Dhaka, Tuesday, December 26, 2000

### The Message is of Peace and Brotherhood

THE month of Ramadan signifying the spirituality I of the mind over matter culminates into Eid, the greatest festival of joy in the Islamic calendar. The connection between month-long self-abnegation and rejoicing at the end of it is self-explanatory. The gains achieved from a full month of selfrestraint is not supposed to be lost through a day of thoughtless joy before we settle down to the mundane routine of daily existence. Through the abstinence from food and drink for twelve hours in a row we should have grown empathetic towards the starving and undernourished millions of compatriots. And when at day-end our thirst was quenched with gulps of water and our taste-buds activated with food intake, the importance of food and drink in general must have dawned on us in a new light.

As we give alms, fitra and zakat to the havenots today we are basically reiterating our commitment to poverty alleviation. Unfortunately, the religious give-aways in cash and kind have been one-off affairs confined to specific occasions, hardly going beyond them. It is time philanthropy got organised and gathered momentum into social sectors where the budgetary allocations from conventional sources have kept low.

Eid is meant to be an occasion of collective happiness and so be it in a real sense by virtue of

an egalitarian economy. What was the flipside of our behaviour during the month of Ramadan that we need avoiding in future? Happily, the priceline more or less held in the market-place this time around as a tribute to preemptive vigil. But the number of murders committed, the magnitude of extortion perpetrated and the nearly four thousand mugging incidents reported -- all went to spoil the Ramadan ambience in no small measure.

Let the Eid be the leveller of all class differ ences in the societies and help build new bridges for brotherhood and peace around the world, cutting across ethnic and religious lines. In the Middle East and Kashmir there were Ramadan inspired cessation of hostilities that stood out as a positive element to an atmosphere for conflict resolution. We think the universal respect for the big festivals of great religions augurs well as a sobering influence on the conflicting paradigms between religions and civilisations of which the UN system got rightly seized on the fiftieth year of its birth.

On our domestic political front, we are looking for the maturity of electoral preparedness rather than a destructive naivete of pointless agitation after the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Eid Mubarak to our readers.

#### Take the NRBs on Board

OUR chief weakness in terms of resource mobili-Usation has been keeping the Bangladeshi expatriate community out of the national development orbit. We have been foreign aid or loan-minded far too long with a dangerous fancy to top it off lately for contracting suppliers' credit little surveying for the investible surpluses held by the non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) overseas. Although greater domestic resource mobilisation was touted as a success story in self-reliance terms it was basically geared to arrange the counter-part financing of foreign assistance. In that set piece scheme of things the NRBs have had very little scope for contributing to the national development process.

It is admitted on all hands though that apart from a monetary surplus in collective terms, the non-resident Bangladeshis have global insights, skills in cutting edge technology, connections, and above all, an inner urge to be of use and service to their country of origin. We have hardly ever looked beyond the remittances from the Bangladeshi wage earners and the occasional floating of bonds that has occurred could merely touch on the fringes of their potential asset. Unless they are embraced as development partners and given a sustainable stake in the national economy through a guaranteed association with various development projects they will continue to feel sidelined, even alienated. One traditional measure of their participation in the economy has been the extent to which they were putting their money upfront in the bourses or future trade but we must look much beyond that as well.

Our agenda for the NRBs should be modelled on the Indian and Chinese expatriate communities' signal contributions to the technological and economic advancement of their motherlands. They can play a significant role in transfer of technology. IT and software developments and on the infrastructural side of the overall technological development of the country. Without being vague about the 'field environment' required to draw them into our development endeavour one could only point one's finger at the 'illegal occupation' of some 47 acres said to have been earmarked for an IT village as a testcase.

In this overall context, we congratulate Tech-Bangla, an organisation of NRBs and the BUET on their having held a three-day convention for tying technologists, investors, entrepreneurs (TIEs) from amongst the resident and non-resident Bangladeshi communities. The recommendations of the convention will be editorialised upon in due course.

### Indo - Pak Relations

HERE are faint rays of hope As a matter of fact the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has become moribund that a dialogue may start due to the continuous mud slinging between the two parties. Next to SAARC, there is ASEAN, which can be between India and Pakistan considered a success story. Those nations have known to freeze political disputes and have taken a giant in the near future. Based on past experience we must keep our leap forward in economic development. fingers crossed.

The latest developments not long ago, when direct buses between the two arch enemies started running between Delhi give cause for cautious hope. To and Lahore. The passengers in begin with the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has those buses were the Prime Mindeclared a cease fire in the part of ister of India and the now ousted Kashmir, which is under her Prime Minister of Pakistan, control. Such is the sensitivity

Nawaz Sharif. Nawaz Sharif appears to have paid the price by his political eclipse because as he was basking in the new found friendship with India, Pakistani intelligence was plotting to sabotage the entire process. We may recall the brief but sharp conflict in Kargil, in the high Himalayas. Pakistan was caught red handed and the entire international community including the USA condemned her. Pakistan had to withdraw her forces across the LOC and Nawaz Sharif had to bow to US pressure.

This humiliating withdrawal was resented in Pakistan and particularly by the military establishment. A whispering campaign started against Nawaz Sharif leading to his overthrow by the army chief Pervez Musharraf, through a military coup. Nawaz Sharif has been tried in a Pakistani court and condemned to life imprisonment. By a dramatic turn of events Gen. Musharraf gripped both India and Pakistan. has sent Sharif of exile in Saudi

Arabia. This has perplexed the Pakistani people for Sharif was convicted on charges of graft and Gen. Musharraf's ascendance to power is precisely to cleanse the augean stables created by the politicians. In a TV interview Gen.

place in Indo-Pak relations back in 1964, when Field Marshal Ayub Khan was firmly in the saddle. I was the Public Relations Officer of President Ayub Khan, the first and the last Bangalee to serve on the personal entourage Musharraf appeared less than of President Ayub. News came

# The Horizon This Week

Arshad-uz Zaman

convincing when he stated that it was the friend of Sharif, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who had wanted to provide a home to Sharif. It is surprising that Saudi Arabia should exercise such influence in the internal affairs of Pakistan!

In any event Gen. Musharraf appears on the defensive. The question is that with such a weak hand will Gen. Musharraf be able to make the kind of compromise, an essential ingredient for any negotiated settlement? I may narrate an incident that took

that Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had died. President Ayub immediately decided to lower the flag to half mast and asked me to go to Foreign Minister Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto to draft a warm message to the Indian Government. A period of warm relations started but was fouled up by the Pakistan intelligence ISI, who started training volunteers in the hills around Murree that ended with the war of 1965 between India and Paki-

Pakistan, the other opposition leader Benazir Bhutto has signalled that she was preparing to Sabha. return to Pakistan and start her campaign to return to active politics in the country. It may be recalled that the Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto was trounced in the elections against Nawaz Sharif. She too was tried for corruption and sentenced but rather than face the situation

live in comfort in exile.

not in a similar sticky wicket as the fallout of the Babri Masjid issue. Vajpayee leads a coalition government with his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as the main component. Whereas the major portion of BJP is rightist Hindu, Vajpayee until recently has succeeded in projecting an urbane middle-of-the-road nationalist image. That image was seriously dented recently by his pronouncement on the emotional largest countries of the SAARC issue of Babri Masjid. His statement could be given the meaning that he too favoured the con-To add to the confusion in struction of Ram Mandir in place

the demolished mosque. Vajpayee has of course denied that he had any such thing in mind. However, the controversy refuses to go away. Should negotiations start with Pakistan, this would give breathing space to Vajpayee. His government was recently defeated in the Rajva

The Indo-Pakistan tangle would not assume the importance it has, if both were not nuclear powers. This adds a totally new dimension to the situation in the region. As a matter of fact the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has become moribund within the country, preferred to due to the continuous mud slinging between the two parties. Next Atal Behari Vajpayee, the to SAARC, there is ASEAN, which Prime Minister of India, though can be considered a success story. Those nations have known Gen. Musharraf, is embroiled in to freeze political disputes and have taken a giant leap forward in economic development. Indeed they are in a league close to Western Europe, when SAARC lags way behind. SAARC with its one billion population has enormous potential that remains untapped due essentially to the endless bickering between India and Pakistan.

> India and Pakistan, the two region must find a modus vivendi. The world will not stay still as they continue their incessant

# Vajpayee's Ram Dhun: Parivar Shifts Rightwards

Praful Bidwai writes from New Delhi

Intemperate remarks from high places are a signal for thugs to run amok. This shifts the political terrain further to the right. It also ratchets up the political temperature. Once this logic comes into play, "moderates" within the Far Right themselves become its victims.

mosque. Nor could he have acted more irresponsibly as India's loyalty to the RSS. It is wishful to imagine that Mr Vajpayee is the Events since his December 6 "right man in the wrong party" statement highlight the danger-Even more delusory is the image ously communal shift under of Mr Vajpayee as a "statesmanwaywitness Mr Bal Thackeray's like" leader who has "decisively" demand for the wholesale disendistanced the BJP from the RSS. franchisement of Muslims and Mr As this column has consis-L.K. Advani's attack on the CBI tently argued, this reflected softwhich has filed charges against ness in some analysts' heads, not softening of Mr Vajpayee's poli-

Why did Mr Vajpayee choose

surprised even Mr Advani? The

straightforward explanation is

that he believes the BJP must

reaffirm its hardline Hindutva

moorings even at the NDA's

expense. This has a lot to do with

bly elections in which the party

larger calculation besides serious

More broadly, there was a

the coming Uttar Pradesh assem-

Mr Vajpayee's statement about tics. What distinguishes Mr the Ayodhya agitation being Vajpayee from the Singhals and "nationalist" and about its "unfin-Sudarshans is not ideology or ished" agenda was deliberate, politics, but style or formabrasive carefully crafted, and unproin the latter, subdued in his own voked. His "clarification" that the temple demand represents the "national sentiment" reinforces this time to make a remark which this assessment.

about the matter that Vajpayee

has not called it a cease fire but in

effect it is a cease fire. The cease

fire has been timed to coincide

with Ramadan, the Holy month of

fasting for the entire Muslim

Ummah including he overwhelm-

ing population of Kashmir, the

Muslims of India and Pakistan.

Since according to Indian esti-

mates violence has significantly

diminished in Kashmir, Vajpayee

has extended the cease fire by

another month. In response the

Government of Gen. Pervez

Musharraf of Pakistan has with-

drawn substantial forces from the

Line of Control (LOC) dividing

Indian Kashmir from Pakistani

Thus the stage appears set for

a contact at a high level for dis-

cussion of many bilateral prob-

lems and specially Kashmir.

While we can be guardedly opti-

mistic about the turn of events,

we must not forget that euphoria

R Atal Behari Vajpayee

I greater blow to his manu-

factured "moderate" image than

he did by demanding a Ram tem-

ple on the rubble of the Babri

Prime Minister.

him in the Ayodhya case.

could not have dealt a

Kashmir.

This is fully in keeping with his previous statementse.g. in September at Staten Island that he would always "remain a swayamsevak". His obnoxious defence of the anti-Christian violence in December 1998 too was of a piece with thisand a prelude to Graham Staines' kill-

Mr Vajpayee has never once moderated his commitment to Hindutva nor his foundational

THO is a Diplomat? One

lation is that without RSS-VHP strife. Most Hindus see the even with history". Even assumbacking, the BJP can't overcome recent setbacksin Uttar Pradesh, its vote fell by nine percentage points between 1998 and 1999nor mollify numerous people who have suffered under mindless economic deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation.

Falling back upon the RSS, Mr Vajpayee reckons, will help the BJP enlist swayamsevaks to mobilise votes. In return, the RSS will let him pursue marketfundamentalist policies.

Secondarily, his Ram dhun to the Babri demolition. may have been prompted by an inner-party struggle. In all probability, the RSS read the Riot Act and asked Mr Vajpayee to stop promoting Mr Jaswant Singh and strongly defend Mr Advani against the CBI chargesheet. In general, parivar hardliners now stand strengthened.

Mr Vajpayee is deplorably wrong to claim that the temple demand represents the "national sentiment". It doesn't even reflect Hindu sentiment. According to RSS pressure behind the state- the shastrasimportant for orthoment, which reflects a changed dox Hindustemples shouldn't be stance, even strategy. The calcubult on contested sites or amidst Ayodhya agitation as an extreme, communal movement.

deeply embarrassing. That's precisely why even Mr Sudarshan concocts "theories" about a government-inspired "explosion" and Mr K.R. Malkani a CIA "plot"!

To demand a temple on the Babri's rubble is to be shamelessly sectarian, majoritarian, and communal. If anything, there is a stronger Muslim claim for restitution of the status quo prior

Mr Vajpayee is Constitutionally obliged to follow a Supreme Court ruling which upheld the Ayodhya Land Acquisition Act precisely because the dispute had affected "public order and harmony". The Court ordered the government to preserve the status quo, observe strict neutrality, and "maintain public order and promote communal harmony". Mr Vajpayee is recklessly threatening to violate this

Like the RSS, Mr Vajpayee has Thackeray's fascist demand that BJP will have vitiated the national a reprehensible notion of "getting" all Muslims must be disenfran- climateto its perpetual disgrace.

ing a Ram temple had been demolished to build the Babri The Babri demolition remains mosque in 1528 ADwhich is probably untrue-it is wrong to seek "revenge" 450 years later. Civilised societies do not legitimise such violent retributive justice.

> Modern nations do not settle medieval wrongs with medieval methods. At Independence, India signed a social compact between all communities, which involves leaving behind past wrongs and building on democracy and pluralism. Mr Vajpayee wants to undo that compact.

The consequences of Mr Vajpayee's stance are unmistakable. Mr Advani has rubbished the CBI for the Avodhya chargesheet. It is grotesque for the Home Minister to run down a major official agency which examined 850 witnesses and 700 documents before indicting him. He is undermining his own government's legitimacy.

chised. Clearly, he felt emboldened to indulge in hate speech only because of Mr Vajpayee's Ram dhun. A distinctive logic is at work. As

the Staines murder showed. intemperate remarks from high places are a signal for thugs to run amok. This shifts the political terrain further to the right. It also ratchets up the political temperature. Once this logic comes into play, "moderates" within the Far Right themselves become its

Mr Vajpayee has politically weakened the NDA. Its "secular" parties lack the guts to confront him for violating the NDA's agenda. Power has prevailed over principle, especially for the likes

of Mr George Fernandes. This spells trouble for NDA constituents, who have been told by their favourite leader that Hindutva comes before them. Even for the BJP, a hardened stance may not yield dividends. Temple construction probably won't mobilise the kind of negative energies that the demolitiona

destructive actdid. The BJP may only end up consolidating its hardline uppercaste base. But that doesn't need consolidation. The temple move will probably repel many ordinary Even worse is Mr Bal people. But in the bargain, the

apology to the people of Bangla-

desh for the genocide by its army

of the Bengalis in '71. Will the

present government, headed by

Gen Musharraf be bold enough to

come forward to accept this hard

ground reality? Or, will he pass

the buck to the next elected gov-

ernment? At least, he should

throw some soothing light on this

burning question. "Hear all, see

all, and say nothing" is not always

# A Dare-devil Diplomat's Damaging Disposition

by A M M Shahabuddin

The earlier the Pakistanis realise that to heal the old wounds they should not sprinkle (salt) on the wounds, the better. Rather they should use some 'healing balm.' And that lies in an early apology to the people of Bangladesh. Because this would go a long way in removing the suspicion against Pakistan. Otherwise the big thorny 'but' will be hanging there with its sad message.

/// who 'lies abroad'! Yes, that's the most satirical, if not text-book, definition of a 'diplomat'. But when a diplomat assumes the role of a foolhardy to show his atrocious 'gimmicks' before a distinguished gathering, he becomes more a liability than an asset for his own country and of course a persona non grata to his host country. No sensible diplomat could dare to throw to the winds all his professional niceties and decorum and use the most objectionable language to belittle and dishonour the tremendous sacrifices made by our freedom fighters in '71 to fight against the hell let loose by the Pakistan army in those days. And that also standing on the soil of Bangladesh and in the month of December, which historically has become our month of victory. Pakistan's ex-Deputy High Commissioner in Dhaka, Irfan Raja, an errant diplomat, had precisely proved that he is out 'to lie' abroad.

But whom he was trying to fool? Himself? Bangladeshis? Or the world at large? Anyway, he had played a dangerous game, either on his own initiative or at somebody's biddings, with an ulterior motive. He had stoked up and ignited the fire that had not only burnt his own finger, but also greatly damaged the fabric of relationship between the two countries. He is either too immain his own way (from a colonial will hang there till the sun comes view-point?), with his own ver- out to throw some light. It is, sion, the freedom struggle of indeed, difficult to pinpoint where Bangladesh. But can he deny that the errant diplomat's centre of he had himself played the role of a gravity lies government, army or 'villain' to add salt to the fatal injuries inflicted on the innocent people of this country by their army about three decades back? It is his misadventure on the soil of Bangladesh the other day that forced the people of the country to react violently against his 'explosions' (may be an experiment!). It is he who is solely responsible to desh government from taking the force our people to bounce back to demonstrate against his country. He had damaged the image of his own country by opening the

in where angels fear to tread". It was aptly pointed out in The Daily Star editorial (Dec 2) that "mystery still surrounds as to why ... (the Pak diplomat) said what he said and chose words and expressions that he knew well...would raise a storm among

tin of worms and digging up the

said about such a 'dare-devil'

diplomat the better: "Fools rush

ture or too smart to misinterpret us." Perhaps the mist of mystery

some other dubious zone. The situation could have been worse had not the Pakistan government called him back. By recalling the 'disturbing element' from Bangladesh, the Pakistan government had not only shown its political wisdom, although belated, but also spared Banglamost uncomfortable decision, to declare him a persona non grata and expel him forthwith. By this move of Pakistan government, as The DS editorial (Dec 2) said, "At bones buried by them. So the less least some sort of damage control mechanism can be set to work and the spirit of SAARC...can be saved to the extent possible."

Raja's Patriotism! Of the derogatory remarks made by the errant diplomat, the

most audacious was his outburst

sense of patriotism of the diplo-National Assembly in the 1970 general election, was deliberately debarred from taking its legitimate place in the parliament to form government with Sheikh Mujib as prime minister? They were then busy in palacedesigns and machinations, by an unholy alliance between People's Party leader Z A Bhutto and a group of ambitious Generals, who were having a hey-day, sitting around that allegedly ever-drunk president Gen Yahya Khan. The Irfan Rajas of yesterday can't pretend ignorance of that black

Black Chapter of History History can't be killed outright

chapter of Pakistan's history.

when he said: "Apology for what? Apology for losing half of my (!)

of one's patriotism and a sense of history can't be 'white-washed' so sorrow "for losing half of my (?) easily by, of all persons, a governcountry"! However, the question ment official like Pakistan's Depis: Where was this commendable uty High Commissioner. History talks very loudly if one wants to mat and his likes when Awami listen to its message. It became League, led by the undisputed an open secret that 'Bhutto and leader of then East Pakistan, Generals' gang prevented Sheikh Mujibar Rahman, emerg- Bangabandhu from becoming the ing as the largest party in then Prime Minister for obvious reasons that the 'Punjabi clique', using the popular Sindhi leader Bhutto, was most reluctant to hand over power to a Bengali leader. When the people of then East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, saw through the sordid game intrigues, adopting all sorts of evil being played by the anti-Bengali gang, they took to the streets of Dhaka and other parts of the country in protest.

erals, was out to sabotage the scheduled Dhaka session of the National Assembly, threatening that legs of any Member of the National Assembly from then West Pakistan, whether elected with PPP ticket or otherwise, who would attend Dhaka session of the Assembly, would be broken. It and buried to hide hard facts. So created a chaotic situation. The country?" What a bold exposition the black chapter of Pakistan's Awami League leadership had no other alternative but to get ready for the show-down. And the Generals, like hungry wolves, were waiting for this 'troubled waters' to fish benefits for them. So they jumped in to show the fire-power in order to 'save the country' Thus the 'show of the Generals' began on that dark night of 25 March '71. Their 'killing fields' were in full blaze. On that fateful night, Bhutto left Dhaka for Karachi, where on arrival, he declared smilingly that "at last Pakistan has been saved." The world knew well what had been saved and what destroyed. The rest is history written with blood of the millions of Bengalis who had laid down their lives, in the hands of the saviours of Pakistan. for the emergence of a new coun-

nations.

try, a new state in the comity of The storm raised by the errant long way in removing the suspidiplomat seems to have calmed cion against Pakistan. Otherwise

down after his departure from the big thorny but will be hang-Dhaka. But it is likely to brew ing there with its sad message. under surface for some time to come, until Pakistan shows its sincerity in extending an overdue cial.

a wise policy. **Encouraging Signs** It is encouraging to note that some strong voices from the upcoming generation, particularly the intelligentsia, in Pakistan are gradually gaining momentum in favour of an early apology by Pakistan to Bangladesh to freshen their relationship. Much water has flown down the Indus and the Ganges over the last three decades, creating new ideas about inter-state relations by healing the past wounds. China, Japan, and even America have recently shown the way. For Pakistan, a strong political will is needed, to follow the examples. Mr Bhutto, aided by the Gen-A leading Pakistani intellec-

tual, Dr Tariq Rahman, in a recent article in a Lahore daily. The News (DS Dec 9), has strongly advocated that Pakistan should apologise to Bangladesh for the military actions in '71 "if it wanted to establish genuine friendship" with Bangladesh. He argued why the ordinary Pakistanis would bear the burden of the guilt of the military action taken by an unelected government (of Gen Yahaya Khan) which was later declared illegal by the Supreme Court of Pakistan?" In fact, the ordinary people were spoon-fed regularly with the wellregimented 'hand-outs' on the 'successful achievements' of the army in action against the 'subversive elements' or the Awami League 'miscreants', as repeated by the errant diplomat in Dhaka after about three decades. But Pakistanis like Irfan Raja are made of die-hard stuff. They seldotm change their 'spots.' So the earlier the Pakistanis

realise that o heal the old wounds they should not sprinkle (salt) on the wounds, the better. Rather they should use some healing balm.' And that lies in an early apology to the people of Bangladesh. Because this would go a

The writer is a retired UN offi-

#### Telecom system can save lives

Sir, When a cyclone hits Bangladesh, the conventional public telephone system becomes an easy victim and consequently the LoCal as well as long distance telecom systems are immediately disrupted. What we need is a system which is not affected by cyclone, and it is not dependent on public power because like the telecom system, power is also knocked out of service. Fortunately, a solution has appeared in the form of a new technique called GMPCS (Global Mobile Personal Communication through Satellite). The International Telecom Union (ITU) has approved it and many member

countries of ITU have signed the

This is a very simple system, through a satellite, by-passing to its popularity throughout the

Memorandum of Understanding.

because a caller from the cyclone the LoCal telecom networks. A affected area can call anywhere in subscriber of this system passes the world through his handheld his signals directly to its called mobile telephone set. This set is party who is holding a similar very similar to a normal mobile mobile phone set. This is direct set available in the market. This communication between two GMPCS set is for normal use as a subscribes of the same system of public telephone set, but remains GMPCS. It is also possible for a available for service after a GMPCS subscriber to call any cyclone or any other natural subscriber not holding a GMPCS disaster where the conventional set or vice versa. This is possible telecom systems totally fail. by directing the GMPCS caller's Hence, this aspect is a beneficial signal through a Satellite Earth by-product of the system, adding Station which is connected to the exchange of the called party.

sons. This system works directly

This system will soon be avail-This is a normal system able in Bangladesh. Asian Celludesigned for public service even lar Satellite Bangladesh (ACeS for places where normal telecom Bgd) is a LoCal Bangladeshi systems do not exist or cannot be Company which has applied to installed for topographical rea- the Ministry of Posts and Telecom

of some leading telecom organisations of Indonesia, Thailand. Malaysia and an American comorbit, and Indonesia has comfrom September, 2000 and the and property. Philippines from November, 2000. The other countries of the group such as Thailand, Taiwan and India will follow shortly while Pakistan and Bangladesh will follow thereafter.

The Government of Bangladesh will have no financial involvement as ACeS Bangladesh will take care of it. Moreover, Bangladesh will earn revenue

(MOPT) for a license to operate through license fee, call charges structure was a symbol of the this system with the Cooperation etc. Hence, Bangladesh should of ACeS International, Jakarta not delay in introducing this which is a joint venture company system because apart from being the most modern and latest technology on telecom, this system will be of great benefit to a counpany. LoCkheed Martin. The try like ours where disaster man-Satellite Garuda-I is already in agement during cyclone, flood and other natural calamities will menced its commercial operation be highly assisted in saving lives

Mohammad Alauddin Ex. Member (M&OBTTB, Dhaka)

#### "Preaching to India?" Sir, In his letter (DS, 22

December), Mumbai's Rajeev Kumar justifies the Ayodhya destruction "...as the disputed

cannot be denied the right to regain their self-respect lost as a consequence of that experience". Noble sentiments, no doubt But by this logic, the Taj Mahal,

invasion of India, and Indians

Red Fort etc should go as well. Why stop there? India Gate in Mumbai and Parliament Buildings in Delhi should also go as symbols of the British invasion. And for good measure, why not

do away with English or for that matter the Vedas as products intro

duced by invaders!

M. Igbal 33 University Avenue Toronto, Canada