports. Most of these countries have a legitimate grievance against many of the rich countries. They need more market access; the richer countries are

loath to open further. Like many other issues relating to the Uruguay Round, the developed countries want to stick to the implementation of the Round's textile agreement to its deadline, 2005. The poorer nations justifiably fear that once China enters the WTO within the next few months, its products will capture a large share of the international market and sweep the products from other poor countries aside.

Also on the agenda in Seattle are such multi-billion dollar trade topics as biotechnology, intellectual property rights. banking, insurance, telecommunications, labour rights, and

e-commerce. Launching a successful trade round would be a powerful way to reinvent the WTO's authority and viability in a complex world. For this to happen, the two biggest partners in the WTO the US and European Union must show some flexibility in their attitude. The developing countries must be convinced that they would gain from a trade round. The best way is to further open the markets in the US and European Union. Yet they are balking at eliminating tariffs on imports from the poorest countries, while the US is refusing to discuss its restrictive anti-dumping policies.

Worse still, the US and European Union want to introduce labour rights into the WTO, arguing that public opinion in their countries would otherwise reject freer trade. However, the argument that living standards in developing countries can be raised only through linking labour standards to trade is quite misleading. Almost ninety per cent of the labour force in the developing countries are unorganised. A small portion of the labour force belongs to organised labour unions. Of the unorganised labour force, a small minority are involved in production for export. Thus any linkage of labour standards with the WTO would be point-

Moreover, recent UNDP Human Development Report has shown that more than 1.5 billion people around the world live on less than one dollar a day and continue to survive in misery. Any discussion on labour standards will not help them, unless the developed countries find new ways of financial assistance to the poor countries. In this context, the issue of debt relief for the poor countries is worth considering more seri-

WTO vs Activists: Showdown in Seattle

Naeem Mohaiemen writes from New York

CTIVISTS are calling it the "Battle in Seattle". On ✓ November 30, representatives of 135 nations gathered in Seattle for the 3rd Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Hosted by the Clinton Administration, this round is billed as the "millennial" round and intended to be a crowning moment for the WTO. But as the Conference approached, the WTO became ensnared in one controversy after another. For instance, on November 23, WTO officials failed to reach consensus on a draft declaration after 15 months of negotiations. But looming large on the streets of Seattle was a much bigger challenge, threatening to dwarf the disagreements among international powerbrokers.

S you are reading this ar-

ticle, trade ministers

A ticle, trade ministers from 134 countries aro-

und the world are meeting in

the rain-soaked city of Seattle to

begin discussion about a new

for several tumultuous days as

the images of both are put at

bickering over the areas to be

included in the next round of

trade talks. The developing na-

tions, who account for more

than two-thirds of WTO mem-

bers, are justifiably calling for

the complete implementation of

the accords agreed upon under

the Uruguay Round of talks be-

fore opening the next trade

success, the participants must,

therefore, agree to complete the

unfinished works of the

Uruguay Round, add new sec-

tors for negotiation in the next

round, and set firm deadlines

embracing itself for a different

type of problem. Thousands of

protesters who are upset about

what they call unchecked global

capitalism have come to the city

to register their displeasure with

the WTO. Protesters, from

about 800 non-governmental

organisations, ranging from

large labour unions and envi-

ronmental groups to human

rights activists and development

lobbies, such as, Free Burma

Coalition and ACT-UP are rais-

Seattle, on the other hand, is

for completion of talks.

For the WTO session to be a

round.

The WTO members are

The WTO conference in Seattle has become a catalyst for a massive mobilization of activists from all corners of the globe. They see the WTO as an unaccountable global trade body that threatens worldwide human rights, labour unions and the environment. The activists who descended in tens of thousands on Seattle are broadly leftist and progressive in orientation, but their microinterests are diverse - covering the gamut of environmental, economic and social justice advocacy, labour unions, human rights activists, farmer unions, feminists, churches, and anticorporate agitators. The people who have traveled here from all over the world to confront the WTO "power cabal" include organizers such as India's Vandana Shiva, Mexico's underground rebel Zapatista movement, Anita Roddick of England's Body Shop, Yash Tandon of International South Group Network, Students for Free Tibet, and Sanjay Gopal of Na-

tional Alliance of People's When Seattle was first chosen, one of the intentions was to locate the WTO meet away from the traditional hotbeds of anti-WTO agitation. Europe, already stinging from violent protests against Monsanto, Shell, Unocal, McDonalds and other symbols of global corporate power, was considered off-limits. Only a few months back, a French sheep farmer Jose Bove had become a national hero when he attacked a McDonalds in Paris to protest "American neo-colonialism". On June 18, London saw violent anti-globalization protests, causing major property damage. Latin America was equally volatile on this issue. Seattle, the home of Microsoft and Boeing, was considered a safe meeting place for the millennial round. The WTO organizers forgot to

take into account two things. First, the Internet allowed activists to organize on a global level, transporting knowledge and experience from the European/South protests to Seattle. Second, Seattle is one of the most heavily unionized American cities — with 120,000 union members in Seattle and more than 400,000 members in Washington State. The AFL-CIO national union body, already stinging from what they saw as the Democrats' abandonment of labour issues in the effort to "fast-track" WTO. mounted a heavy campaign focused on November 30. Throw into this mix the demands of labor, environmental and human rights activists from all corners of the globe, and you had a showdown that threatened to shut down the entire WTO proceedings. So volatile was the mix on the streets that Seattle Council member Brian Derdowski told reporters the

music and dancing combined with a sharp political message. By using 12-foot street puppets that represented various multinationals in the act of destroying indigenous people and environment, the group was forcing networks like CNN to give coverage to the dissenting voices. Other media-savvy activists like AdBusters created sleekly packaged anti-WTO TV advertisements, sending them out to organizations across the US to get them aired on local television stations. Other grassroots organizations like AgitProp were taking inspiration from Gandhi, staging "Direct Action" events on November 30, including a call for people to "Walkout" from their jobs or school to block the streets of Seattle. Seattle's fighting spirit has spread to regional protests across the country. In New York student protesters have besieged the immensely popular GAP clothing store, protesting the company's policy of manufacturing clothes in sweatshop, conditions. The theme of all

to stop US purchases from corporations doing business with Burma's military junta, would be in violation of the WTO. It isn't a far-fetched scenario to imagine Bangladesh's attempt to stop dumping of toxic varieties of food crop (as with the recent wheat case) being challenged by the WTO.

Environmental Standards: Under WTO, global companies will be incented to open factories in locations where environmental law enforcement is lax, so they can pollute in ways that would be unacceptable in their home countries. Combined with World Bank and IMF pressure to pay off loans through export earnings, this will propel LDC's into a "race to the bottom", where countries will compete to have the most lax environmental standards in order to attract the next Nike factory. A few years ago, the World Bank's Lawrence Summers (presently US Treasury dents: "Scientists from the Secretary) was engulfed in con- [American-led] Human Genome troversy for a memo in which . Project have even come and

ization. Pro-WTO businessmen point at the US in the early 19th century, when similarly brutal conditions existed in American factories. But they fail to realize that, it was campaigns against these sweatshops. mounted by American labour, that forced the modernization of these factories. The WTO can enforce laws so that no such campaign, whether international or domestic, can be waged against sweatshops.

Bio Piracy: The WTO's TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) allows multinationals to claim patents for agricultural and medicinal knowledge of indigenous people. Companies have already secured patents for traditional medicines, human DNA and indigenous methods of growing food. At a recent WTO Teach-In at New York University, Panamanian activist Taira Stanley told stuhe suggested that rich nations taken the blood of indigenous

WTO, which ruled that the EU had to allow import of the beef, or face sanctions.

Human Rights: WTO rules require all member countries be treated equally, even if some are led by undemocratic governments. The "Free Burma' campaign has already been affected by these regulations. making it harder for individual countries to maintain boycotts against the military junta for human rights violations. The long-running struggle for Tibetan freedom from Chinese rule will also be hard-hit by the US success in securing a deal to gain WTO membership for China. As one of the most powerful members of the WTO, China will almost certainly block any attempts at making human rights part of trade agreements.

Although the term "Anti-WTO" is loosely used to describe the diverse coalition of activists who are protesting the present round of WTO talks, antiglobalization is not a term that can be used against them. In fact, in its international and multiracial nature, in its successful use of the Internet to organize globally, this coalition is truly a global movement. The anti-WTO movement recognizes that Globalization is inevitable and has, in the past, often helped to improve the lot of developing countries. There are many positive examples of trade helping to develop LDCs and also fostering human rights (as with England's BODY SHOP). What the activists are protesting is the WTO's attempt to de-link trade from demands for human rights, democracy, environmental protection and the right to enjoy a working wage. Above all, they are protesting the WTO's complete lack of accountability to the nations and the people it affects

The movement is focused on reducing the power of global capitalist market a subordinate lennium" round is over, the

The real challenge for activists lies ahead. Seattle has provided a visible venue for organizing but after the "Millennium" round is over, the WTO body will go back to closed-door sessions, away from the public eye. That is when activists will have to rise to the challenge, to keep this movement going even in the absence of major, watershed events.

WTO meet was "the greatest security risk this region has ever known." John Kinsman, a Wisconsin dairy farmer travelling to Seattle to join the protest told The Nation magazine. think they thought they could put this meeting in the US and nobody would care. But they're going to find out that an awful lot of us do care.'

Inspired by the example of

guerilla street theater, anti-WTO activists were combining the traditional speeches, leaflets and seminars with more alternative, "theatrical" forms of protest. Throughout November, an "international caravan" of environmentalists, human rights workers and women's rights activists from countries such as Bolivia, Israel, Tibet, Panama and Nigeria had been travelling across America on its way to Seattle. Along the way they stopped at 18 towns to host anti-WTO teach-ins and train local grassroots groups. Caravan sponsor Michael Morrill told reporters, "In India and Europe tens of thousands of people demonstrated against the WTO. Seattle is where America will catch up. Reclaim The Streets was another activist network that was organizing "carnivals of resistance": street parties with

the protests is the same, to draw attention to the WTO, so that it can no longer continue its deliberations in conditions of semi-secrecy with no accountability to democratic governments or people.

The WTO's militant freetrader Michael Moore has dismissed this opposition as grumpy, geriatric communists". President Clinton said. "Every group in the world with an ax to grind is going to Seattle to demonstrate". But looking at the position papers being circulated by activists, it is difficult to be dismissive or patronizing about their concerns. Here are just a few key issues that anti-WTO activists are focusing on:

Democracy and Sovereignty: WTO rules supercede domestic laws. Any laws that place worker's rights, food safety, environmental protection and cultural heritage above free trade can now be judged illegal by the WTO. In the United States alone, California has 95 laws that are. "WTO-illegal". The state's ban on a poisonous chemical, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), is already being challenged under NAFTA's "investor protections" act. State laws such as the "Burma selectivepurchase" laws, which attempt

export their polluting materials to poor countries, in exchange for financial compensation. Now the WTO will indirectly implement Summers' suggestion. As pressure mounts in the North to raise environmental standards, polluting factories will gladly move their factories to the Third World where they can continue business as usual. Bhopal is the most extreme result of such a policy, but gradual long-term pollution is an even more deadly, and invisible, killer.

Global Sweatshops: There is now a full-throated campaign in the United States and Europe against buying clothes that were made using sweatshop or child labour. In the US, students have been particularly powerful on this issue, launching highly effective campaigns that have bloodied Nike, Banana Republic and many others — forcing them to improve the nightmarish conditions in their overseas factories. The WTO would make such campaigns impossible, as they would be considered barriers to "fair trade". In this effort, the WTO finds allies among the LDC's. Business lobbies within LDCs have claimed that sweatshops are an essential price to pay on the path to industrial-

people and patented it, because we have immunities that you don't." Similar patent claims have already been made for quinoa (high-protein grain developed by indigenous Quechya and Aymara people of Bolivia and Peru), fish-killing ingredient (Amazon). Una de gato (indigenous medicine of Peru) and numerous other indigenous products. Health: Genetically modi-

fied food is at the centre of an intense trade war between Europe and the United States. Monsanto's genetically modified "Frankenstein food" has been the cause of widespread protests in Europe. Emboldened by European opposition to Monsanto, LDCs have also blocked attempts to market Monsanto products elsewhere, including Bangladesh (where UBINIG and others opposed Grameen Bank's partnership with Monsanto). Stung by criticism. Monsanto has withdrawn the "terminator" gene from the market. But WTO could turn the tide in favour of the "Frankenstein" food-makers. Recently the EU banned the import of artificial hormone-fed beef from America. The US government. on behalf of National Cattleman's Beef Association and Monsanto brought a case to the

corporations, and making the part of society again - so that basic social values take precedence over the values of the market. The real challenge for activists lies ahead. Seattle has provided a visible venue for organizing - but after the "Mil-WTO body will go back to closed-door sessions, away from the public eye. That is when activists will have to rise to the challenge, to keep this movement going even in the absence of major, watershed events

directly.

The article was written on the eve of November 30.

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.

Fact and discretion

Sir, SK Hasina (the PM) is reported to have said while meeting the pressmen that what she said about the personal life of Begum Khaleda Zia (the Leader of the Official Opposition) was fact, and she had the right to comment (one a public figure: as this piece of criticism is on a Prime Minister's questionable conduct).

However, she overlooked several tactful points: when to differentiate between fact and discretion. She is holding a high public office, and what she says publicly (and in the Par-liament, which is officially recorded), cannot be dismissed as ordinary drawing room gossip or blank fire. high dignitaries do not generally provide unnecessary information at the wrong time and place; especially one which could be classified as character assassination of a public figure. A public figure is not expected to stoop

down to malice and viciousness, and that too against a lady; and, what is more surprising, by a lady who happens to be holding the post of the Prime Minister!

Abul M Ahmad Dhaka

A trigger-happy society

Sir, The regime is spending too much time on politics, and ignoring the alarming symp-toms of a changing and triggerhappy society. It seems the gun has become an omnipotent weapon for solving all the problems of life. This is a distorted philosophy of life. Firms corrections must be applied from the very top, with the cooperation and coordination of the prominent citizens.

Thousands of unauthorised firearms are in the hands of irresponsible persons, and there appears to be no hesitation in using the same against unpro-

tected individuals going about their errands in daily life (the latest is the shooting of a father while he was escorting his child to school in a rickshaw). We saw the wild. Wild West in the movies; now we have the Wild Wild East in reality, in real time, in Bangladesh.

The politicians must talk about how the negative elements are behaving and announce master plans for deterrent punishment. But, alas, the very police is unreliable, and has lost its proper image (safeguard of the Law). There are severe erosion and breakdowns in the normal system which works invisibly in a civic society. The government's performance will be judged by the lapse in the routine security system available in a society. We are right in the midst of the Age of Indiscipline.

A Husnain Dhaka

trust Sir, It is regrettable that ev-Convention hall

for NAM Summit Sir, It is good to learn that the government has decided to shift the site of the convention centre for NAM Summit from Osmani Uddyan to Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. But there is even a better place than Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. A few acres of land north of Bijoy Sarani

where there is a vegetables garden and a small one-storied army museum could be the ideal place for the convention centre. It seems that the land belongs to the army. The place is centrally located and is close to the Jatiya Sangsad.

Army authorities may not like the proposal for obvious reason but the government should act in national interest. The Prime Minister, who is also in charge of the Defence Ministry, should think over it. By doing this, we can save valuable land in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. I hope this suggestion will not fall on deaf ears.

Md Nasim DOHS, Dhaka.

Non-government teachers' welfare

ery government has been churning out commitments to implement non-government teachers' welfare trust but none of them has done it. Perhaps no one will. It's a kind of duplicity. Whenever Teacher's Association goes for agitation, then government declares something in favour of them to stop their

programmes. On the other hand, unlike

the students, our teacher community is more humble and gentle. As a result they believe the commitment of the government. But later on, the be-

come frustrated.

We know that former President HM Ershad sanctioned Tk. 30 core for non-government teachers, Khaleda Zia gave Tk 20 crore and Sheikh Hasina has given 20 core. Not only that, 2 per cent is cut from the every teacher's account for this welfare trust. But where is the implementation?

Md Nurul Islam Koliakair Degree College Kaliakoir, Gazipur

'Villagers' sufferings

Sir, Bramman Khara, Chhotra, Bagmara, Barkmka, Ashara, Premu, Fagunda, Nabiabad, Bagur and Jafrabad are some villages of Debidwer thana under Comilla district. These are ten to twelve kilometres away from thana headquarters. But there is no communication facilities between these villages and thana headquarter. On the other hand, these villages are only two to three kilometres away from Chandina thana headquarter. Villagers of these villages have to go to thana headquarter for

many purposes. We face problems to report the violences occurred, to the thana headquarter only due to distance. That is why, offences like dacoities, thefts, etc. occur frequently in these localities. On the other hand, if these villages would belong to Chandina thana then sufferings of the villagers would lessen in many respects.

I humbly draw the attention of the authority concerned to this fact and pray for taking instant measures to join these villages with Chandina thana which could curtail sufferings of the villagers.

Faruk Ahmed Bramman Khara Chhotona Debidwer, Comilla.

Indignant people

Sir. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina failed miserably in her attempt to belittle the Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia by her abusive words in the closing session of the JS. In fact, it acted like a boomerang. People do not want to see their PM speaking like that. They want someone who is poised and sophisticated, who has control over words and deeds.

Nur Jahan Chittagong