The Baily Star

Founder-Editor : Late S.M. Ali Dhaka, Monday, December 18, 2000

For Impetus to **Economic Groupings**

COME work has been going on under the D-8 and BIMSTEC umbrellas, the two relatively new economic groupings which seem quietly determined to slough off their neophyte image. BIMSTEC is an economic cooperation forum still in the formative stage. It comprises Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand and has a vast potential to be a close-knit entity on the strength of the shared geographical contiguity of countries in the region. It has an office in Bangkok and with the diplomatic representatives of member-countries making it a point to meet there regularly, the grouping remains in a state of activation in terms of stock-taking and looking ahead into the future. BIMSTEC has been of great help in pushing the agenda for improved inter-state transit, something which fits into the broader perspective of its commitment to Trans-Asian communications network.

The Developing Eight or D-8 on the other hand. may not be an economic grouping of countries geographically adjacent to each other but its potential to act as a reasonably cohesive economic forum stems from fraternal ties. Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey are a compact group of Muslim countries within the OIC which very thoughtfully decided some three and a half years ago to constitute the D-8 for a fusion of their experiences. They are in different stages of economic development and yet some common con-

cerns have bound them together.

The grouping originally mooted by Turkey and launched in Istanbul in mid-1997 has since identified 13 key areas of cooperation with a strong technology and expertise sharing content. If banking, shipping, customs union, insurance and travel facilities are improved with a greater inter-action between the private sectors to top it off, then all doors will be flung open to market interpenetration across the board. That geographical distance is no bar to two-way market expansion within an economic grouping if adequate political will were brought to bear on the question has been a proven fact.

As the current chairman of the Developing Eight Bangladesh hosts the D-8 Commission meeting in Dhaka some time next month by way of preparing the ground for the summit in Cairo early next year. Let the Dhaka input lay the foundation for a useful summit in Cairo. We need to take the crucial step from rhetoric to action to graduate from any 'talk shop' to an effective economic forum.

End the Traveller's Trauma

CACH year, millions of people travel to their an-Lestral homes to celebrate Eid with their loved ones. Carrying assorted gifts, and even cash on their person, they use their hard-earned income to buy tickets on various modes of transport launches, trains, buses - to take them safely home. But year after year, a majority of them go through the most unimaginable trauma simply in order to

make this journey. Thousands of people have already started crowding the ticket counters of the BIWTA and private river transport companies, looking for tickets to various destinations. Most of these travellers have to grapple against amazing odds simply to get home. Reservations, when possible, now cost 100 per cent more than before. Scalpers operate a black market in tickets with complete impunity. A large number of seats are simply not available. having been "reserved" by influential people or the

companies themselves. This is the situation at the main launch terminals in Dhaka city: the situation in the bus and train terminals is the same, if not worse. We have stressed on this issue before, and we do so again, with even more emphasis now, that those

responsible must take steps to end this trauma. First and foremost, the underhand practices must be stopped. We are appalled and disturbed by the permeation of extortion to such an extent that it seems to be accepted as the norm, especially during this holiday rush period. We urge the authorities to ensure the rights of the traveller. The ordinary person must be able to make a simple acrossthe-counter purchase without having to run from pillar to post or, be forced to pay an exorbitant fare from his hard-earned income. Secondly, the transport sector must plan far ahead of the seasonal rush. With a mere ten days left for the Eid festival, it is surprising that extra vehicles, on land and water, have yet to be pressed into active service. Bringing the extra transportation into service at a late date will not solve the problem, as many travellers will already be exposed to much physical discomfort and mental stress. The final aspect that requires vigilance is the safety of the travellers. Let us learn from the past and ensure that overcrowding and short-cuts that ignore other basic safety precautions are not ignored .Here, once again, the authorities must step up their surveillance of vehicles, especially at key points such as terminals and crossings.

At the end of the day, the joy of this festival will be seriously marred if the ordinary traveller is not given a minimum level of accessibility to resources. provided with basic levels of security and allowed to make the most of this vacation.

In Quest for Ultimate Weapon

The non-nuclear countries like South Korea, Japan and Taiwan share common concern about North Korean and Chinese ballistic missile threats, and have been working together and with the US in trying to develop individual responses to these threats. China has however been successful in dividing these states and dividing them from the US and vice-versa so that it would be difficult to build a critical mass on a theatre wide ABM system.

tration, all of which had strong roots in the anti-nuclear movements in 1960s and 1970s that there is a nuclear weapons stability in the world and that to tamper with this would mean disaster.

HE strategic weapons on

coupled with ballistic missile

delivery system have been in

existence, for more than half a

century. They are still the ulti-

mate weapons which dramati-

cally, and in virtually a single

step, eclipsed all other readily

deployable weapons the world

has known so far. Although an

antimissile missile system chal-

lenges the efficacy of ballistic

missile delivered strategic

weapon such as nuclear war head

it will lack offensive capability if

at all, developed and produced.

As a result the all powerful status

of nuclear weapon both as a

vertical of destruction and an

instrument to deter all future

wars remains. According to the

agnostics what has been invented

can not be less invented. That the

world, more or less, came to term

with the nuclear reality was

apparent from the signing of ABM

treaty in 1972 between the US

and the USSR both of whom were

reluctant to trigger a race for

destroying each others incoming

ballistic missile attack. Instead

they wanted to stabilise this

nuclear weapons in their posses-

The premise of the 1972 ABM

treaty had been that there was no

solution for the threat emanaling

from the combination of nuclear

weapon and ballistic missile but

between the reasonable people

and a prudent balance of num-

bers and throw-weight between

the nuclear powers nuclear war

would be mutually deterred. The

world was to convinced of this

theory that there is still a belief

and it exists strongly within the

US's Clinton Administration,

Britain's Blair Government and

Germany's Schroeder Adminis-

IF there is one thing that

Indian bureaucrats excel at, it

is evading public accountabil-

ity especially where underprivi-

leged people are involved. They

can even negate a good cause by

undermine universal and free

elementary education through

the Constitution (83rd Amend-

placed before the Lok Sabha any

Article 45 of the Directive Princi-

ples of the Constitution which

casts a duty upon the state to

provide "within a period of ten

education for all children until...

the age of fourteen." But, in sub-

stance, the Bill whittles down and

greatly weakens the right to uni-

It achieves this astounding feat

by adding a new Article (21A) to

the Constitution's right-to-life

provision, which says: (1) The

state shall provide "free and

compulsory education" to all

children between six and four-

teen. (2) The right shall be "en-

forced in such manner as the

state may... determine." (3) The

state shall not make any law for

free education in relation to pri-

vate schools.

versal elementary education.

praising it to triviality.

day now.

sion at deterrence level.

the scale of nuclear and

thermo-nuclear weapons

Every one does not however, share this belief. Not only that the sceptics saw in it the recreation 'nuclear stone age' where states could with relative impurity threat each other with ballistic missile and nuclear warhead, the treaty itself was signed in bad faith. Even at the time of signing the ABM treaty the translantic scientific community was contemplating methods of defeating ballistic missiles by destroying them in their flight. Perhaps a disclosure of such intention prompted the Chevchenko Administration in the USSR to seriously consider, at one stage. the launching of a pre-emptive first missile strike against the west inspite of an ABM treaty in place. There are evidences that well before the signing of the ABM treaty the both sides, in their desperate search for an ultimate weapon, were already toying with the idea of neutralising each other's nuclear war-

heads even if they were launched. Dr Stefan Possony who had been called the "greatest strategic philosopher of the 20" century" had from the late 1960s been giving considerable thought to the developments of a spacebased energy-derived globallyeffective anti-ballistic missile defence system. He correctly perceived that the strategic weapons systems should be destroyed SBL as they came up in the space and before they began their descent outs their targets and before the MIRV (Multiple Independently-Targetable Re-entry Vehide)ed

Initiative (SDI), but Reagan had finally lost by the USSR by to wait till was elected President in 1980 and committed the US to

In the meantime, the Soviet began experimenting with earthbased contained nuclear explosions, beaming the energy into space to be directed at satellite,



by Brig (Rtd) M Abdul Hafiz

warheads could separate. In warheads or other targets. Indeed other words the wanted to destroy the Soviets became extremely the missile and warhead at the advanced, more so then the west. apogec of the ballistic curve. In the science of plasma weapons. Possony claimed that the science Although Possony's concept of was demonstrably in place to Anti Missile Missile came much achieve such a system but cau- earlier it was the Soviets who first tioned that the programme could committed funds and programme "stretch the budget to a bursting to actually

paper containing his ideas in would have given them exactly 1974 where he was working at the Hoover destilation on war. There are now ample evidences Revolution and Peace at Stanford that in the year before Reagan University in California. The former state governor, Ronald Reagan was then taking an interest in breaking this prevailing announced his SBI programme strategic would to end the cold war. His reaction to Stefan virtually set to throw away the Possony's initial report was the start of the strategic Defence of the end of Cold War which was

Creating a strategic ABM Possony floated a brief concept umbrella which if successful, what Reagan's SBI sought to do. came to White House Moscow had · already begun its own strategic ABM programme. When Reagan both the US and USSR were 1972 ABM Treaty. It was he start

attempting to compete with SBI and bankrupting itself in the

Launched this SBI programme, its precise purpose was to defeat the Soviet Union in the Cold War. With the Soviet defeat, the Clinton Administration found less apparent need, in any event, for a system to defeat the Soviet ICBMs and the SBI was quietly transformed more into a technoland it is still in place because sufficient momentum was generated for it during the Reagan era The anti missile shield the

to build up two years before was in fact spurred by rapid proliferation of nuclear and missile technology among the so called 'rogue state'. The proposed seems now to be lying in backburner because the whole concept of a major threat from rouge states defies belief after a careful review of threat perceptions. Even to his fellow democrats Clinton's proposed missile defence was at the best a gift to the arm industry and at the worst a provocation to Russia. The US genuine treat perhaps come from China which is to day more sound economically than the Soviet Union was. It can within a short span of time,

field a nuclear ballistic missile threat to the US as it said it would do which would be evens bit as credible and as lifethreatening as the former Soviet treat. Even as Clinton administration back tracked on ABM issue, a new Republican president-elect would certainly infuse new lease of life to the issue.

Even if the United States is still relying on the deterrence capability of her superior nuclear arsenal When President Reagan the new entrants like India an Israel are not. To them the ultimate weapon is the combination of both ballistic missile and antiballistic missile. India, highly conscious of the missile-based nuclear threat from Pakistan has clearly, and very secretly begun work to defend against Shaheen II and Ghauri ballistic missile. She ogy development agency. The has done this by using domestic muted ABM programme still in defence scientific establishment development in the US was built but also by building a strategic on the strategic foundation of SBI alliance with Israel which could offer Arrow ABM technology to

The non-nuclear countries like South Korea, Japan and Taiwan share common concern about Clinton Administration proposed North Korean and PRC's ballistic missile threats, and have been working together and with the US in trying to develop individual responses to these threats. The PRC has however been successful in dividing these states and dividing them from the US and viceversa so that it would be difficult to build a critical mass on a theatre wide ABM system. Whatever policy may be followed by these players nuclear capable or ones under nuclear threat, there is no evidence as yet of anyone having the ultimate weapon the nuclear devices to strike as well as a protective shield to parry such strikes from others.

Eightythird Amendment Bill: Subverting the Right to Education

Praful Bidwai writes from New Delhi

Education is a fundamental entilement. In this hierarchical, mass deprivation-based society, it is perhaps the sole instrument of mobility. In modern society, the state doesn't come before the people. It exists to subserve functions relevant to the people. That alone gives it legitimacy.

The government is about to at one fell swoop 150 million-plus children in the age group 0 to 6 ment) Bill. This is likely to be years from access to free education. Educationists recognise this as a critical period in a child's The Bill pays lip service to development as well as intelligence and personality formation. Childhood Care and Education is a fundamental right derived from Articles 21 and 45 of the Constiyears... free and compulsory tution. The Supreme Court in the Unni Krishna vs. State of Andhra Pradesh case mandates this. This far-reaching judgement is the fountainhead of the entire Indian debate on the right to education, which made its way into most party manifestos in the mid-1990s. This led to the Committee of Education Ministers, and eventually, to the present Bill now being manipulated by the

> HRD ministry. The Unni Krishna judgement notes that among the Directive Principles, only Article 45 stipulates a time-limit, thus underscoring the issue's urgency. It

Now, the first clause removes holds that this right cannot alone. So tomorrow, if a child receiving its aid. But private remain a "mere pious wish" for demands education, an official decades. The promise can be can ask her to prove she is Indian redeemed only if a child has "a and not Bangladeshi or Nepali! fundamental right to free educa- The communal implications of tion up to the age of 14 years." this need no comment. The Bill confines the right to only Secondly, "compulsory" can be so half the 375 million under-14 interpreted that the compulsion children. But in India, most poor is cast upon on the child's parfamilies cannot provide Early ents. After all, the Bill empowers Childhood Care without state the state to act in "such manner support. The girls who perform as the state may determine." sibling care account for the vast This can lead to re-victimisation majority of those who never enrol, of the original victim of poverty.

> It is the state's duty to provide state's whims. The state can these. The Bill frees it of that plead it lacks resources or adminduty. Only those who can send istrative capability. The Centre their children to private pre- can pass the buck to the states. schools will enjoy the Bill's bene- However, Unni Krishna judgment fits. This violates the govern- was explicit that Article 45 manment's professed commitment to the universalisation of education. The Bill limits the right to education to "citizens", not "children". But a child is not a citizen. Universal rights are available to all, including children. But certain rights are limited to citizens

The Bill makes the enforcement of

Daycare centres are essential. rights conditional upon the dates free education irrespective of the state's capacity. Equally flawed is the Bill's third clause, which explicitly states that the state should "not make any law" for free education in respect of private institutions "not maintained" by it or not

schools are not some isolated islands unconnected to public institutions for registration. curricula and degrees. You can't leave out this substantial, growing, sub-sector if you want to universalise education. Where government schools are non-existent or under pressure. the state should be able to order private schools to take pupils free. The Bill disempowers the government, while privileging private schools. This is obnox-

The Bill is silent on quality. It shows no recognition of education as part of an integrated process of development of people. Therefore, under it, education The Indian state's record in the could be reduced to mere literacy. social sector, especially educa-Fundamentally, the Bill is an tion, is appalling. It is now replacattempt to wriggle out of a Consti- ing trained schoolteachers with tutional obligation cast upon the ill-trained shiksha karmis. It is government, and that too dismantling schools. Unni through the dubious route of Krishna was to be an antidote to removing Article 45, rather by this. The Bill will kill it and cheat amending specific laws. The Rs India's children. 8,000 crore budget it mentions

represents just 0.4 per cent of GDP. What is needed is a doubling of the total spending on education (3.2 per cent of GDP). The 83rd Amendment bears comparison with another initiative taken four years ago to make the right to work fundamentalas demanded by trade unions for decades. This is a worthy

But unless the state is serious about guaranteeing the right practically, the whole thing can become a jokea "right" cruelly negated in practice. That's worse than not having a right. That move was dropped. So should the 83rd Amendment.

Education is a fundamental entilement. In this hierarchical, mass deprivation-based society. it is perhaps the sole instrument of mobility. In modern society, the state doesn't come before the people. It exists to sub-serve functions relevant to the people. That alone gives it legitimacy.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

The US Supreme Court Elects Bush the President

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton

In America everyone is guaranteed the right to vote. There is no guarantee, however, that everyone's vote

will be counted. As the Republicans have demonstrated, they can count on the "Republican" Supreme

Court of the United States to prevent the counting of the non-Republican votes.

HE most popular rap song in America today goes like: "Who let the dog out? Who? Who? Who? Who?" ("Who?" is sang dog-like, 'Woof! Woof!) by a group called Baha Man. And the most popular topic of conversation at the coffee machines and water coolers (for those not fasting) is: "Who stole the Presidency? Bush? Gore? Bush? Gore? Based on what transpired last week, the answer must be Bush and the Republicans, courtesy of the Supreme Court of the United States. Wherever President-elect Bush goes, the band should appropriately play. "Hail to the Thief!" rather than "Hail to the Chief." Bush will start governing in January not with a mandate from the people, but from the Supreme

Popular vote is the bedrock of democracy. Nationwide Vice President Al Gore received over 337,000 more popular votes that

Texas Governor George Bush. legally cast votes, Al Gore would Supreme Court ordered partial face and repeatedly overturned Yet, the second place finisher, have won Florida, Instead, in all winner. Yes, I know that in Amer- finisher, George Bush, was it to 537. That's when the Repub- state's rights are paramount, ica the Electoral College, repre- declared the winner in Florida licans got the US Supreme Court unless a Republican is being senting the state's rights, not the and of the Presidency by the US to vacate the Florida Supreme harmed by it! They voted for Bush popular vote elects the President. Supreme Court.

Bush, has been declared the That, however, makes the American presidential election less networks to call Florida for Gore ordered the hand-recount of Justices O'Connor and Kennedy than truly democratic. Even the on election night was correct. uncounted ballots to resume, and are swing votes, who sometimes state's right issue was trampled. What the voters did not know is this time Bush's lead dwindled switch sides. The other three over by the US Supreme Court. that their votes for Gore would to 154. It was clear further Rehnquist, Scalia and Thomas -Twice the Florida Supreme Court not be counted, for a variety of recounting was going to put Gore are rightwing ideologues ready to ordered all the votes rejected by excuses. The Republicans tipped ahead. Petrified Republicans sacrifice principles for causes the machines to be hand- their hand from the very begin- trashed the Florida Supreme recounted. Twice the US ning. Knowing full well that a Court in inflammatory terms and Let us take a closer look at them. Supreme Court overturned the fair recount will result in a Gore urgently appealed to the US and ordered that the recounting criminal. An automatic machine stop the recounting, and the with Chief Justice Warren Bur- A product of affirmative action be stopped, and Bush's razor thin recount of votes trimmed Bush's Court obliged with a 5-4 decision. ger's court that he was known as which aids blacks. Thomas is there were a fair recount of all 1800 to over 900. A Florida

probability the second place rejected by the machine, trimmed judgements. To these Justices,

Bush; Justice Ruth Ginsburg rebuffed by even O'Connor and (1993). Clinton; and Justice Kennedy. Rehnquist's back is Stephen Breyer (1994), Clinton). The mantra of the five conserva- cannot retire until he is absotive judges (Rehnquist, O'Connor, lutely sure that the next Presi-Scalia, Kennedy and Thomas) has dent will replace him with his been the supremacy of the state's clone. That's why he installed

hand recount of some of the cards the Florida Supreme Court's Court's order. The Florida twice-once on Election Day, and Exit polling that enabled the Supreme Court in a 4-3 decision more decisively on December 12. dear to their conservative agenda.

For a long time Rehnquist, Florida Supreme Court's decision victory, they began acting like the Supreme Court to once again to whose views were so far out of line margin of victory preserved. If original lead by half from over Ignoring the will of the voters, the the "lone ranger." When the virulently anti-affirmative US Supreme Court stopped the Supreme Court overturned actions. Instead of looking after recount and handed George Bush Muhammad Ali's conviction for the interests of blacks, as Marthe Presidency of the United refusing to fight in Vietnam as a shall did, Thomas's views are States. Sensing that every legal conscientious objector. 8-0. move he made to have the votes Rehnquist abstained. When Earl recounted would be blocked by Warren wanted to resign. Ronald the US Supreme Court, Gore Reagan quickly nominated conceded. Gore took a bullet in Rehnquist and had him conhis head for the welfare of the firmed before the Democrats regained the Senate majority in The Supreme Court's bias was 1986. Rehnquist was so controversial that even in a Republican-Seven out of the nine justices of controlled Senate, a record 33

Associate Judge killing him. He wants to retire. He rights over federal interference. Bush. Scalia wants to replace into their own hands, and com-In this case, they made an about Rehnquist as the Chief Justice.

That too can happen only under a Bush Presidency. President George Bush (the

President-elect's father) nominated African-American Clarence Thomas in 1991 to replace the first African American nominated to the Supreme Court (by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967). Thurgood Marshall, even though the American Bar Association questioned Thomas's qualifications. While Thurgood Marshall was a legendary African American lawyer, who won the Brown vs. the Board of Education case in 1954 that led to desegregation of American schools, Thomas had no such credentials. As soon as he was nominated, university Professor Anita Hill accused him of sexual harassment that led to a Senate hearing. The Senate confirmed Thomas by a 51-49 margin, the closest in US history. closer to that of the Ku Klux Klan. Thomas's white wife, Ginny, works for the Bush campaign. Any self-respecting Justice would have excused himself from such a pivotal case due to conflict of interest. Unfortunately, such decorum and sophistication one has come not to expect from

In America everyone is guaranteed the right to vote. There is no guarantee, however, that everyone's vote will be counted. As the Republicans have demonstrated. they can count on the "Republican" Supreme Court of the United States to prevent the counting of

Thomas or from his other four

the non-Republican votes. The Rehnquist Court had criticized other judges for their judicial activism. Their Republican proxies had accused the Florida Supreme Court of judicial aggression. At the end the five conservative Justices of the US Supreme Court, sworn to uphold the law impartially, took the law

mitted judicial holocaust!

Political magic lamp Sir. As one of the millions of harassed citizens (due to poor governance), the blunt DS editorial of 12 December is to be welcomed, drawing attention of the Prime Minister to the amateurish way in which the country is being governed (before we talk about democracy and lofty and high-

flown political ideologies). Not that the professionals are missing in the feams and in the networks, but the leadership is blasé and squinted, and too much politically polarised, busy with one non-issue after another, raking history, seeking offensive garbage for the opponents. History is not staple food, but a research tool and a recording and

preserving medium. It is one of many reasons why the elected term of office may be reduced from the current five years, so as not to allow fossil to grow, and discourage entrenched administrations, who make hay while the sun shines for them, and not for the citizens. How temptation and wrong motiva-

does not mean private gain, regardless of the personality imposed upon the janata. Immature democratic toddling period starts with autocratic and feudal tinges. How far the leaders have carried out the political purging of the soul?

Hawking political philosophy by political parties is not what the citizens expect from the government or the opposition. The politicians should speak like nonpoliticians (if they understand what is meant by this factual but elusive statementit has something to do with statesmanship), and not mix masala in every dish (like too much salt).

This attitude of the politicians reveals that they are not sure of themselves, and live on alibis. There is too much unwanted advice floating around at the public meetings and indoor gatherings. We have to develop the peer level ambience. The political leaders look down upon others. The political glamour displayed today is virtually euphoric,

seen on the computer screen (Heart of the Matter column, DS, 12 December).

regaining the polls, it should gird the public services, contain corgarment factories, as the majority outbreak of fires was due to stamsures were not imposed on daily, minute-to-minute basis.). AMA Dhaka

Sylhet Rly Station Sir, Recently I had the misfortune

of stepping into Sylhet Railway Station. If one wants to experience hell on earth, he may have a look into the place. It is absolutely in filth, stinking and disorderly. The entire station has been occupied by vagabonds, professional beggars, countless urchins and anti-social elements. It seems the only rule prevailing there is law-

tions are related? Public service resembling the virtual reality division city now. There are viability of foreign loan or a forscores of high profile and high eignaided project? placed ministers and politicians from both the benches. The con-If the ruling party is serious about scious citizens of Sylhet have on an UNDP aided project. many a time staged their activities in support of different issues work, cost, period, our financial ruption, punish the offenders with strong voices. I wonder, how and foreign loan involvement, (including the management of the could Sylhet Railway Station importance and justification of escape their care and attention. of those who died during the Now, I understand why my ageing aunt told me that she often prays learn that our Election Commispede, as physical safety mea- to Almighty upon entering this sion has appointed a foreign railway station so that she can disembark from the shortest route and escape from this garbage bin! After my recent encounter with this place my fervent sector corporation or an autonoprayers are 'God save me from mous organisation has ever this place.!' And I know it is no use asking for a clean up because no one listens or cares! Tanzia Choudhury Chittagong

> Foreign aid Sir, Do our political leaders and

bureaucrats have the capability, technical know how or efficiency to know the pros and cons, work lessness. Sylhet on paper is a out the cost benefit or economic

We understand that our Election Commission has embarked We do not know the nature.

the UNDP project. We are however stunned to

consultant for the project on a monthly salary of taka ten lakh. Never before we have heard that our government, public appointed any person in our country on a monthly salary of

taka ten lakh. What sort of practice is this? What sort of foreign aid is this? Is this not a violation of human rights and misuse of public money of a poor country?

OHKabir

transparent and hypocritical. this "Republican" Supreme Court Senators voted against his confirwere appointed by Republican mation. Presidents (Chief Justice William Antonin Scalia, a native New Rehnquist (1972). Nixon; Justice Jersian who was a Judge in the John Paul Stevens (1975), Ford: area the writer lives, is well Justice Sandra O'Connor (1981). known for his extremist views. Reagan: Justice Antonin Scalia Scalia, along with Rehnquist and (1986). Reagan; Justice Anthony Thomas form the Court's extreme Kennedy (1988), Reagan; Justice right. Their attempt to character-David Souter (1990), Bush: ize the Florida Supreme Court's Justice Clarence Thomas (1991), decision as unconstitutional was

Would the authorities concerned kindly clarify the matter? Wari, Dhaka-1203