

Remembering Neelan TWELVE TWELVE PAKISTANI pop singer, months have Nazia Hassan, died in London

"The Tamil political first volume Young Tarang'.

devastating annihilation dee dum dum. tactics, has become much poorer with the stifling of the charge community's democratic

conscience.

The Icon Dies INDIAN Prime Minister Atal Behari Vaipayee has led the tributes to Lala Amarnath, the national team's first Test captain following independence, who has died at the age of 88. Amarnath had been confined to bed at his home in New as "an icon" and former provisions of the blasphemy International Cricket law with the critics arguing Council president Jagmohan that it could be misused Dalmiya hailed him as an particularly against the "institution".

Nazia Hassan dead

elapsed since on August 13 after a the passing of protracted illness. She was 35 and had been suffering from Tiruchelvam. cancer. Nazia sprang into The cruel deed stardom with her Indian film of a Libera- Qurbani song Aap jaisa koyi tion Tigers of meri zindagi mein aaye. The Tamil Eelam (LTTE) suicide song was followed by another bomber snuffed out the life of hit Disco deewane which took a great personality who repre- the young generation of the sented all that was noble and sub-continent by storm. The great in human civilisation. true fame came Nazia and her Imbued with visionary brother, Zohaib Hassan's way idealism, Neelan unceasingly with their electrifying songs worked "to take the bitterness on the album 'Star'. Nazia out of the ethnic divide and to and Zohaib, who formed a heal history's wounds". As perfect duo together, then Malini Parthasarathy wrote travelled to Pakistan in the in her tribute in The Hindu, early '80s and released their spectrum, which has been The volume contained famous subjected to the LTTE's songs such as Dum dum dee

Death on blasphemy



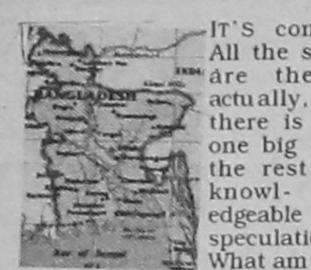
A sessions court of Lahore has sentenced a Muslim to death on charges of blasphemy subject to approval by the High Court. The charge

against the accused, Mr. Yusuf Ali, was that he had sought to Delhi since undergoing project himself as 'Prophet of surgery to repair a fractured the God'. There has been a hip in February. The Prime great deal of controversy in Minister described Amarnath Pakistan on certain minorities.

Bangladesh

Time for Action

By Navine Murshid



are there... the rest are

speculations.

talking about? Flood. That's what I'm talking about. worst floods in years,

either. Already, diarrhoea and Ministry. cholera patients have started to come in at different hospitals in the city including Dhaka Medical College Hospital and widespread Shomorita Hospital.

ease is spreading."

With the Dengue 'epidemic' in full swing, the added floodrelated diseases may turn out to be catastrophic. However, a flood this year would not come have grown used to the floods; they know how to tackle it; time | shelters as well. has taught them how to survive.

IT'S coming. Therefore, the steps to minimise destruction should include formation of disaster management committee at all there is just levels; creating stocks of ORS at upazilla level; offering sanitation facilities in the embankment and other high areas where people are taking shelter; making available water-purifying tablets as and when needed.

The government, meanwhile, has undertaken several With India facing one of the initiatives to contain the calamities of flood. The respec-Bangladesh is not far off. The tive ministerial departments of Brahmaputra may appear to be the inter ministerial disaster behaving at the moment, but management co-ordination stakeholders believe that the team will open 24-hour control river would ultimately overflow room considering the situation in Bangladesh. The incessant and will send report on their acrains are not helping matters tivities to Disaster Management and Relief

Health Ministry and Health Department will take necessary actions to tackle any kind of disease. Disaster Management and "Floodwater is destroying Relief Ministry will take necesour tap water," said a diarrhoea sary steps through respective patient's relative at a city hos - District Commissioners to pital, "and that is why the dis- provide temporary shelter and immediate help to homeless people from river erosion and

The Public Health Engineering Department (DPHE) will take proper actions as a surprise to anyone. People to supply safe drinking water in flood-affected areas and flood

Water Development Board



Flood has taken lives and property in northern India today. In no time,

Bangladesh will have to face it too? Are we ready? government-sponsored shelters Department including the refor flood affected people. The spective ministry/department government also has sectors are responsible for taking nec allocated for flood and disaster management. Their performance has been put to test during the 1998 floods and they have done well. The partnership of the private and public sector has made effective a plan of action whereby aid and relief was made available

even to the poorest of the poor. If the 1998 flood management is anything to go by, then we can surely tackle the flood as it comes this year, with an added advantage. This is an election period. Every political party will try to outdo one an other in their rehabilitation

programme.

or property will be lost? No. But this means that the which are water-borne. death toll would not be high People are aware of the pattern of flood. They would have enough time to think ahead; to move off elsewhere: to resort to DPHE? shelter centres. Some people would drown; some may die of snakebite; some people from water-borne diseases. As for property, homes would be de-

the risk of destruction.

essary actions to protect the erosion prone embankments and roads.

At this time, the NGOs should get into a partnership with the government. Time has shown what this partnership can achieve. Let us not waste any opportunity to keep the disaster toll as low as possible.

With people used to natural disasters, the biggest challenge would be to ensure that no diseases spread and the water supply is not contaminated. We can hope that time has taught the poor how to protect their crops; how to protect their lives; but it would be foolish to think that So, does this mean, no lives they know how to protect themselves from diseases, especially

> It seems as though the government is ready to face the flood head on. The question is: is the health ministry? Is the

While considering the shortterm to-dos, the long-term Bangladesh, was to bring toplans of action have to be in - gether seven South Asian coun grained too. While making sure | tries - Bangladesh. Bhutan, that the flood next month does India. Maldives. Nepal. stroyed. What has been built not affect us too badly, we have Pakistan, Sri Lanka - for their over the past few years will face to make sure we have a protec-People may be aware of the a flood ten years later. Shortcalamities that lie ahead, but term disaster management may that does not mean there is be effective today, but in future nothing to do. At present, the we need something more conproblems have to be addressed crete; something that would enon a short-term emergency ba - sure safety and protection. sis. This is time to prepare for Every year cannot be a disaster management. management year.

India-Pakistan

The Myth of Independence

independence day celebration

By Mansoor Mamoon



other, reflecting over half a different outlawed secessionist century of acrimonious relations between them. Both the celebration marked tight secucountries have so far fought at rity. President K R Narayanan least three full-scale wars and a in his routine nationwide limited one and the shadow of their bitter rivalries and confrontational attitude loomed large as usual. Their bone of contention had been and still is Kashmir over which the two countries are consistently making claim and counter-claim. Kashmir long stood divided, one portion under Indian administration while the other under the control of Pakistan. An upsurge of violence has erupted in the divided territory by different militant insurgent groups and Delhi is blaming Islamabad for fuelling the

In his Independence Day message Pakistan's military field has failed to keep pace ruler General Pervez Musharraf called for peace talks with India. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee scoffed at the idea saying that Pakistan was inciting insurgency on the one hand and on the other calling for a dialogue. This, he said, is a sheer duplicity. If Pakistan sincerely desires peace, it should stop aiding the insurgents. Jammu & Kashmir are an integral part of India and would remain so, he asserted.

The dominant militant in Kashmir, Hizbul Mujaheedin, recently unilaterally declared ceasefire and had two rounds of talks with the Indian government. The talks broke down when the insurgent group asked India to invite Pakistan to take part in the negotiation as, according to Hizb, without tripartite involvement the long standing problem could not be resolved and reality dictates there is a grain of salt in it. But to New Delhi, the military ruler in Islamabad is an anathema.

By AMM Shahabuddin

Kathmandu in November last,

Mr Bajpayee that he won't sit at

new military ruler Gen

Musharraf who, in a coup, took

over power dismissing Nawaz

Sharif on several criminal

charges. The Summit, which is

a regular annual affair, was

stopped literally at the eleventh

hour from holding its annual

conference of heads of govern-

ments and states, perhaps for

the first time on bilateral polit-

ical reasons. As the big brother was full of fury and sound, the

other members of the organiza-

tion kept quiet without making

much noise, perhaps to main tain the dignity of the organi-

However, hopes have again

been raised with the recent re-

ports (DS 4 August) that new ef-

forts are afoot to salvage the

almost 'sunk' Summit. The re-

port said that "a process is on to

reactivate the SAARC and hold

its next Summit", adding that

diplomatic observers in Dhaka

'feel that the ball has already

been set rolling to revive the

SAARC activities in full swing,

What can be more pleasing and

encouraging for its member

Bangladesh which fathered it

some 15 years ago. Bangladesh

can't allow the organization to

die unsung due to a some politi-

cal crisis somewhere having no

the report the whether the ball

has been set rolling with the

nodding of Mr Bajpayee that he

would now attend the Summit

and was ready to sit on the same

table with Gen Musharraf. We.

however keep the hopes high,

presuming it would be so, be-

cause there is no alternative or

option than to hold the summit

at an early date as Gen

Musharraf will be holding

power in Pakistan for more

than two years, under a

Supreme Court order, when

general elections would be held

to hand over power to elected

Main Purpose

SAARC was established some

collective and uniform eco-

15 years ago at the initiative of

The main purpose for which

It is, however, not clear from

link with the organizations.

countries,

particularly

following a lull a about a year.

It's Summit Time

Regional Cooperation), which its political ambivalence

due to the most unexpected de- or so, SAARC has gone into

mand of Indian Prime Minister limbo for no earthly reasons.

was scheduled to be held in against another country.

SAARC

INDIA and Since then the Hizb and other the court. Bhutto is now living Both the countries have as-Pakistan, the rebel groups have heightened in exile while Nawaz is sumed the status of nuclear two South their operation against the In- languishing in Attok Fort powers while their economies Asian neigh- dian forces taking toll of serving life sentences. General bours, cele- several lives in attacks and Pervez Musharraf has made it brated their counter-attack preceding the known that both Nawaz and Independence Day celebrations. Benazir has no place in independence New Delhi also faced almost a Pakistan politics. He suggested days on August 14 and 15, with similar situation in its trouble- alternative leadership. In so verbal fusil lade against each torn northeastern region where doing, the general is in fact making politics difficult for the politicians and planning to groups are active. Hence the stay longer in power than what is usually anticipated. On Agust 15, General Pervez broadcast on the eve of the Musharraf expanded his cabi-

net with the induction of four lamented that though more more ministers and reconstithan half a century has already tuted the omnipotent Executive elapsed after India became free Council -- the main from British rule, the administrative organ of the magnitude of abject poverty has state. Previously the Executive not undergone marked Council comprised senior improvement. He warned of the officers of the armed forces and unholy nexus between a few civilian technocrats. The criminals and politicians due technocrats have now been to which, corruption, violence dropped and in their place the and religious intolerance ministers for finance, home, increased manifold. Women are commerce and foreign affairs being subjected to repression in will now sit in the Executive an increasing number. Albeit remarkable achievement in the In General Pervez Musharfield of technology, particularly

tion as well as day-to-day run claimed. ning of the state. Analysts are Pakistan has once again reof the opinion that in reconstilapsed into the days of dracotuting the Executive Council the nian military rule. General Permilitary ruler's intention is to vez Musharraf, the military ruler, who usurped power on October 12 last year by dismissing a popularly civilian government, promised that he would strive for restoring democracy at the grassroots through the process of devolution of power. His promised devolution plan aims at reviving district and tehsil councils and transfer of Pakistan also celebrated its Inpower from the provinces to dependence Day amidst tight those bodies in the villages. He. however, did not give any time- tween the police and supporters frame for a return to civilian of Nawaz as well as threats of

Much water summit, to evolve some accept- has already given Gen

sudden post- negative vote or so-called veto it is better to follow the ground

ponement of power used by a single country rules of the political game and

Annual Summit of the SAARC whole organization on a whim- need two hands to clap, so one

During the last nine months

the same table with Pakistan's own internal problems and Summit was against the letter

(South Asian Association for sical bilateral issue because of hand always washes the other.

flown able solution, without vitiating Musharraf three years to run

down the atmosphere within the con - the country and hold elections

river ference hall. But it is almost un- during the period to handover

thinkable that an obnoxious power to the elected leaders. So

would jeopardise or torpedo the call spade a spade. Just as you

Each member country has its postponement of the SAARC

each try to solve them in its and spirit of its charter is an

own way. But as they say, accepted fact. Because it has

"Desperate diseases must have been clearly stated in the

IT, development in the social

with it and has even rolled

backwards, the president

give an acceptability of the suzernaity of the armed forces in the country's administration before the return of the civilian rule. The military is extending its tentacles and making its grip firm on the statecraft as Ayub Khan and Ziaul Haque did in the '50s and '70s. Like India, security. There were scuffles berule, though the higher court bomb blasts. Sectarian clashes has given him a two-year man- are a regular feature of Pakdate in an unprecedented ver- istani life. dict. In the meantime the lead-

As the peoples of India and ers of the two major parties -- Pakistan are celebrating 53rd former Prime Ministers Nawaz anniversaries of their indepen-Sharif and Benazir Bhutto -- dence from long two centuries have been disqualified and of British colonial rule they are barred from taking part in pol- likely to be introspective as to itics for their convictions by what they received in return.

What SAARC

Charter Says

vis-a-vis the almost forced

That Mr Vajpayee's stand

ful, while the cabinet plays a

second fiddle in policy formula-

are ranked as poverty-stricken

at least for the time-being. Here lies the biggest tragedy

and backward. Whatever developments have taken place are only cosmetic in nature. These have not trickled down to the level of the poorer segments. Resources have been endlessly drained out for unproductive military expenditure. Peace between them has largely remained elusive. In India democracy is only a facade and in Pakistan it is regarded as not suited for the country. The leaders are in one pole while the masses are on the opposite. What an anomaly! When both these countries emerged 53 years ago as two separate independent entities there were high hopes among their populace. Initially prospects were also no less bright. But soon these have been dashed to the ground. In dependence for the majority of the peoples of both India and Pakistan has largely proved to be a myth. A staggering number of 15 million people were estimated to have perished in raf's administrative setup, the communal strife following the Executive Council is all-power- partition in 1947. Many more millions were uprooted from their hearth and home and had to begin life anew in unusual circumstances. Yet there is no end to bickerings, violence and bloodshed. There is also no prospect of peace in the fore. seeable future. Both India and Pakistan appear to have been caught and trapped in the whirlpool and black whole of pulls and counter-pulls of retrogression from which there seems to be no escape for them,

of partition imposed by the British for the benefit of the elitist leadership through wedging cleavages on communal lines, a new and unknown element in the long history of the region. The game plan had been to ensure that South Asia could not be in a position to emerge as an economically viable and stable region. Consequently, there is no peace in India, there in no peace in Pakistan and there is no peace between them as well as in the region.

lacks, or pretends to lack cer-

tain sensitive qualities to reach

that goal, the most sensitive be-

ing its over play of its big

brother attitude towards it

small neighbours. In fact, in-

tentionally, or unintentionally,

India always keeps the pot

India's posture as a 'big pow-

er' towards its small neighbours

has been clinically analysed,

in-depth, so to say, by The Daily

Star Editor, Mr Mahfuz Anam,

in a recent signed article, "How

is India as a neighbour" (DS 6th

August). He had inter alia said:

"For India, there are only two

neighbours - China and

Pakistan. The rest of us are just

one of the most significant for-

eign policy failure of India. In

fact, the bottom line is that

miscalculation and wrong jux -

taposition of foreign policy per-

ception has always created a de-

ceptive smokescreen for India

to misjudge things. India has

thus developed a 'China-

Pakistan syndrome' and wants

its small neighbours to follow

its steps with which majority of

them disagree. China may be

too big a power for India, but

Pakistan, just a 'minnow' com-

China is a different question.

Then why this 'Pakistan-pho-

bia' is haunting India al-

through, thereby magnifying

Pakistan much larger than its

size and creating thereby more

problems for the subcontinent

than solved.

Bangladesh stands out as

geographic entities.'

a safe distance.

Dhaka in 1971, suppressed for 28 years, reached INDIA TODAY GROUP ONLINE.

"The government is seized of the matter," Pakistan informa tion minister Javed Jabbar told The Dawn.

government would make an ap-

there was a positive side to the publication of the report. "One hopes the document contributes to a future that is better than ers, the Ojheri Camp and the boiling to keep its neighbours at the past," he said.

Other official sources told The Dawn that the government was trying to find out if the report was "doctored". But Maj Gen Rao Farman Ali, former justification for protecting the political adviser to the East Pakistan government, said the report seemed genuine, and contained everything he had said in his deposition to the War ports.

Inquiry Commission. Asked how be thought the

Chaudhry in Delhi

Neighbour



Chaudhry in Delhi

THE ousted, ethnic-Idian Prime Minister of Fiji, Mahendra Chaudhry, has begun a ten-day visit to India aimed at rallying support for his demand that his government be reinstated During his visit Chaudhry will have meetings with President K R Narayanan, as well as the prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who invited Chaudhry and who will host an official lunch in his

Pakistan Probes

By Samar Halarnkar



THE Pakistan government find out how the Hamoodur Rahman Report on Pakistan's surrender in

He was quoted as saying the

propriate statement at an appropriate time about the facts surrounding the Report and its Still, the minister believed

report reached India. Gen Farman Ali told The Dawn that originally 12 copies of the report had been prepared, two of which had been taken by the late Z.A. Bhutto. However, one copy was taken back when the military raided his Larkana residence following the 1977 army takeover.

Former army chief Gen Mirza Aslam Beg said the publication of the report by INDIA TODAY GROUP ONLINE was very embarrassing for the Pakistan government and every citizen of the country.

Gen Beg, who now heads a political party, said now the government should publish the full account of the report, along with other reports which so far had not seen the light of the day, like the 1965 war assessment, the inquiry report on the 1988 air crash which had killed Gen Ziaul Haq and many oth-Kargil episode reports should also be made public. Gen Beg said. He said there was no point

in hiding facts. Gen Beg said there was no people who were guilty. In his opinion, instead of offering excuses and apologies, the government should publish all re-

Courtesy: India Today

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmad, President of Bangladesh: "The name of Sheikh Mujib is inseparable from the history of creation of independent and sovereign Bangladesh. His immense sacrifices for welfare of people is unparalleled in history... Now it is the responsibility of all of us to materialise his dream of a

'Golden Bengal'. Unity of all is needed for that." Anwar Hossain Manju, Communications Minister of

Bangladesh: "I have doubts about holding of the national election as we are yet to ensure that polls would be held in the country after every five years. There was always such apprehension in the past and it still persists because we have failed to establish constitutional politics in the last 50 years.'

Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India: "Borders could not be redrawn either in the name of religion or on the strength of the sword...Pakistan would not be able to get its way through the undeclared war that it has been waging against India"

Parvez Musharraf, Chief Executive of Pakistan: "The sacrifices rendered by our Kashmiri brethren for their right of self-determination, despite being subjugated to the worst form of atrocities and abuses by the Indians... is living proof of this...Pakistan stands united with its Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their just cause and will continue to extend all moral, diplomatic and political support to their indigenous struggle against statesponsored terrorism."

Kulsoom Nawaz, Nawaz Sharif's wife: "We have observed this Independence Day in chains and I was not allowed to address the rally... Even the pigeons which the PML workers brought with them were not allowed to be set free."

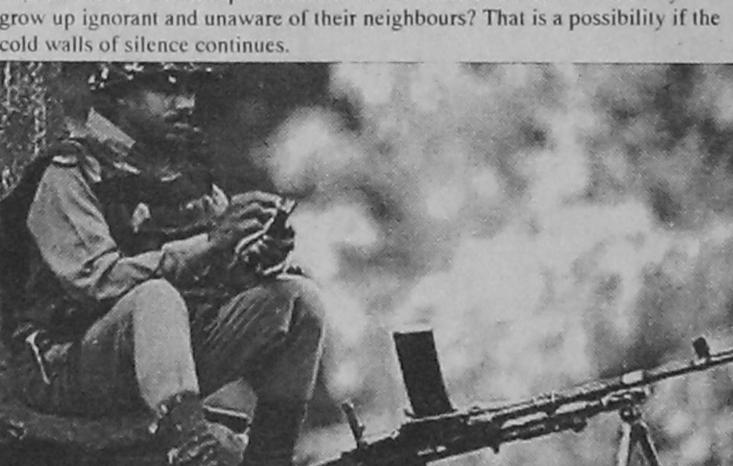
Fazl Haq Qureshi, Hizbul negotiator on Kashmir: "Efforts were on to get the dialogue going to resolve the Kashmir problem... other Mujahideen groups would also join the dialogue once the negotiations reached a certain point... But it is not practicable for Pakistan to be involved in the process initially. There are some difficulties in it that Pakistan should realize."

Homage to Bangabandu



T ENS of thousands of Bangladeshis marched barefoot to the I former residence of Sheikh MujihhUr Rahman in west Dhaka on August 15 to mark the 25 anniversary of the assassination of the country's founder. Men, women and children carrying black banners and flowers filed past the three-storey private home where Mujib was murdered along with close family members during a coup led by a group of rebel army officers.

These children are the representatives of the Saarc countries. Would they grow up ignorant and unaware of their neighbours? That is a possibility if the cold walls of silence continues.



Defence expenditure continues to increase and youths increasingly become part of the military. If summits remain stalled, a generation will be lost.

country adopts its remedies ac-

cording to its needs. Sometimes a cesarean opersovereignty of that country.

maintain the organisation's cussed the 'political weather' of intact, neutrality and integrity, bilat - the region, advising the General

desperate remedies", so each Charter that "no one state, or a combination of members" would be allowed to impose its decision on the organization, It ation becomes must to save a has been further clarified by desperate situation. Hence, the Prof Shamsul Huq, who was less someone pokes his nose in Foreign Minister of the internal affairs of its Bangladesh, when the proposal neighbour, it is better, because of SAARC was initiated and poking nose and advising him launched in 1985. He had, inter from across the fence what is do alia, said some time back that tantamount to infringement of "no one state alone or in combination with others can im-Moreover, when President pose its decision, because una-Clinton during his last March nimity, and NOT, consensus, is visit to the subcontinent, vis- the basis of all decisions. Had it ited Pakistan and held talks been wrongly interpreted by Mr with Gen Musharraf, in Hug then it should have been Islamabad, after he had long contradicted long ago to put the discussions with Mr Bajpayee record straight. But no such in Delhi. Undoubtedly, he had- contradiction or rejection of n't discussed with the General this interpretation by members about the weather of Islamabad. of the organization has been tion mechanism to save us from nomic development. And to Of course, he must have dis-done so far. So it stenches there

It can't be denied that India eral issues were kept outside its to ease the storing weather to as the largest democracy in the jurisdiction. But it always pro - have dialogue with India on world, with its huge manpower vided an opportunity to the Kashmir, and also to make a and vast natural resources, can heads of governments and clear announcement about re-, have a 'dream' to become a states to discuss their bilateral turn to democracy of the coun- 'regional power' or even a 'world issue's, in sidelines of the try. Pakistan's Supreme Court power'. But, unfortunately, it

The writer is a retired UN of-

pared to India, and India's Defence Minister George Farnandez once said Pakistan can be tackled very easily but

No More Childish Games If any meaningful and last ing outcome is expected from the SAARC not only for the sub continent but also for the region as a whole, then let the leaders

wash off their dirty political hands and make a straight approach with a mind free from any disturbing "ifs" and "buts" about one another. The dog-inthe-manger policy on the part of any of the member countries would be disasterions for all. Hence there should be no more delay in holding the SAARC Summit which is already over-

due. And no more foot-dragging. Before I conclude, I want to quote India's former Prime Minister, Mr Gujral, Mr Gujral said that SAARC should not be linked to any bilateral differences and strongly urged that the Summit should be held as early as possible. Mr Gujral also expressed the hope that and meeting between Mr Bajpayee and Gen Musharraf would help de-escalate ten-

Let these 'words of wisdom' fall on right ears at the right time. Let Mr Bajpayee come out with a declaration that he had already endorsed the proposal to hold the next Summit at Kathmandu and he would at tend it to make its deliberations