

## PM, Judiciary and the People

THE Prime Minister reiterated her comments about the judiciary on Thursday saying that her views were not contemptuous of the courts and reflected those of the people. She did not intend to undermine the judiciary but only to serve the people. In another move the government has set up a three-member committee, with Additional Attorney General as its head, to look into the lapses on the part of the government, the public prosecutors, the police and the whole administrative process dealing with the process of bail for the accused criminals. It will also investigate how effectively the government side opposed bails when it came up for consideration in the higher courts.

Both these developments deserve comments, and we start with the second. We think that the Law Minister or whoever did it has moved in the right direction. This paper repeatedly urged the government to undertake a cleaning of its own house. We all know how corruption ridden the whole prosecution process has become, starting with the arresting officer to the thana officials to the public prosecution offices. We also know how the hands of the magistrate can be tied by the efficacy of the pre-trial process. This is definitely not to say that the lower judiciary is beyond reproach.

There is also the question of the lawyers themselves as the servant of the law. Are they really working to uphold the highest standards of our legal norms or are they more interested in using the loopholes or the inadequacies of our legal system to serve fat fee paying clients regardless of every other consideration? We know that lawyers will say that every accused has the right to the best legal services regardless of his or her antecedents. We understand and recognise all that, and yet we say that lawyers could do far more than they are doing now to improve our legal system.

All these need to be looked into. But for the whole process to take an effective shape the government must start with itself first. If the necessary reforms and support — in terms of training, equipment and resources — were made available to all the relevant agencies first, and only afterwards was the judiciary put in the dock then the whole debate generated by the PM's comments would have served us better.

Though late we welcome the formation of the committee and ask the government to give it all the assistance and the freedom (we underscore this point) to complete its work speedily. At the same time we urge this committee, especially its head, to do a real a soul searching job and not be pressured into covering up essential flaws just to please this or that coterie or the powers that be.

As to the PM's persistence in publicly speaking out against the judiciary, the kindest thing we can say is that it will defeat her very purpose, assuming that her purpose is to reform the judiciary and rid it of all its corruption and flaws and NOT to intimidate it. PM repeatedly claims that what she is saying reflects the public sentiment. How is public sentiment formed? Through publicity and information. The judiciary is NOT and SHOULD NOT be in the information and publicity game.

And on the other hand if the elected PM repeatedly speaks against them then of course public opinion will have a negative image of the judiciary. So now the judiciary will have to either come out in the open and start speaking out for themselves — and by implication against the PM — or keep quite and get blamed for every flaw of the executive branch. Will it be wise, or serve any national purpose if that were to happen? There are some things better done by making public statements. And there are others, which are far better done by keeping silent. In the case of the judiciary the wise course to follow — and we have said this before — is to discuss the problems with the Chief Justice, senior judges, the lawyers and their representative bodies and undertake serious reforms.

If the PM is really serious about reforming our legal system, then she should immediately desist from the course of public denunciations of the judiciary and engage them in a substantive dialogue on reforms. She should learn about the sensitive and respectful nature of the relationship between the Executive and Judicial organs of the State from the recent Indian example where the PM forced his own Law Minister — Ram Jathmalani, a highly respected lawyer in the country — to resign for an oblique remark on the Higher Judiciary.

## An Aborted Opportunity

AN opportunity for peace in South Asia which flickered the other day has disappeared as quickly as it came on the horizon. The excitement and hope generated a fortnight ago when the Hizbul Mujahideen, a pro-Pakistani militant group, made its ceasefire offer in Kashmir are no more. The militant outfit has called off its ceasefire, ascribing their change of stance to the Indian government's refusal to include Pakistan in the proposed talks. Expressing "regret" over the announcement the Indian government, not wanting to bow before the Hizb condition, stuck to their earlier stance of not 'entertaining' anything outside the Indian constitution. Pakistan, on the other hand, has said that "negative and transparently insincere responses" by India have destroyed the prospect for peace.

However, the ceasefire and consequent Indian response were something of a break and a good augury for the region at large. It almost presaged the breaking of new grounds or melting of the ice on an intractable problem. We think a new beginning has been made to address the problem through a new window and hope it will lead to the resolution of the crisis in due course. One thing is sure. Militancy cannot solve the problem; and even if a single group wishes to offer unilateral ceasefire, it represents a radical change on the outlook of things. This spirit needs to be carried forward by those who have taken up arms. Insofar as the governments of India and Pakistan are concerned, their stakes lie in finding a speedy solution to this five-decades-old Kashmir imbroglio, which has proved attritional to both the countries.

If we look back to the 53 years of our achievements since Independence, we come to realise how diffident our response has been to the challenges we faced. People were willing to snatch even the moon from the sky and place it at the feet of the leaders at their bidding.

Why has that enthusiasm evaporated? Why the disappointment with the system is so deep that the very word politician is an abuse? Where did we falter? The countries which threw off the yoke of foreign masters, more or less at the same time, have been brisker in pace and quicker in development? India has at present a larger population of poor than it had when it won freedom. The middle class has expanded but the economic benefits have not. In fact, the yawning gap between the haves and the have-nots has widened further. Even among the states, there is a growing hiatus which is telling upon the feeling of equality and unity in the country.

True, India can raise its head high when it comes to free institutions it has nourished. The countries which have had faster growth have generally lost democracy, at least in content. The judiciary is timid and their society, although open, is not free. This does not in any way lessen the stigma of poverty and destitution attached to India. Jawaharlal Nehru talked about the trust with destiny on the Independence Day. But what went wrong when the time came to redeem the pledge and free people from want? Mahatma Gandhi said that political freedom had no meaning without economic freedom. Many explanations are available. But there is no doubt about the economic and social backwardness of the country. Many things went wrong and priorities got distorted. Being a soft state, to use the phrase of Swedish political economist Gunnar Myrdal, the tackling of problems was not decisive. Above all, those who fought for independence wanted to cash in on their sacrifices. Almost overnight they became a squabbling crowd of self-seekers, jostling each other for office or reward.

Nehru, a democrat to the core, built up institutions. But he failed badly on the economic front. He was probably wrong in changing the agenda that Gandhiji had set for the country: self-sufficient village republics. After wandering many years, the nation has come back to the point of restoring them in the shape of panchayats. But too much time has been wasted and too many vested interests have developed to defeat even a modicum of authority to people at the grassroots.

Impressed by the industrial growth of the West, Nehru tried to duplicate it in a society which had no renaissance, no reformation and no revolution. In fact, the situation was opposite. The society was ridden with superstitions, castes and religious division. His dream of a socialistic society could not come true because he failed to motivate people to rise above their personal greed. He

**How can the system be cleansed when politicians and officials are themselves involved in taking money for 'doing work'? With the politics of coalition, now in its 10th year, the governance of India has become still more difficult. Woefully, it has been reduced to the art of possible. There is no fixed goal and no idea of where to go. The rulers have a one-point programme: cling to power by hook or by crook.**

had to make them work in unison for a system which would ask each one of them to give according to his capacity and get according to his needs.

But how? Gandhiji prescribed "simple living and high thinking." Eighty per cent of them were in villages. Agriculture was their lifeline, while Nehru's socialism emphasised industrialisation, less dependence on land. He did not even effect drastic land reforms which would have benefited the countryside. But it is an open secret that he was let down at every stage by his own colleagues who had no faith in his ideas. The bureaucracy, used to the colonial way of working, was the biggest impediment in the path of progress. Even work culture was not allowed to develop. Still Nehru's rule he died in 1964 provided the synthesis of scientific and technological civilisation of the modern world with India's contemplative spirit. He was able to spread the message of democracy, pluralism and public participation.

Lal Bahadur Shastri, Nehru's successor, did not live long enough to translate his dream, which coincided with that of Gandhiji's simple living and high thinking. He tried to consolidate the gains of the Five Year Plans by declaring a 'holiday' to the regulated and disciplined way of development. Again the bureaucracy turned out to be too strong to pursue his own methods.

Things deteriorated sharply during Indira Gandhi's time. She swept the polls by coining the slogan: *Garibi Hatao* (oust poverty). But when she failed to make any dent into the pitiable plight of people, she used the state machinery to suppress discontent. She put pressure through police and income-tax officers on her opponents in her Congress Party and in the Opposition. She believed in authoritarian ways. Mrs Gandhi did not mind splitting the party for her own ends and used all methods to stay in power, even after she was disqualified for six years by the Allahabad High Court. If there is a watershed in the country's politics, it is the emergency she imposed in June 1975 to suspend even the fundamental rights. She detained more than one lakh people without trial and gagged the press.

The bureaucracy, which was negative during the days of Nehru and Shastri, became a willing instrument of tyranny in the hands of Mrs Gandhi. Obediently, it broke rules and circumvented

# Why did India Falter?

## BETWEEN THE LINES

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

Nehru too said: "At all times there should be due stress on the moral, human and spiritual values which give meaning to economic progress." Transformation by spiritual means meant rebuilding the individual, making him or her to adhere to right methods to achieve the right ends. This indeed was a daunting task.

Nehru was, somehow, confident that the excitement to change the face of India would involve people who had waited for decades to see the dawn of independence. Indeed, they were in that mood. But the fervour got buried beneath the government's preoccupation with the relief and rehabilitation of refugees from Pakistan. Lenin had to change the people before he could force communism down their throat. Nehru thought he commanded so

much affection from his countrymen that he did not have to take stern measures. They would follow him blindly, so he imagined. If he could have only educated them!

Eighty per cent of them were in villages. Agriculture was their lifeline, while Nehru's socialism emphasised industrialisation, less dependence on land. He did not even effect drastic land reforms which would have benefited the countryside. But it is an open secret that he was let down at every stage by his own colleagues who had no faith in his ideas. The bureaucracy, used to the colonial way of working, was the biggest impediment in the path of progress. Even work culture was not allowed to develop. Still Nehru's rule he died in 1964 provided the synthesis of scientific and technological civilisation of the modern world with India's contemplative spirit. He was able to spread the message of democracy, pluralism and public participation.

Lal Bahadur Shastri, Nehru's successor, did not live long

enough to translate his dream, which coincided with that of Gandhiji's simple living and high thinking. He tried to consolidate the gains of the Five Year Plans by declaring a 'holiday' to the regulated and disciplined way of development. Again the bureaucracy turned out to be too strong to pursue his own methods.

Things deteriorated sharply during Indira Gandhi's time. She swept the polls by coining the slogan: *Garibi Hatao* (oust poverty). But when she failed to make any dent into the pitiable plight of people, she used the state machinery to suppress discontent. She put pressure through police and income-tax officers on her opponents in her Congress Party and in the Opposition. She believed in authoritarian ways. Mrs Gandhi did not mind splitting the party for her own ends and used all methods to stay in power, even after she was disqualified for six years by the Allahabad High Court. If there is a watershed in the country's politics, it is the emergency she imposed in June 1975 to suspend even the fundamental rights. She detained more than one lakh people without trial and gagged the press.

The bureaucracy, which was negative during the days of Nehru and Shastri, became a willing instrument of tyranny in the hands of Mrs Gandhi. Obediently, it broke rules and circumvented

the institutions to let her, nay her son, Sanjay Gandhi, have a field day, without occupying any office under the constitution. Authorities behind the scenes developed in those days. The institutions got weakened. The rule of law collapsed. It was survival of the scoundrels. Politicians and bureaucrats joined hands to lay the rule of law. Criminals too became their partners. It took no time for them to realise that they could quell the people's protests with the well-oiled network of police and security forces. This has been the pattern for nearly two decades, despite the qualms of conscience on the part of a couple of Prime Ministers. Still, India has made progress. Whatever the quantum, the credit goes to the people. They have gone ahead in spite of government bungling. In the first speech, Mohammed Ali Jinnah made after partition, he said: "One of the biggest curses which India is suffering... is bribery and corruption. That is really poison." All the three countries in the sub-continent India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have a system which is seething with corruption. It is increasing by the minute. How can the system be cleansed when politicians and officials are themselves involved in taking money for 'doing work'?

With the politics of coalition, now in its 10th year, the governance of India has become still more difficult. Woefully, it has been reduced to the art of possible. There is no fixed goal and no idea of where to go. The rulers have a one-point programme: cling to power by hook or by crook.

# National IT Policy is a Must for Development

by M Shahjahan Khadem

**It is unfortunate that in spite of repeated instructions from the Prime Minister herself since 1998 to develop at least 10,000 computer programmers per year, no effective measures appear to have been taken by the relevant authorities.**

THE Ministry of Science & Technology is going to formulate the national Information Technology (IT) policy soon. On the eve of framing IT policy of Bangladesh, which we believe is in the offing, the policymakers must take into account the progress made in this sector by the neighbouring India, China, Malaysia, the Philippines apart from America, Europe and other industrialised countries. From now on for the survival of 130 million people of Bangladesh, we must think of IT, dream of IT, live with IT and die with IT. Bangladesh can't survive without developing IT professionals among our educated younger generations. History will not forgive us if we fail to look into their interests since we are not in a position to provide them suitable job opportunities both in the public and private sectors.

It is unfortunate that in spite of repeated instructions from the Prime Minister herself since 1998 to develop at least 10,000 computer programmers per year, no effective measures appear to have been taken by the relevant authorities. It is ironic that in spite of prime minister's commitment to allocate Tk 15 crore for development of IT professionals from among the graduates of BUET, Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Khulna University and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet (Tk 3 crore for each university), the authorities concerned for the last two years failed to prepare a national policy to develop programmers of international standard. We approached the authorities but without any result till today. We made it clear, it is possible to develop at least 10,000 programmers per year as per global requirements with the assistance of internationally accepted trainers now working in Bangladesh. These five universities can produce only 240 Computer Science & Engineering graduates per year and not IT professionals.

With 16 years of academic career and acceptable aptitude in spoken and written English and basic programming knowledge in computer, all other graduates of all the universities of Bangladesh — including the private ones — as well as officers and employees

now serving in different govt./autonomous/private organisations are eligible to take such training programmes and thus prepare themselves as IT professionals at different costs varying generally from Tk 25,000 to Tk 85,000 depending upon the course contents and duration of the courses which are vendor-specified. The reputed vendors are Oracle, Microsoft, Sun Micro System, IBM, Novell Inc., Cysco, Comp Tia all USA based, ICIL Ireland and WWW, Switzerland. The facilities must be vendor-certified. Authorised training centres of respective vendors must have provisions to get the Online Training Exams either by Sylvan Prometric, Australia or Virtual University Enterprises, USA. In this category, the successful IT professionals with about at least 6-9 months experience in a software industry are eligible for H-B Visa for USA.

A study by the Information Technology Association of America reveals that 3,46,000 IT jobs are currently vacant in different US companies alone apart from global requirements in the other countries viz, European markets, Canada, Australia, Japan, Middle East etc. The demand in American markets will drastically reduce to about 350,000 for fresh IT professionals in the next 6 years. In other words, the job in the IT market is very much sensitive and we must prepare us with the latest technologies and up-to-date job-oriented IT curriculum required by different vendors. The policymakers are urged upon to highlight these points to our younger generation — who are educated — to prepare themselves as per global standard.

Bangladesh 2000 a voluntary organisation, mainly devoted to poverty alleviation programmes of educated youths, has arranged a package programme to train at least 1000 IT professionals by the year 2000 as per international standard from amongst the promising university graduates and officers of different govt./autonomous bodies/private organisations and other inter-

ested and eligible individuals.

To formulate the IT policy of Bangladesh, we must keep the following 21 points in mind:

1) A crash programme to develop at least 100,000 IT professionals within a period of 3 years should be our national objectives. Starting from August, 2000, in the first year 15,000, in the second year 30,000 and in the third year 55,000.

2) The minimum academic career should be 16 years with acceptable aptitude in spoken and written English and basic programming knowledge in computer.

3) The course curriculum must be internationally reputed vendor-certified and the respective IT trainers in Bangladesh must have the provision to conduct online exams.

4) To achieve national targets, all existing facilities available with the different govt, semi-govt, and private organisations must be utilised with a minimum lab facility for 15 persons with individual PCs.

5) The facilities may be hired on suitable terms and conditions from abroad, preferably India, if not available locally.

6) Vendor-certified reputed Bangladesh facilities now serving abroad may be offered attractive salaries for development of software industries in Bangladesh for both domestic and export markets.

7) There should be a National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) in Bangladesh similar to that of India which may be named NASSCOM National Association of Software and Service Companies of Bangladesh instead of BASIS and must follow Indian techniques in this sector since they started the journey in the IT fields 20 years ago with the inspiration of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

8) There should be a separate IT ministry under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister like India and Malaysia instead of the present Ministry of Science and Technology and should be

manned with IT related professionals from Asstt. Secretary level to Minister. If required, renowned IT specialist Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury may be requested to take the charge of the proposed ministry.

9) The policymakers must at least visit the Silicon Valley of the USA, Telecom and Multi Media University in Malaysia, Bangalore in India and China to see practically the progress made by them in the IT sector and implement some of their techniques for Bangladesh.

10) We must fix up some Software Technology Parks (STP) all over the country with V-SAT connection and fibre optic backbone networks on hired buildings for at least 5 years on emergency basis to develop software industries till establishment of IT village at Mohakhali. The floor area should be around 500,000 sqft. Presently in South Asia, there are 600 STPs. The initiative must be made by the government and there will not be any problem for financing since private sector IT firms including the foreign investors will be interested to buy the space in advance as reported to be in the other countries including India.

11) We must have a think-tank at least similar to that of Calcutta for development of software industries in Bangladesh. Cabinet ministers concerned i.e.,

commerce, industries, science & technology, planning, finance, posts and telecommunications, education, youth and culture and information with the secretaries concerned as well as the convenor and advisor of the national committee on software exports, governor, Bangladesh Bank, Chairman & Managing Directors of different banks, VCs and heads of Computer Science Departments at the Universities, head of the Bangladesh Computer Council, editors of the national dailies, computer journals and IT-reporters and other persons concerned should immediately visit Calcutta, Bangalore, China and USA. Even the head of the government can visit such places as did Dr Mahatir Mohamad of Malaysia in 1986 and stayed at the Silicon Valley of the USA for 10 days without meeting the President of America.

12) English language must be introduced in the country more seriously from the primary to university levels for our own interest along with Bangla.

13) Basic computer courses must be developed in the primary, secondary and higher secondary levels in English language similar to the standard of Microsoft. Average per student cost per month, five days a week and one hour per day should not exceed Tk 500 only. Respective schools and colleges should have

lab facilities for at least 15 students at a time with PCs. Computer education must be introduced as per government decision in 136 science colleges within the budget provisions of Tk 27 crore approx. Private colleges also should introduce computer education as a subject at the HSC level immediately under Bangladesh Open University with minimum lab facility for 15 students and 15 PCs.

14) All government colleges in the country must provide computer education at the HSC level with easy access to Internet as an optional subject.

15) All university students — both graduation and post-graduation levels — must have computer skills with Internet facilities. A national curriculum may be framed for the same.

16) The telecommunications system needs to be developed immediately for quicker access to the information super highway. Otherwise, we will be handicapped in data communication outside the country.

17) All government officials must have basic computer skills.

18) The politicians should be unanimous for a national policy planning for development of computer education in the country within our limited resources.

19) We must enact cyber and banking laws to facilitate growth of e-commerce in the country.

20) We must have software export target of at least \$ 1 billion by the year 2003.

21) There should be regular IT news on radio and television for at least 10 minutes.

## OPINION

## NGO Involvement Needed to Fight Dengue

Mahmuda Imam

ON Saturday, the 5th August 2000, I saw a photograph in *The Daily Star* which overwhelmed me with grief. A jute-mill worker had gone to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with high temperature, fearing that he might have caught dengue. But on Friday, pathology section of the hospital was closed. He did not have the money to have his blood sample tested at a private laboratory. What a pity! Dengue fever has invoked panic among the city dwellers. The overall dengue situation is getting worse every day. It is now spreading all over the country.

Aedes Mosquito that bites during day and transmits dengue virus in clean stagnant water both indoors and outdoors. The black mosquito is about 5 millimeter in size with stripes on the body and legs. Its eggs grow in to adult mosquitoes in three days. It leaves on blood for survival. The mosquito is found in tropical and subtropical urban areas. After a person is infected, symptoms including fever becomes apparent in four to six days.

Symptoms of dengue fever are: sudden rise in body temperature, facial flush, severe headache, pain in muscle, joints and rash.

Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DHF) may cause death from trauma and bleeding. There is no known vaccine to fight the virus. The treatment of DHF is rapid replacement of blood. Blood platelets may be needed. The patient should be treated in intensive care with more and more people need blood bags to give transfusion to dengue

patients with low platelet levels, blood banks are running dry. Two tests can be used popularly to detect the disease. Elisa test and Immunochromatographic test. The are only two government institutes in the city to test dengue virus. One is Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) and the second is Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP). The government hospital, in this respect, has scarcity of testing tool kits. It takes about Taka 500 to Taka 1,000 to have the test done.

Mr. Mohammad Hanif was elected the city mayor on the pledge that he will free the city of mosquito. But nearly 5 years into his job, Mayor Hanif has presented us with a Dhaka with one-third of its total area feared today to be infested with Aedes mosquito, according to an estimate by World Health Organization. Many city dwellers blame the Dhaka City Corporation for not taking action to eradicate the mosquito menace, which could have been done long before the dengue outbreak. The Corporation has allocated Tk 2 crore in the recent fiscal out of which Tk 1 crore has been reserved for new equipment and the rest for insecticide. City dwellers have seen very little spraying in their areas.

According to WHO, dengue is one of the prime re-emerging diseases of Bangladesh. People today are in mortal fear of being beaten by mosquitoes in general.

When Aedes breeds just about anywhere in the city area can imagine the dread of living with it. People are taking all sorts of precautions like using repellents of all kinds at the doorsteps and inside the rooms in daytime when

Aedes bite. Still there is no guarantee that anybody in Dhaka city today, rich and poor, old or young will be spared the attack of this vermin. There is no antidote to the dengue virus. All that one can do when attacked by it is to seek medical advice at the right time when high fever breaks out. The test and monitoring procedure are expensive for ordinary people. Moreover these are not easily available to common people who are most likely to be affected by it.

Since this disease has spread like rapid fire and environment is not going to improve overnight, to expect a sudden disappearance of the malady. We must have long term strategy to combat it.

My first suggestions would be to get the philanthropic people to finance the establishment of pathological laboratories. This will give service to the people at nominal cost.

Finally, I advocate a proactive role of the NGOs to complement government efforts towards fighting the dengue menace. They are ideally suited to play a significant role in enhancing awareness against the disease at the community level in maintaining the right environment. Already the NGOs have been successfully associated with many social mobilization programmes. The WHO concern over dengue can be shared by NGOs in combating dengue. The WHO, it must be remembered, had played a significant role in making Bangladesh largely free of malaria and TB. NGOs can be partners of the government and WHO in our fight against dengue.

## To the Editor ...

### Consumer Interest

Sir, The retail price of imported margarine (hydrogenated vegetable oil) in the local shops is same or more than the price of ghee or butter oil (animal fat). Margarine should cost only marginally more than soybean oil—compare the prices of local *dalda*/*vanaspati*, which is a variation of margarine.

It appears that the sellers' chain is fleecing the consumers, and there is no field monitoring mechanism in the market to monitor prices and advice the government and the apex importing agencies. The CAB should be strengthened to reinforce its field activities. The government can easily review the situation and introduce necessary market regulatory measures. Free market does not mean the consumers' interest would be overlooked. Where are the official quarterly reports on deterrent action? Any comment from the FBCCI?

Another issue should be included: why the retail prices of Indian imported goods are more than the double the retail Indian prices printed on the packages (the Rupee is going down, down)? Is it due to booming smuggling, and the black money is being invested towards the development of 'black politics', as the

press is increasingly reporting (DS, Aug 8, report on seminar on bad politics)?

We cannot be tough on malpractices on inter-border trade? Wanted: more practical and dynamic administrative measures from the government, than dissipative but fiery political pronouncements from the ruling regime. Less pre-election political lobbying please, and more consumer-interest official measures. That the traditional street agitators cannot rule, is an obvious conclusion (any regime).

Abul Ahmad  
Dhaka

### Public complaints

Sir, As an ordinary citizen, I was surprised when the Prime Minister complained publicly against some of the weaknesses in our legal system and delays in judicial processing, liberal granting of bails, etc. Some jurists expressed concern against such open criticism of the judiciary. Now the PM has reiterated her stand (DS, Aug 5).

I wonder, if, as an ordinary citizen, I had made the same remarks publicly, I would have pulled up for contempt of court. It means that the same law applies to the PM as to any other citizen. I

seek guidance on this issue. The PM has other official avenues to handle such issues, but she has chosen public confrontation. Is she speaking as the PM or as a party leader?

The weaknesses or alleged corrupt practices in the judiciary could have been handled in formal recognised manner at the proper level, through a proper mechanism. I do not know about the mechanism, but surely it is not through *lahit* processions in the streets all over the country that such issues are settled. The government should know how to go about it.

Already anarchy is being allowed (by the Administration) to prevail in the society in various forms, causing public concern and misgiving; and the law and order in the country has almost gone out of hand. Under the circumstances exemplary behaviour is expected from the leaders of the society; but what we see is the opposite. It is all too confusing for the man in the street. What will be the effect on future administration? Why is the government so seemingly helpless, and aggressive, outside the secretariat?

A Perturbed Citizen  
Dhaka