

The partition of the country frightened the constitution framers and made them transfer

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

In contrast, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru kept the Chief Ministers in the picture through a fortnightly letter. Much before the 1962 war with China, he informed about the intrusion into the Ladakh area where Beijing had built a road to connect Sinkiang with Aksai Chin. Vajpayee may not have Nehru's flourish in English but he is lyrical in Hindi. There are enough officers in the PMO who would aptly translate his Hindi

It is not being understood that such bodies are the sinews of democratic structure. Indeed, democracy, which has taken

Unfortunately, the Hindu middle class is getting

One redeeming factor is the indignation which the nation exhibited over Vajpayee's words that "the national aspiration to build the temple still remains unfulfilled." He explained that the media had misinterpreted him but the damage was done. The biggest tragedy of the past decade is that the people of the nation have been asked to fight the growing communalism. Hopes had come to be pinned on Vajpayee. They have been shattered. It is up to him to revive them. By declaring a ceasefire unilaterally, he showed the type of courage which is required to sustain faith in pluralism. Will he follow it up all the way? Federalism and the democratic structure of the country of the last decade may be adversely affected if he thinks that he has done enough by giving explanation to his observation.

for law and order".

For years to come we will remain broke. All the government organizations and institutions, many of which do not justify their existence, and the armed forces are all living beyond their means. The country's revenue earnings amount to some Rs.450 billion per year. Debt servicing takes care of around Rs.350 billion and the armed forces consume Rs.230 billion (130 b. salaries and other recurring expenses; 50 b. defence spending-- tanks, aircraft, ships, etc. in Benazir's time this cost us 100 b per year; 25 b. pensions; 20 b. ISI and paramilitary-- rangers/coastguards/levies/constabulary; 5 b. nuclear deterrent, capital and recurring).

Any Atatürks in sight? Moaning and groaning and giving in to threatened riots and marches on the capital does not help. Yesterday was the first day of the new millennium. We must thank our stars that despite the destroyers of our country who have led us since Jinnah died in 1948 we have so far only lost half of it. Now, on the foreign affairs front, would it not help if we were to adopt a less belligerent posture?

Dhaka, Tuesday, January 2, 2001

Oddly, Musharraf's objective listed at number 4) was the premier objective of the country's founder, Mohammad Ali

Hudaiba Pape Mills Limited (first defendant), Mian Shahbaz Sharif (second defendant), Mian Mohammad Sharif (third defendant), and Mian Mohammad Abbas Sharif (fourth defendant), borrowed money from Investment Funds Limited, operated by Al-Tawfik Company. A master of the court, not even a judge, served an order on the defendants on September 4, 1998 and the court attached valuable

Hafiz Pasha is a talented man who tried his hand at planning and policy-making during Nawaz's second round. He failed and gave up. Now he has gone to the UN in New York as an assistant secretary for economic

affairs. We wish him luck.

Today 46 million people of Pakistan are poor and one in every three families is unable to meet its basic requirements of nutrition and other needs. During the decade of the 90s [Bhutto/Sharif years] the number of poor has increased by as much as 25 million. If present trends continue then we expect that within the next three years the number of poor will increase by another 14 million and approach 60 million, almost 40 per cent of the population. Clearly poverty has emerged as the principal problem requiring urgent attention if a large-scale social breakdown is to be averted, with its concomitant implications

by Abul M Ahmad

Now the politicians, working within the confines of a bad or ineffective system, are creating more unnecessary garbage, for others to clear. This happens when the naive workmen find

Today the cultivation of political styles is passing through a vicious cycle, and only third

Dhaka needs a new type of movement, to tame the bad politics openly practised by the sly and cunning politicians, of which we have a surplus.

The outcome is political adulation in all spheres of life. The established institutions have been unwittingly destroyed one after another and now things are beyond the control of the politicians, the governors, the administrators, and the management. Nobody is listening to anybody. Other nations have faced this naked situation before, and the fights of liberation have been well recorded. Once again, the Bengalis have been disappointed in their fighting qualities, but this time within their very own society.

Unruly students are controlling the education sector (though DS editorial Dec 5), spoiling the nation's seedlings; and we also see the uncommon and strange sight of a retired

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

Sir, I am writing this letter on behalf of most of the passengers on British Airways flight 145 from London Heathrow to Dhaka, Bangladesh via Calcutta. Upon arrival on Monday, December 25th at 3:50 AM, many of us discovered that our luggage was missing. We were made to fill out a complaint form and were told that the bags would arrive on the following Thursday, December 28th. We were also told not to call the British Airways office, and that they would contact us. However, my mother did call the office on the 26th, and she was informed that non-residents such as myself would receive compensation for the inconvenience. Upon arriving at the British Airways Head Office in Gulshan, she was offered Tk 3,000 for the missing luggage, which by the way had not yet been traced. When she inquired about any written policy stating the amount of compensation given to passengers, the officer on duty stated that the

I travel British Airways because it is known to be a responsible and well reputed airline. It is a shame that they discriminate and treat their passengers with such disregard. It may not make any difference to British Airways, but for one will certainly not travel the airline again.

Making the wrongs right

Mahmudul Hasan
Leicester, UK

Sir, Mr M M Rezaul Karim has written a highly objective and fair article captioned "Pakistani Diplomat's Remarks and its Reaction" (DS, 9 December).

He has cited articles 13, 14 and 15 of the tripartite agreement signed by the foreign ministers of Bangladesh, India and

Robert Kader
34 Mehdiabagh
Chittagong

Sir, After visiting the Dhaka Book Fair 2000 in December, I urge the authorities to pay serious attention to the changing trends in the universal implications of the book pub-

The Bangla Academy has to look out rather lonely in, and has to strengthen its translation section (two-way, in and out, in coordination with the national book agency and the local publishing industry) for providing a window to the world in the export and publicity of Bangladesh literature and culture (must use the Internet also).

face the world through the print media.

There is no point in holding Fairs during the month of Ramadan (the peak visiting period is the afternoon and evening). The Book Fair may be held during the cooler months according to convenience. The organisers have to call in international exhibition agencies to provide the proper perspective and approach to the whole show, which should be oriented at the multinational level, with accent on local products and activities. This year's Fair at Mohammadpur looked rather amateurish in presentation. It was a welcome sign to notice a Book Guild coming over from Calcutta, but it will take some time to get the feel of the participation from both sides.

The future Book Fairs have to be glamorised, but the government should not interfere too much (especially politically, which has become a bad habit!), but provide the backing and act as the facilitator. The time to start planning of the next Fair is right from the beginning of the new year.

*A Mawaz
Dhaka*