#### **BNP** interviews By **Election candidates**

You have written in the aforementioned article that BNP is interviewing, among others, the son of the President and a brother of a minister as potential candidates for by-

This government, like its predecessor, seems hell bent on divvying up the spoils of our country between their relatives

It is sad to see that BNP has learnt nothing whatsoever from the collapse of Awami League. And thus doomed to repeat them.

MA, on e-mail

#### Cancel 20th BCS result

We completed our master degrees from the Dhaka University like other universities with at least five years session jam. After completing our degrees we thought we would get suitable jobs like joining the BCS cadre. But the real situation was very different. There was no job except on the recommendation of the ministers or by donating huge amount of money. 20th BCS was the best example of that. We never got other jobs either and passed the 30 years age

BNP gave hope to the agitating

### The Kahtib's Baisakh

I think the Khatib of Baitul Mugarram mosque is an Awami League agent. He has made me and many others so angry that we plan to vote for AL the next time. Having voted for Zia and his party all these years, I think the time has come to switch. If BNP is going to use my tax money to hire men like this ignorant anti-Bangladeshi Khatib, it won't get my vote.

And why isn't he being charged as an anti-state? Is it because Shahriar Kabir is pro-AL while the Khatib supports Jamaat-e-Islam?

**Havat Karim** 

Dhanmandi, Dhaka

When the President of a country sits and hears that observing something as intrinsic to the national culture as a New Year's Day is not proper as far as his religious understanding goes, we must say that all those praying under him have endorsed the view. As the head of the state, he has therefore accepted the condemnation of the Khatib since he was present there in his official capacity.

Suppose the Khatib demands that all women wear burga when on the street? That the bombing of the Pahela Baisakh gathering was actually a good thing because all present there were infidels? That Osama bin Laden did a great thing by bombing Twin Towers? Having accepted his Imamat, the President and all others who attended that prayer have a responsibility to answer such questions.

Zakir Hussain

Maghbazar, Dhaka

tion of the factory suddenly stopped dead in tracks. It is a matter of great regret that there is no discipline i.e. accountability for the duties of personnel in the factory at all. Indiscipline has been prevailing in the factory since its inception. As a result, explosion and accident occur frequently. The following record speaks ing everyday for resolving the factory's day to day problems. It is now proven that due to lack of technical know-how, the decision-making authority totally failed to take prompt decision. As a result, the secondary reformer's inner heat exceeded 425° C resulting in the explosion on

August 25, 2001.

nity of courts there can be no respect for law. But who could protect the dignity, honour and respect for the judiciary more than the courts them-

The dignity, honour and respect for the judiciary is in the hands of the judges. There is serious erosion of people's confidence in and respect

North Carolina, USA

Mohammad Zaman, M.D

#### India vs Pakistan

We who closely follow the developments in the Indian subcontinent through your esteemed newspaper are regularly perplexed at the kind of troubles that props up from time to

After more than 50 years of freedom from the colonial rule what kind of maturity India and Pakistan have attained as responsible nations? India's record as a democratic nation is praiseworthy even if still a sizeable number of its population is utterly poor and improvised. But India's recent economic upsurge is really praiseworthy and the western world is very hopeful of India's future as a new Asian giant after China. India's position in the western world is much more important than Pakistan because of its economic and military potential and also as a stable democracy.

On the other hand Pakistan's position is no where close to India's. Pakistan's continuous failure to promote democracy, its military rule and its very poor economic performance has put this nation into a very dismal position. Pakistan's handling of the Kashmir problem is not approved by many. The most impractical national pride of Pakistan with its nuclear arsenal has made this nation a laughing stock. The reality that a few atomic bombs do not hide the fact that it is a very poor, undemocratic and corrupted nation. The so-called Kashmir dispute is a stumbling block in the way of Pakistan's pros-

The present US, Pakistan flirting will not last long and when the question of taking sides in a conflict India will always score higher grade than Pakistan. So the solution of Kashmir dispute in Pakistan's favour is a far cry. The best thing is to accept the status quo with India. The Pakistani support for the so-called Kashmir freedom struggle is an age-old Pakistani political stunt of the successive government to prolong their rule by playing with cheap national sentiment. It is very important that Paki-

Husain is not an Indophile. But it's regrettable that he chooses to let a heinous act like the attack on the Indian parliament be a trigger to

spew more venom on India. The writer suggests that India is not really a victim of terrorism, mocks at India's 'victim hood', and pooh-poohs virtually all the recent moves of the Indian leadership.

Unfortunately, it is India¹s restraint in tackling forces inimical to its interests that leads to comments like these, even from our pipsqueak neighbours. Since Mr. Husain seems so very clever in offering all that advice on what the Indian leadership should do, he must have come across this comment from a recent editorial in Washington Post (decidedly more weighty than Mr. Husain's opinion): "Fortunately India's democratic government has reacted to the assault with admirable restraint. Though it has as much right as the US or Israel to defend itself against the extremists, it has so far refrained from acting while waiting to see what Musharraf does.

As far as India pretending to be a victim of terrorism, the '93 serial bomb blasts in Bombay, the attack on the Srinagar parliament, the Indian Airlines hijack etc are proof enough of how much we have suffered and suffered silently. In fact, the main accused in the Mumbai serial blasts, Mr. Dawood Ibrahim is a state guest living lavishly in Karachi, as well documented in the Pakistani magazine Newsline. Yet, India has been unable to extradite him or 'smoke him out'. The writer is right in suggesting that the context in which the US and Israel retaliate against forces inimical to them, is different. Several advisors, media personalities and politicians in India have already spelt out that any military response or 'hot pursuit' of terrorists is a non-option. The rhetoric of a possible armed conflict with Pakistan, which the writer refers to, is a posture for the benefit of the international community that sadly does not appreciate the restraint India has shown against consistent attacks on its interests. To suggest that the December 13th attack is a ruse by the Indian government to obfuscate

Hitler and Laden: The two faces of the same evil?

be the only way to restore

peace and order. In the context of America's successful military

action against bin Laden and his terrorist gangs in Afghanistan, it

may be interesting to recall how Britain responded to Hitler's

forces conquered France in 1940. William L. Shirer, renowned

American commentator for CBS Radio, left us an eyewitness

report of Hitler's peace offer and Britain's response in his Berlin

"In Reichstag tonight, Hitler 'offered' peace. Hitler put his peace

'offer' very eloquently, at least for the Germans. He said: 'In this

hour I feel it my duty before my own conscience to appeal once

more to reason and common sense. I see no reason why this war

must go on. I am grieved to think of the sacrifices, which it would

"I wondered a little what answer the British would make, and I

had hardly arrived at Rundfunk (German radio headquarters) to

prepare for my talk when I picked up BBC in German. And there

was the answer already! It was a great big No! The more I thought

of it, the less I was surprised. Peace for Britain with Germany abso-

lute master of the Continent is impossible... The BBC No was very

emphatic. The announcer heaped ridicule on Hitler's every utter-

ance. Officers from the High Command and officials from various

ministries sitting around the room could not believe their ears.

claim. I should like to avert them, also for my own people.

It may be recalled that Hitler offered Britain peace after his

aggression in the early days of the World War II.

**Home Minister's allegation** 



Victims or separatists?

According to the BBC web page

(http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south\_asia/newsid 1725000/1725254.st), the Home Minister has accused some Bangladeshi Hindus of participating in a separatist plot. Apparently he made these comments to the Ittefaq (December 22).

If the Hon' able Home Minister has actually made these accusations, he should be asked to show his proof immediately and in a public forum. If there is insufficient evidence, as is most likely since if the government had anything harder than rumours they would have already rounded up the usual suspects, then the Home Minister should be sacked for criminal negligence and for trying to stir up communal tensions.

If he has not made these comments, he should ask the BBC and the Ittefaq for a retraction and demand an apology.

Thank God Britain was "crazy" enough to reject Hitler's peace

offer. If it had accepted his offer, Britain could have escaped a total

war, but Europe would be ruled by a tyrannical Nazi regime to this

day. It is even more likely that Hitler would not have spared Britain

once his other conquests were complete. Similarly, it is clear that

bin Laden and his terrorist henchmen will not stop even if America

does not respond to their attacks on American lives. Though bin

Laden and his gangs don't have a fraction of Hitler's military might.

they can do a great damage if allowed to go unchecked. Like the

Nazis, who brutalised their Germans who didn't agree with them,

Talibans have done great damage to their own society by allowing

terrorist hideouts in their country. Like British Prime Minister

Winston Churchill, U.S. President George W. Bush has

responded with courage and fortitude when he ordered American

Air Force to take out terrorist hideouts in Afghanistan. The mas-

sive display of American airpower, which broke the back of the

Talibans and their Al-Qaida backers and helped the Northern Alli-

ance liberate their country, will go a long way to defeat the terror-

Miran, on e-mail

is India's international success in various fields (least of which is cricket!) that drives many in our neighbourhood jealous. We in India have lots to be proud of and are aware of our shortcomings. I hope that the likes of Mr. Husain in our neighbourhood would feel the same way about their country someday. That would keep them occupied and not be obsessed with its neighbours all the time.

**Bhatnaturally** 

Though I believe in non-violent resolution of international con- One of them shouted at me; 'Can you understand these British

flicts, there are times when violence must be countered militarily fools? To turn down peace now?' I merely grunted. 'They're crazy,'

he sai

Often Sajjad Husain's letters are published in your daily. He has good command over the language and views are straightforward. He cer-

Mr. Husain, we Indian assure you that we want a solution to this madness. Kashmir is inseparable from India. We are (Indian people) ready to fight a last war with Pakistan, may be a nuclear one. India may suffer, we may have to sacrifice one or two cities, but there will be no Pakistan in the world map.

So, Mr. Husain please wake up, do not live in a dream world. You have every right to place your views, but do not twist the fact with rhetoric language. Do not spare venom in

The Pakistanis butchered your intelligentsia on the same day in 1971(13th December) they attacked

## Fighting terrorism: The Indian way



Recently there was a terrorist attack on the Legislative Assembly of India. All the terrorists were killed by the Indian security forces in a quick shootout and about six bystanders were killed in crossfire. None of the officials or members of the Legislative Assembly were hurt. A similar attack occurred on the Kashmir Legislative Assembly after the September 11 attacks on World Trade Center. Then there was a hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane on a domestic route. As usual India was quick to blame Pakistan for the hijacking, but as soon Pakistan provided the proof of Indian intelligence agency's involvement in the hijacking, Indian government backed out of their accusation to malign Pakistan and declared the hijacking a "False Alarm".

In each case India quickly blamed Pakistan and Pakistan based guerilla groups fighting to liberate Kashmir from the Indian occupation. Each time Pakistan offered to India a joint Indian and Pakistani investigation of these incidences but each time India refused. Both the times President Bush offered to send FBI teams to India to help the investigation and each time India refused the offer.

For a long time India has been trying to get Pakistan be declared a terrorist state and the freedom movement a terrorist movement by the U.S government. There is a strong feeling in Pakistan and Kashmir that these terrorist acts are carried out on behalf of the Indian intelligence agencies to malign Pakistan. The circum-



stances under which these incidents took place also fuel these suspicions. Persistent Indian refusals to allow Pakistan to conduct joint investigation and President Bush's offer to send FBI team to India to help the investigation don't help to ease Pakistani and Kashmiri suspicions.

The freedom movement in Kashmir has entered in its 12th year. More than eighty thousand Kashmiris have been killed since then by the Indian army. The groups fighting against the Indian rule has mostly targeted Indian army. After the September 11 attacks, when there are strong sentiments in the world against terrorism, it seems highly unlikely that any group, or Pakistani government will be so silly to conduct these terrorist acts and in turn risk themselves by getting declared terrorist outfits.

Terrorism is a worldwide problem. If India is serious in fighting terrorism and want U.S help in punishing the responsible parties in these crimes then it would be wise for the Indian government to allow an international team to investigate these terrorist acts.

Sohail Ahmed Houston, Texas, USA

candidates that if they came to power they would cancel the results of the 20th BSC exam as it was wholly unfair.

Now we fervently request the honourable Prime Minister to cancel all the BCS results after 19th BCS and increase the age limit of the candidates from 30 to 32.

Samiron Ray, on e-mail

## Save JFCL

Jamuna Fertilizer Co. Ltd. (JFCL) is a gigantic granular fertiliser factory in Bangladesh. It is a key point installation of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. We are grateful to a genius as well as patriot man like Mr AKM Mosharraf Hossain (at present the State Minister for Energy & Mineral resources) the then Chairman of BCIC and afterwards Secretary, The Ministry of Industries for his role in the public sectors' developing industries rapidly in our country. Under his leadership it was possible to establish Jamuna Fertilizer Co. Ltd. through turnkey basis. Its daily production capacity is 1700 MT urea fertiliser which was fulfilling the crying urea demand of the northern districts of the country. But it is a matter of great regret that JFCL's secondary reformer exploded on August 25. 2001 as a result, the overall producfor itself:

a) The STG (Steam Turbine Generator) exploded in the year 1999 due to delay in its stoppage. The factory incurred huge loss to the tune of Tk. 50 (Fifty) crore. No one was served even with a show-cause notice

b) At the advent of 2000 a heavy hydraulic crane was severely damaged due to improper supervision i.e. non-placement of steel plate/avoiding safety devices. It caused loss of life as well as property worth Taka 5 crores. No one was punished. Moreover, some high officials of the factory were awarded proc) The secondary reformer is the

lifeblood of the JFCL's Urea and Amonia production. There are three layers in the Secondary Reformer and its thickness is 440mm, heating capacity is 368° C.

It is a matter of great concern that the temperature of the secondary reformer was allowed to reach 380°C which was displayed as "Alarm" on August 8, 2001 in the control panel of the central control room of JFCL. Such a grave situation was duly informed to the concerned higher authority. In this context it may be noted here that all the general managers and other senior officers participate in the technical meet-

It is known from a reliable source that a new secondary reformer would be installed within May, 2002. The factory's one day's production stoppage means loss of one crore Taka, So. JFCL will incur loss of Tk. 300 (three hundred) crore (approx) before it restarts.

The approximate total loss incurred by JFCL to the tune of Tk. 1000 (one thousand) crore (cost of imported urea included) is equivalent to the cost of setting up a new factory. The present government should come forward without any partisan position in order to save JFCL from its total ruination by taking punitive action against the corrupt officials of the factory as well as BCIC without further delay

M Hamidul Haque Bhashani Station Road, Jamalpur

## Dignity of judiciary

In a statement published in some newspapers on December 6, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed said that the government would protect the dignity of judiciary at all coat as the people consider judges as their last shelter when they are exposed to difficulties.

We all want the rule of law and know that without respect for the dig-

To make the rule of law effective and strong let the Hon'ble High Court Division give top priority to Contempt of Court cases, be firm in rejecting prayer for adjournment and deal with a person disregarding the authority of a court of law swiftly and with an iron hand. The honourable judges owe this to their profession,

CMA

## Women and purdah

To my lay understanding, the basic message of purdah is restraint. Why should we wrap women in uncomfortable attire, when it is much easier for the men to restrain their lustful

for the courts. When it is possible to flout the judgements and directives of courts with impunity, the courts can have no respect in the eyes of people and there can be no rule of law. This unfortunately is happening in our society. A principal reason for this unfortunate state of affairs is that the courts do not seem to take contempt of court seriously. Instead of swift and firm action against a contemner the courts seem to favour the latter and grant innumerable adjournments in Contempt of Court cases or relegate them to low prior-

the people and to themse-lves.

## Toronto, Canada

stan accept this reality Akbar Hussain

"Berlin, July 19

### "India's woes"

This refers to Mr. Sajjad Husain's letter ("India's woes" (December 21). Going by his earlier letters published in these columns, clearly Mr. Sajjad

other issues like the POTO bill is laughable. And if India's 'inconsequential' role in international affairs warrants trips from the heads of major global powers, appreciation of its economic power and contribution to it etc., we are happy staying that

For all his sarcasm about India, Mr. Husain cannot hide the fact that it

ists around the world. Hitler and bin Laden are two faces of the same evil and had to be defeated militarily. America has done just that. Mahmood Elahi Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

not want to accept the reality. He does not seem to find any other subject than India bashing. He says that Kargil is a nightmare for India. But Mr. Husain, in Kargil it was Pakistan that had been humili-

ated and was forced to leave the

Indian territory not only by India but

also by the international community.

the house of world's biggest democtainly has a scholarly mind, but does

> Ťime has changed. Try to live I ike civilised man in civilised so-

M. K. Barua, on e-mail

# Why were Rajakars forgiven?

We must look back to use our experiences of the past to formulate our policies for the future in order to avoid repeating mistakes, if any. Past we can not change for which living in the past carries no sense. What we do today will pave the foundation for better or worse for our future. It is, therefore, very pertinent to look back.

We have just witnessed the calamity that befell on the innocent Afghans who knowingly or unknowingly supported the radical Talibans and their allies. Jamaat, in spite of their past proven misdeed, is thriving under the umbrella of major political parties in Bangladesh which is a real concern for those who were victims of their misdeed in the past. Yet more so as Jamaat with its radical philosophy is now successful in sharing power in the government with BNP as a result of strategic partnership against Awami League in the last

election. Because of poverty, inequity and deprivation in society, there is ground for radicalism in Bangladesh and ascend of Jamaat in power might enthuse this trend to the disadvantage of the progressive mod-

erate majority in society. C.M. Rahman, on e-mail

Our nation is still haunted by its past, the doings and the undoings of so many calculated mistakes committed by both the loyalists and the antagonists of our freedom fight. Our never-ending dispute and

arguments on the issues of declaration of independence, the role of Sk. Mujibur Rahman in our freedom fight and his eventual demise from the scene are all spices for hot debates.

The debate on Razakar is a glaring example of how obsessed we are about our past. Most of the arguments and the counter arguments about the role of Razakar Bahini is a reminder of how divided the nation is on issues of national reconciliation.

Let us first understand the historical background of the making of Razakar Bahini before going into any logical conclusions. The birth of Razkar Bahini in Bangladesh was the making of the Peace Committee formed at each Thana council level under the auspices of the civil government. The members of the Razakar Bahini were mere volunteers from the community to safeguard the vital installations specifically the bridges that were the love target of the Mukti Bahinis during the rainy seasons.

The intellectuals from the Pakistani Army headed by Gen. Rao Forman Ali formulated the excellent idea to use Bengalis against Bengalese and created this voluntary Banglaee force named Razakar to use them as human shield against the rising surprise hit attacks from the Mukti Bahinis.

The Razkar Bahini had no philosophical, ideological or political convictions like that of the Al Badr Bahini who were totally opposed to the freedom fight and had a long term political agenda at hand.

Most of the Razakars were young reluctant volunteers who were left behind in Bangladesh due to circumstances and had joined the forces to save the sanctity of their parents and their sisters so that they would be spared from the onslaughts of the Pakistani Army and Al Badr Bahini.

I remember these young reluctant recruits would listen to Chorom Patro at 10 PM of Bangladesh Betar and would shed their guilt away of joining such a force. Sk. Shaheb had understood the role of Razakars rightly and accordingly had issued a general amnesty as a sign of the good will to fellow Bangladeshis. This was a great gesture

to the path of reconciliation in the post liberation era. We are one nation based on a single identity. Diversity of thoughts and ideas is healthy for a nation and therefore we need to find the bases of minimum understanding among these differing ideas and create a common platform of national reconciliation. The process is painstaking but it has to happen. Our political leadership has to demonstrate the good will to bridge these divisions for the sake of our sur-

vival as a nation Rial Ahsan Toronto, Canada



The Razakar squad of Fakirapool area