## The Daily Star

Founder-Editor : Late S. M. Ali Dhaka, Friday, January 14, 2000

Crime: The Insidious

Destroyer

Our political leaders have acquired a passion for keeping their antennae high on the diatribe of each other and very low indeed on the field-situation and public disenchantment with it. So engrossed are they in running each other down or personally vilifying and undercutting one another that during most of their waking hours they are basically blowing some hot air around. Resultantly, they are getting very little time to introspect and meditate. So, they are missing out on that crucial slot for an objective fermentation of ideas that would have helped them change their course for the better, for the positive and for the desirable.

What is even worse is that they are hell-bent upon turning their negative words into deeds by letting off roars of all kinds: "marathon hartals as never before" versus "resistance come what may." This is exacting a heavy price by not allowing the atmosphere to acquire a minimal congeniality needed for the keenly-awaited political dialogue to take off.

With such compulsive obsessions getting the better of their best judgement they remain absolutely blind-folded to the stark reality that something menacing is happening beyond their immediate world. Crimes have started making a minced meat of the vitals of the society, polity, institutions and the value system as a whole without our politicians realising how much so.

In their volume, tentacular spread and pernicious effect crimes have outstripped all previous records. So much so that the processes of democracy, administration, economy, development, education, service-delivery are gravely threatened by their ever increasing incidence and morbidity. The political ground is shifting underneath us not so much as a direct result of the political unrest as due to the crowding out of the otherwise pressing law and order agenda from our list of priorities.

In our context, political criminality and social criminality have become indistinguishable from each other. And, as if to make the situation much worse for us, they are reinforcing each other in a way so very typical of us. When everything is seen through the political prism partisan ghosts are bound to be seen all around. So it is not just a political threat or a social threat, it is, in fact, assuming the veritable character of a lawlessness and ungovernable situation in which no government, AL or BNP, can hope to find it easy to func-

Why do we think we are teetering at the edge of survival? The reason why we feel so is because crime is an insidious destroyer. It denudes from within and burrows a whole system into a state of atrophy. Crime is such canker in the body-politic that it can be likened, in a manner of speaking, to the AIDS scourge in the African continent where most civilised institutions seem now threatened by its rapid-fire proliferation.

So, let's say this to our politicians as full-throatedly as we are capable of: For God's sake, do not look at crime as a partisan issue but treat it as a political and social question touching on the very survivability of the system our Constitution stands for.

## Bangladesh Politics in the Y2K Generation

by M. Rashiduzzaman

Will there be a new breed of politicians in the Y2K generation? Imagination can

was visiting Washington. D.C. soon after she had become the Prime Minister in 1996, a young lady of Bangladeshi descent, I am told asked her a portentous question at a public meeting: "Do you know that if you live by the sword, you also die by the sword? You came to power riding the crest of hartal and protest, don't you fear that you could also face such a tide of political unrest?" I was not at that gathering, and I cannot vouch for the exact wording of that prophetic question to Sheikh Hasina. But that apprehension may hold the key to the future polities of the Y2K generation that is long out of the crib and kicking in Bangladesh. Except the hype that goes with it, there is no way to precisely calculate the political future of the mil-

lennial generation although

one could make projections of

the likely events. I saw an

abundance of such spinning in

HEN Sheikh Hasing

the last few weeks. The human inventiveness in politics, in practice and imagination, is limited - during the last 2000 plus years, people have toyed only with a few forms of government while physics, and chemistry, electronics and communication technologies have made astronomical advances. Aristotle offered only two qualitative measurements for government - good and bad, and quantitatively, the Greek philosopher classified them as a govern ment by one (good monarchy or a dictatorship), a few (aristocracy or an oligarchy) and by many (democracy or anarchyl. Neither Plato nor Aristotle liked democracy. Because in their understanding, democracy tries to make a donkey an elephant by (the majority) calling a donkey an elephant Both of those philosophers preferred governance by a "few good men". Things have changed since then — we prefer democracy not because it is the perfect form of government, but it is the most desirable one since it is more (hopefully!) corrigible than the leadership of

In the last (virtual) three decades of the last millennium. Bangladesh has in turn tested governance by one (single charismatic leader), a few (martial law government), and many (parliamentary government) - we have been shifting political gears as nervously as the excited but inexperienced automobile driver. We have seen a chaotic Bangladesh at the dawn of its separation from Pakistan; still a parliamentary form of government was in place until its sudden transformation into an authoritarian regime in 1975. But that was followed by the bloody coups and counter coups unparallel in South Asia although we could still claim to be better off than Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo, Haiti, and Indonesia, to name a lew among the apocalyptic spots around the world. We saw martial law, and then the military

get foot loose but let us not expect a completely different kind of politicians in the near future. The quintessential lawyer-politicians will yield the remaining of their ground to the new business groups, and such activists who can organize hartals or who can counter them. The influence of the moneyed class in Bangladesh politics, irrespective of the denominations, is palpable, and the Y2K politicians will even be more sautéed in money. hardly inspire many beyond us not lorget that most

turned into civilian regimes, one of which was vociferously rejected in 1991 for an about turn to the Westminster form of government. That's an epigrammatic but not an unfair summation of Bangladesh politics - may I add that the Y2K generation will surely carry the baggage of the past. The calendarical change to a new century/millennium does not dramatically alter the political inheritance.

The impasse between the opposition and the ruling party is not likely to break - one side is not ready to yield to the other. In fact, the BNP-led alliance has greeted the new millennium with more strikes, and the governing party is planning to go ahead with the local elections in the teeth of the opposition resistance. The government and the opposition fronts are out to "teach" each other a lesson! I fear that the hangover from those opposition-boycotted local polls, if they are held in the coming weeks, will last much longershan the hangover from the 31 December night. That's the troubling prospect in the weeks and months to come. which few could ignore. Not even the most dedicated followers of Sheikh Hasina expect tranquillity in the coming months of the millennium. Neither the Awami League nor the BNP-led alliance is thinking beyond their immediate future - as a matter of habit, few ordinary politicians think beyond the next election. But no more a single leader will be treated with hypnotic reverence, and no single party will be considered the "natural inheritor" of power in Bangladesh. The old hyperbole of "pro-liberation" versus "anti-liberation", will

the ardent partisans. Sadly, that split could continue as before unless we stop using history as a single cookie-cutting mould to divide the civil society into "us" against "them".

Bangladesh emerged as the effective two-large-parties system as a result of the 1991 and 1996 elections — a rare achievement except in a handful of democratic countries. But that opportunity has been missed for which the Awami League, more than the BNP, shoulders the burden. By launching an unprecedented campaign and fomenting a bureaucratic rebellion against an elected government for the alleged by-election fraud, the Awami League set up a bad precedent in 1995-96 that is now exploding on its face in 2000. The BNP-led antagonists are parading the streets and mobilizing forces to oust Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina the same way she had forced Khaleda Zia to step down from office. Arguably, the Awami League could again do the same if the BNP-led coalition returns to power. So even the most optimistic BNP leaders may not have much to rejoice. This future cascade of tit for tat is not difficult to imagine! Irrespective of the possible winners and losers in the months or even years to come, the institutional weakness of politics is most likely to deepen. That should worry those who think about the long-term domestic and strategic configuration for Bangladesh, and the Y2K generation should shudder at such a destabilizing prospect.

Let us not ignore that Bangladesh politics is passing through a fed up phase; and let

Bangladeshis want to get out of the perceived paralysis of the law enforcement agencies. Both of those proclivities are the results from what they experienced in recent years. But the people also want to extricate themselves from the cycle of lawlessness. For the future, the importance of good governance will be the issue number 1 -more pragmatic Bangladeshis of the new generation would prefer a scaled down partisanship in the affairs of the state. Still, the intensity of the division along party lines will not drop out of sight, in fact, it may even get worse before it gets better. Rampant corruption, often politically backed, is pounding the last nails on the failed apparatus for governance. It's not just a question of toning up the administrative machinery, but overhauling it, lock, stock and barrel. The Bangladeshis are caught in the mind boggling environmental pollution, but their politics is even more dangerously contaminated by overpoliticization. Worse still are the conceptually loose vocabularies and personal insults which shred even the semblance of mutual respect and understanding between the leaders and groups. Lot has already

concerted challenges from the minority rights activists, there will be more pressure from the international NGOs, and those tremors will be felt across the political spectrum. Bangladeshis are rapidly acquiring the information technology that can digitize, retrieve and circulate political emotions around the globe to gather support for those causes

been written on this.

- such forces will open new frontiers to the old religious and ethnic conflicts. To accommodate such pressure, the larger parties and the national leaders need a change of heart, flexibility and accommodation. It's not just a question of the BNP and its presumably right wing and anti-Indian political partners who will be confronted by the minority activists — even the ruling Awami League is facing the tough choice of accepting the minority demands to abrogate the so called enemy properties law that came in the wake of the 1965 India-Pakistan war. Even if the law is changed, there are free floating doubts if the minorities will ever get back the properties. They might form their own parties; already there are voices from the minority groups and the smaller parties for proportional representation. Once that happens, the single dominant party system would lose its flair, and the Bangladeshi political landscape will change forever. But the minority activism may also result into an

reactive phenomenon - what happens in New Delhi will affect Bangladesh politics, no matter which party will be in power in Dhaka. Indeed, the fu-Bangladesh will face more ture configuration in West Bengal and the insurgencies of the northeastern states will also colour the Bangladeshi political scene. The BJP has remained somewhat restrained in. the coalition partnerships, but, once it wins an absolute majority, its dogged pursuit for the Hindutva will be felt squarely throughout the entire region. including Bangladesh. It is no longer a loony thought! Some of

anti-minority backlash.

Modern politics is largely a

the parties will conveniently feed the public on an anti-Indian bearing. Dhaka is unable to match New Delhi militarily but the unraveling Hindu naliqualism will make India the strident political issue, not just in the hands of the BNP and the Jamaat. Bangladesh will not be a doctrinaire Islamic state, but the Muslim identity of Bangladesh will become a strong political force, and the major parties would vie with each other for the centre-right posture. The recent political realignments are a testimony to that likelihood in politics.

Will there be a new breed of politicians in the Y2K generation? Imagination can get foot loose but let us not expect a completely different kind of politicians in the near future. The quintessential lawyerpoliticians will yield the remaining of their ground to the new business groups, and such activists who can organize hartals or who can counter them. The influence of the moneyed class in Bangladesh politics, irrespective of the denominations, is palpable, and the Y2K politicians will even be more sautéed in money. The influx of the retired civilian and military bureaucrats turned politicians has not improved the quality of political leadership, nor will it make much of a difference for the better in the luture. Over the years, the student organizations have lost their old spirit of selfless standard-bearers: they also lost their credibility as the recruitment ground for future political leadership. If the recent trend is a road map to the future. Bangladesh will be more in the grip of the goons better known as the mastans, the most alarming spin off of the last few years of the past millennium. I see a chasm between what the Y2K generation might generally expect and what its politicians might offer. The calendarization of years, centuries and millennium does not necessarily match with the qualitative turning points of history and politics. The Y2K generation is vel to set the fresh tone of poli-The writer teaches Political Science at the Rowan University. Glassboro. New Jersey.

## Why Not Privatise the Government?

HE idea may sound a little weird and wonky, but it is going to work if tried. When the wind of free-market liberalism is catching up with everything, why leave out the most pivotal business of human society: its governance? Wastern cities are afready bringing competition into the picture by privatising services. including street cleaning. police, and even prisons. Years ago in the US, a federal highway bill partly proposed to privatise road maintenance. Norman Macrae of the Economist has actually suggested that people would someday elect commercial firms instead of

politicians to run their cities. Why not magnify that possibility to national level and think of corporations running the government someday? Let us not have illusions that the private sector will be more efficient than the public sector, that bureaucracy and inflexibility will not saddle the government run by corporations. But if judged by the quality of customer service offered by private telecommunication services compared to that of our T&T Board, or private banks compared to nationalised banks, it kindles hope for a privatise government. No need for sham parliament, which is railroaded by the ruling party and boycotted by the opposition. No need for strikes. demonstrations and demagogy. No need for costly and violent elections, caretaker government, hassle of fair election monitoring, and obscene and raucous exchanges amongst the

Also gone will be worries and anxieties about bribery and corruption, because corporations will ensure sincerity and honesty amongst their employees for profit maximisation. It will be able to fire a non-performing employee quicker than people can revoke an unseemly elected official. There will be a hierarchy of the corporate government starting with managers at unions, senior managers at upazilas, regional managers at districts, and divisional managers at divisions.

politicians.

by Mohammad Badrul Ahsan

What is a government expected to do anyway? It is supposed to maintain law and order, create jobs, ensure justice, conduct foreign policy, raise taxes, undertake public works and control monetary and fiscal policies. A corporate body elected to power should be able to do all of these. Even better, it will appoint qualified and educated executives to run the government contrary to some of the elected members who adorn our parliament.

General managers will be in Leninist prediction for comcharge of several divisions reporting to a managing director who will report to the board of directors through a chairman. The managing director will do the functions of the Prime Minister and the chairman will do the functions of the President. The corporation will have the freedom to choose between parliamentary and presidential forms of government depending

on its business goals. Edmund Burke said, "Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants". And it is in the confluent image of wisdom and wants that governments have been erected from time to time. From warlordism of the tribal lords to theocracy of the clergy to democracy of the common folks, government has evolved to satisfy the deepest longings of man and his time. The great ferments of nationalism and communism failed because the expanse of internationalism and capitalism proved more ingratiating for the human spirit than the stifling enclosures of the first two.

In modern nations market forces are gradually encroaching upon the power of government. In the eighties under the presidency of Ronald Reagan. discourses were undertaken whether to minimise government interference on the market. Karl Marx expounded that the state, which is the instrument whereby one class oppresses another, will become otiose in a classless society. The munism was that the state, as a centralised embodiment of coercive power over society would 'wither away'. In recent times we have seen how the governments of several European countries combined their sovereign interests to introduce a single currency.

By all means the touchstone

of our time is the market econonly, where the cost-effective entrepreneur is immensely powerful to exploit comparative advantage in trade and commerce. In Bangladesh, governments take the business community in confidence before formulating policies. The entrepreneurial class is most vocal for law and order and a political reconciliation. The businessmen are the largest donors of campaign funds and FBCCI and other business forums exercise significant clout over the governments. The business community is also the largest borrower of bank loans, and the inability of several governments to bring loan defaulters to trial is indicative of the formidable power and influence of business over national life.

What is a government expected to do anyway? It is a supposed to maintain law and order, create jobs, ensure justice, conduct foreign policy, raise taxes, undertake public works and control monetary and fiscal policies. A corporate body elected to power should be able to do all of these. Even better, it will appoint qualified and educated executives to run the gov-

ernment contrary to some of the elected members who adorn our parliament. The authors of Megatrends 2000 looked forward to "a period of stunning technological innovation, unprecedented economic opportunity, surprising political reform and great cultural rebirth." Needless to say that the entrepreneurs will spearhead technological innovation and economic opportunities, while money will drive the cultural rebirth. Who should then know

it best what political reforms

should make all that happen? John Adams, 2nd President of the USA and father of John Quincy Adams, wrote in 1776, "The happiness of society is the end of government". It is obvious that the happiness of modern society is rooted in the government based on economic populism. In other words, the dominant ethos of modern governance should be the economic empowerment of every citizen when each will be free to satisfy his needs according to the fruits of his labour. To state more pithily, happiness in a marketdominated society will be ensured when citizens will have the opportunity to match earn-

ings with yearnings. Either a plutocracy or dictatorship of the corporate will best empathise with that definition of happiness because its own objectives will be in line with those of its subjects. Herbert Spencer elucidated that the highest form of government would require the highest type of human nature. To turn that

Even the individuals were not

spared. A senior officer, Joint

Secretary to the Govt. was bru-

tally murdered by the muggers

on 11.1.2000 on the university

campus around 6-30 a.m. while

he was coming from the railway

station by a rickshaw. It was

done in the broad day light. And

there too police had failed mis-

erably to give protection that

too to a high official. That being

so, the helplessness of the ordi-

nary people could be better un-

derstood than described. The

more the heinous act is con-

demned is the less. It is reported

that there was a police van

standing nearby but to no deter-

rence to the muggers.

saying on its head, a moneydriven society should be ruled by a money-driven government so that everyone will be engaged in maximisation of production and profit

And look at the sunny side of this novel idea. It will bring an end to political cant, jousting and jealousy. There will be no dogmatic or ideological conflict, political killing, demonstration, strike, campaign violence, dynastic arrogance, caretaker government, extortion, endemic corruption, lecund elections, cadre-building, opportunism, chicanery, and selfseeking pretensions. At the end of every term, a board comprised of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, heads of leading NGOs, religious leaders and others can invite tenders from various corporations. The specs and prospectus of each corporation will be scrutinised by the board and those of the best three will be publicised through newspaper and television. There will be an election on a specified date and the corporation winning majority votes will run the country for the elected term.

American writer Henry David Thoreau wrote that although he accepted the motto "That government is best which governs least", he actually believed "That government is best which governs not at all". The endless bickering in our politics has proven that democracy is futile because every government governs most to stay in power and least to keep its promise to the people. Given the pandemic lawlessness, corruption and insecurity in the country, it is worth trying any alternative. If we switch from democracy to plutocracy, moneyed people will come to power instead of powerful people coming to money. For the ordinary men like us who must toil through the humdrum of life, perhaps the welcome change will mean a little more money and the safety to carry it anytime anywhere in our pockets. I would still say it's a wonderful thought, although some may think it wild and woolly. The author is a banker

## Friday Mailbox

Access to the university

campus Sir. We all know that the Dhaka University is not only one of the best educational institutions of our country but also a historical place. Including the Shahid Minar and Aparjeyo Bangla, many other recent sculptures are located there. Apart from the Amar Ekushe Boi Mela, different organizations hold many programmes on the campus on different occasions like Pahela

Boishakh, Shadhinota, Bijay Dibash etc. All these factors make the university a place to visit or we may go there simply for sight-seeing. But in recent years many indecent incidents have taken place on the campus on these occasion-days. So I think it is time for the authorities of the DU to take some measures for controlling access to the university campus. That doesn't mean only teachers, students and university staffs can go there - it will remain open for all, but there should be some regulations.

I suggest a few steps which the university authorities may consider.

1) Use of alcohol or any kind of drugs in campus should be banned.

of the area on workings days.

sity area.

2) Except for the national programmes and programmes by the organisations that are related with the university, no other celebrations, programmes and processions should be allowed on the campus.

3) Noone should be allowed to get into the TSC compound. Arts Faculty. Karzon Hall, Mokkaram, IER and Charukala buildings on holidays, and also after 5:00 p.m. on working days

without showing proper reason. 4) Except for occasions like Bijay Dibash or Ekushe February, no other programmes will continue there after 8:30 p.m.

5) In every such occasion-day, the university authority should seek additional help of the 6) Rickshaws and private cars should stay out

7) The university authority should not allow

illegal shops, hawkers and beggars in the univer-

Omar Sharif Turza Monowara Sikdar Apartments Dhaka 1209.

I am shocked

Sir, The picture of Dhaka University in the DS of 2.1.2000, including all other newspapers, depicting as if a bunch of hyenas attacking a helpless prey has shocked me. I feel ashamed of being a student of this institution.

It is being observed that the DU has lately turned into a safe haven for criminals, extortionists, kidnappers and killers. Now it seems that the campus is harboring elements that are suffering from psychological problems. The VC did not lose time to state that his students had returned to residential halls before the mid-night (Janakantha, 3.1.2000). But the question is: With check-posts at all entry points and police patrols inside the campus, who commits crimes after midnight? When would the students develop their conscience, if not now? The DU needs to clear its stables.

A Shocked Citizen Dhaka

To the leaders

Sir, I would like to ask some questions to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia. First to Khaleda Zia:

1) You said that BNP would form a shadow government like that of Britain if it sits in the

opposition bench. Where is the shadow govern-

2) "BNP neither believes in secularism nor in fundamentalism", was said by you in 1991. Now you want to go to power with the help of the fundamentalists. It may be mentioned that they do not support women leadership. They are also against women's education and women working in public. Now if you form a coalition government with them, what type of government would you expect that to be?

4) If you can have talks with H. M. Ershad, whom you once considered as political enemy, why can't you have talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina?

Now to Sheikh Hasina: 1) Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had attended a round table conference called by Ayub Khan in 1969. He also discussed how to solve the problems with Yahya and Bhutto in 1971. So if history is any guide, why can't you have direct discussions with Khaleda Zia? 2) Being an educated person, why did you use

indecent language in the parliament. 3) On one hand, you will offer dialogue with the leader of the opposition and on the other hand, you use objectionable words against her. In this circumstances, how can you expect them

to accept your offer? 4) Before the election, you said that you would scrap SPA and give autonomy to radio TV, if your party went to power. But you did not scrap the

TV. Why?

SPA. And also, there's no autonomy for radio and Iqbal Ahmed

> A deadly culture in the offing

Sir. "Jubo League leader shot dead" was a story in the DS (Jan.4, 2000). This killing of the youth was reported as "a sequel of rivalry with the Ward Commissioner." To the local insider, however, the murder was the sequel of a landgrabbing episode. There have been other murders under different contexts. Then we have episodes of rape at the highest seat of learning. unimaginable in the history of a civil society Raping and killings of victims in official custody, highway public transport, in cities and far flung villages, are all parts of our daily news. Then again, land-grabbing seems to have become integral to the politicians and their cronies, whether the land belongs to a private person or the government. Even rivers or mosque property are not spared. Individual victims may cry out for help, but no one seems capable of standing up against land grabbers.

Corruption at all levels; bank loan defaulters; uniformed or non-uniformed toll collectors; Chakuri chai kaj chaina officialdom; side walk usurpers like vendors, work-shops, used car sellers; non payment and under payment of utility bills by way of bribery or influence or by being members of the public offices including the parliament are the order of the day.

Why forget new culture of Hartal? Once the PM decided to get rid of guns from our educational institutions for she 'earnestly believed' in creating a 'peaceful' environment for students to pursue their education. In pursuance of this belief she handed over pencil and paper to hundreds of students belonging to her party's student wing, instead of fire arms, with dazzling fan fare. She seems to have forgotten what she promised.

Do we see any sign of these disorders being eliminated in the foreseeable future?

Syed Waliullah

OPINION

Dhaka is said to be a city of pollution, population, traffic jam and what not. But soon after the Eid i.e. for two to three days it just gave a different look. It was almost deserted. Motorised vehicles were too few. Rickshaws had their hey days but their number also appeared to have waned. There was little air pollution and heaps of garbages around. It seemed to be a quiet city. So offices being opened, there are much habitable!

closed or had skeleton staff to ing business are simply disapmeet the emergencies. Perhaps there was not more than 10 per cent attendance in the government offices. People had made good use of their optional holidays. Someone had observed that instead of allowing optional holiday, it should either be a closed holiday or the system done away with so far Muslim festivals are concerned. the people avail of the leave while the office remains open. It is just something like opening of office for opening's sake sans business. This creates problem. A closed holiday will

The City of Dhaka after Eid

Abu Imran

be helpful since everybody would know that during holidays no work is done. But due to such optional holidays, despite too few people and no business The offices were either can be transacted. People seekpointed. Hence there are more arguments for making the optional holidays closed holidays or for keeping so such provision. This is in the interest of the employees as well as the members of the public.

Environment and traffic jam wise Dhaka was better but not law and order wise. Just on And there is logic in it. Most of Eid day two groups of people traded with lethal weapons and mercilessly injured one another in Agargaon area. They clash continued till late moon. And to the surprise of all the residents there, the members of the law

enforcing agencies e.g. the police, turned up much later, when all the deadly game was over. It was not known what made the police stay away from the place of disturbance and then turn up much later to the advantage of none. Such lethargy amounts to serious negligence of duty and perhaps calls for disciplinary action. After all a lot of money is spent for their upkeep. And if they fail even in their primary duty of maintaining law and order then why spend money on them? Some members of the public maintain that if people get no security or protection 'with police' then let them remain so 'without police'. At least in the latter case, some money would be saved in the public exchequer.

The above was a group case

of violence and lawlessness.

It is unfortunate that before people could appreciate the quietness and pollution free atmosphere of Dhaka city, in came the horrible news of violence and murder. It is further

peace prevail in the society and the world. But regrettably, no sooner had the month-long fasting been over, than in came the usual phenomena of crime. violence and other evils. But it was expected that following the month-long fasting, there would be some improvement. And there was genuine reasons too. A leading vernacular daily informed that during the last holy month of Ramzan, the law and order situation was more or less stable. This was a good piece of news. But alas! it was falsified. This was because people by and large ignore the true spirit and essence of the teachings of Ramzan. Fasting does not mean only staying away from food, drink, even legal sex etc. Its aim is to purify people from sins. Yet sinners are back on the streets of Dhaka. One wonders how much habitable the city will be with them, when law enforcers are incapable or

Indifferent?

unfortunate that this happened

just after the end of the month-

long fasting designed to help

people attain piety, learn to re-

spect the rights of others and let

Views expressed in this column are the writers' own. The Editor may or may not subscribe to those views. The Editor reserves the right to decide which letters should be published.