

Exporter's awe

The government declared 25 per cent cash incentive to the exporters against export made to overseas. That 25 per cent is now reduced to 15 per cent effective July'2002.-3 For the last eight months cash incentive was not released to the exporters as the government considered 'misuse' of the fund by the exporters. The exporters did not get the money but the lending bank took 15.5 per cent interest over the capital borrowed without any mercy whatsoever

Crores of taka have been accumulated as outstanding from the government but the amount released by the government is so meagre that even the full interest that has accrued over the last eight months cannot be paid or cleared altogether leave alone re-payment of the capital borrowings. We hear tons and tons of money are being miss-appropriated through the purchase of Frigate, Aeroplane, Project commission etc. The exporters of this country are treated as a secondary element, which is so

frustrating. Believe me, not all industrialists are wilful loan defaulters. There may be some bad eggs among the very many but I must say that the government's irrational decisions/implications have forced many entrepreneurs into forcible

Tayab-ul-Huq Uttara. Dhaka

defaulters

Aquestion

From the prevailing political environment, it seems that visiting a burial site has become compulsory. I just wanted to isn't worshipping a grave (mazar) shirq? Suraiya Jahan

Dhaka

False and fake certificates

False certificates have been around for long and foreign countries have smartened up to it making immigration employment abroad difficult.

In 1990 there was an opportunity for Bangladeshi doctors to migrate to New Zealand, but the effort went in vain, because a group of frauds came up with false MBBS certificates and even experience certificates showing them as service holders at different clinics. What happened afterwards is the New Zealanders investigated and found out making visa facilities became

very tough for Bangladeshis. The visa officers at the US

Embassy, Dhaka after scrutinising most of the HSC certificates of the DV winners found that more than half the certificates were fakes. Different national dailies have reported about these false certificates. But these frauds are is still very active in their illegal activities.

I request the authorities concerned to take necessary steps eradicate such illegal activities.

Quazi Raquibul Islam Dhaka

a 'Free Service Booth' at the airport from where the expatriates visiting their motherland would be provided with all suggestions and supports? I must congratulate DC (north) Faruque Ahamed, Addl. DC Humayone Kabir and others of DMP for quickly arresting the killers and

recovering the goods of the murdered expatriate Abdul Hve. Jkobir Mirpur, Dhaka

AK-47 culture

It is really frightening to see in the newspapers that criminals are arrested with all the modern arms. A few days ago I saw in the newspaper that a top criminal from Chittagong was arrested with an AK-56 and on 5th July another per-

son was arrested with another sophisticated machinegun. Something must be done to stop these illegal arms trade if we want to control terrorism. And also the government needs to re-organise our ill-equipped police department with modern facilities and arms. These days it is very difficult to fight crime with the old-fashioned 7.50-Kg weight gun

M Tanveer Sami Nawab Salimullah Road, Dhaka

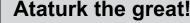
Judges

I am a bit surprised that our Constitution does not require Supreme Court judges to be "impartial". It is OK as long as they are "independent." It looks like they are not even required to take oath of office as judges although we know they all

Don't you think this is strange? I think our Constitution Experts have not taken note of this F.A. Khan Dhaka

Alarming increase in extortion activities Now-a-days, the extortionists have

become so daring that they are frequently killing people for refusal of extortion. It wass reported (July 7) that the armed gang of Picchhi Hannan, one of the 23 top criminals in the city, kidnapped a trader named Amir Hossain from the Karwan Bazar area and later strangled him after he refused to pay tolls to the gang. In another report, in Gazipur, a woman was gang rapped by the extortionists in presence of her husband as her poor husband



The status of Kemal Ataturk is now almost becoming a debate on the pages of Star. Nobody remembers that he was a great figure of history because he defeated the colonial forces in various parts of the world and inspired Indians to fight the British. Remember Nazrul's famour poem, "Kemal tu ne kamal kiya bhai.."(Kemal, you have done a miracle)

Not only that he was the first Muslim who ended the Islamic imperial institution of Ottoman Caliphate, which also ended the Khilafat movement in India. He established secularism and gave freedom from the rule of the Mullahs in Turkey. He was close to what Bangabandhu did for Bangladesh.

We love and respect him for what he did for his people and what he did to the religious theocrats in Turkey. He was a great Liberator of the Turks and not a Mullah Laden of Saudi Arabia. Nurul Alam

sonal scores!

people to wake up.

Green Dhaka,

clean Dhaka

cleaner and greener one.

Azad Miah

On e-mail

The government is engaged in various constructive (!) programmes like banning reconditioned cars, introducing multimetering service, banning cable channels but they never bother to do something about frequent loadshedding and the consequent sufferings of people.

With the rainy season setting in, power failure has increased manifold. With a little rain or a little wind electricity goes off as the transformer bursts and the misery of the people begins. This happens almost

Ours is a country of rain. If with such a little rain or wind the power goes off, what is the justification of having this facility?

Noyonika Noyon Dhanmondi, Dhaka **Democracy has**

Dhaka

suffered a setback in Canada and Bangladesh

What a highly developed country like Canada and a less developed country like Bangladesh have in common? The answer is that in both of these countries, democracy has recently suffered a setback.

In Canada, Prime Minister Jean Chretien has ousted the most popular politician Finance Minister Paul Martin because of his leadership aspirations. It was because of Paul Martin's astute financial man-

It's a wonder to me how Bangladeshis could have gotten such a skewed vision of history. Since when did Kemal Ataturk become such a hero?

I've taken my share of World History classes in my American school and I have never come across such praise for a ruthless, anti-Islamic man. Is this a petty attempt to be "modern"? Do we really believe that to praise Ataturk, George W Bush, and the pro-Western Iranian Shahs, it means that we are "modern and civilised"? Are we Bangladeshis really such docile, brainless zombies, that we will drink in what all that we are

You must question where this knowledge comes from, because without questioning there is no truth. Don't allow the West or anyone else for that matter dictate what you believe in. Think. Question, Learn. **Farah Islam** Grade 12

Mobarok Hossain

On behalf at the students of XI class Ghior govt. college

Party vs President President Badruddoza Chowdhury resigned from his post as the BNPPP asked him to do so. His fault was that he was trying to act neutral. This is the first time in Bangladesh and probably in the world that that a President is removed from the post for being neutral.

B. Chowdhury was not a party President but the President of the country. So it is the people who ference in police work. Why? should have decided whether he

We want nuclear plant and more budget for armed forces

Myanmar is going to start nuclear plant with the assistance of Russia. India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons. In the nuclear era, nuclear capability is the safety guard of a sovereign country. In the present world five superpower countries are controlling the world. They are the lords because they have nuclear power.

If we (Bangladesh) have to eat grass we would but we have to have nuclear plant. But the present government has already curtailed 141 crore Tk budget allocation for the armed forces. We need more allocation and we should have a plan to start nuclear plant. Even we should have a nuclear plant to produce electricity

Sohel Bin Seraj Mymensingh

54**5**4 14610

exposed.

Abd

Dhaka

Nuclear plants: Needed, not needed

over the spoils. We too have an overlarge military although thankfully not even remotely as dangerous as Pakistan's.

Like it or not our erstwhile compatriots fate may be destined to be repeated here. Watch out. Bastiat

be it the Nawabpur Road, Motijheel

commercial area or Dhanmondi

residential area -- everywhere road

crossing has become really a tire-

some, time consuming, risky and

dangerous business, especially for

school going children, old persons

foot over-bridges and underground

The DCC constructed several

We strongly feel that the DCC

and DMP should take effective

steps to mitigate the sufferings of

The regime in danger

Unless the listed criminals and their

gang members are not only arrested

The police must regenerate a

Road crossing Almost in every part of Dhaka city,

Dhaka

and women.

situation much

the city dwellers.

but also prosecuted.

OHKabir

Wari, Dhaka

Ehsanul Kabir Dhaka

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 10, 2002

The President's resignation

continues to increase?

B Chowdhury's resignation shocked me very much. I was a BNP supporter but their unconstitutional and unlawful activites has changed my

However, will the Finance Minis-

ter explain why these poor people

have to pay tax for the luxury of a

cabinet of over 70 ministers -- half of

whom have no work except making

tidbits. Why should the rich be

allowed to legalise their black

money without a single paisa tax?

Why should the tax rate of the high-

income aroup be reduced while the

tax burden of the lower middle-class

opinion. passes to cross at different places in In future, BNP will have to suffer the city for safety and convenience. for their imprudent decision But that really has not improved the Jasmin

Moulvibazai

Save Dhaka

Over populated Dhaka city has become a big gas chamber. Pollution has increased alarmingly and the people are suffering immensely. We have recently elected a new

mayor who has assured the citizens that he'd do his best to fight pollution. We have heard such promises many a times but nothing significant has happened so far.

positive image with the public, the Will the new mayor really be able regime is in danger of very survival. to do something of this polluted city There is too much political interof ours?

> Sharif Hasan Chan DU

New budget for a middle-income family

Burdensome new taxation of this vear's budget has broken the backbone of a middle-class person like me. I am a service holder who will have to pay income tax of Tk 1200 a year (100 Tk per month). I want to describe the miserable effect of the new budget upon a family like mine. For my family maintenance I have to increase such allocations per month. The chart is given below:

1. For my infant child I have to spend more than 250 Tk for sugar and

2. I have a child who studies in an English medium school. And from now on I would have to pay 100 Tk more (15 per cent VAT).

3. To buy fruits for my children I will need Tk 50 more, 4. For biscuits, chocolate, fruit juice,

soft drinks, I need 50 Tk more. 5. Fish, pulse, palm oil, spices will

take 400 Tk more, 6. For retail VAT rates, shopkeepers have increased prices of all items. So, add another 150 Tk for this purpose.

7. My doctor demands 50 Tk more

for his fee. 8. Toiletries, cosmetics will cost 100

Tk more. 9. Transportation cost will increase

by 200 Tk per month I need total 1500 Tk more budget

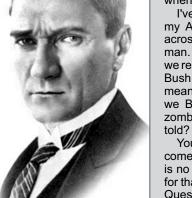
allocation per month. Where will I get this money? Would the govern-

located atop buildings and along the highways More and more trees should be planted on the road islands. And that too should be oushodhi trees. The footpaths should be cleared of hawkers and vendors and should be made user friendly. The surface drains and covered drains should be periodically cleaned. Sweepers and their supervisors are hardly seen The overflowing yellow bins and dustbins should be cleared regu-

Ananta Ashim Dhaka University

larly.

Indian policy towards



TO THE EDITOR

A great leader?

It seems to me that the real con-Khairul Hossain (Pavel) cerns of millions of Bengali poor people are falling on deaf ears! **Budget talk** Bangladesh is turning into a state of

This is in reference to the macroeco-"anarchv". There will be no return. nomic stabilisation that Finance Our politicians are using our money Minister envisioned in his budgetary and resources to settle their perspeech. A big part of macroeconomic stabilisation requires foreign It is time for both Sheikh Hasina trade liberalisation for sure. If develand Khaleda Zia to "GO" because oping and subsidising infant industhey have no intention of doing try to increase comparative advananything for the millions of poor tage is the goal then it is a theoreti-Bengali people. It has only been a cally noble idea indeed. But develfew months since BNP came to oping two contradictory public power. But instead of addressing all policies where, in one hand foreign those important issues, all they are trade is supposedly "liberalised" doing is fighting with the opposition. according to most-favoured-nation It is always the same, two parties fighting their war and in the process, philosophy and on the other hand taxing the same consumer goods they are simply killing Bangladesh!

leaves no incentives for our domes-It is already too late for Banglatic producers and further elongates desh and it is about time for the the vicious circle of underconsumption among consumers as well. I am not sure, how a decreased productivity growth would actually contribute to our prosperity and lead us to macroeconomic liberalisation.

However, the poverty alleviation programs vaguely mentioned by the I'd like to request our otherwise Finance Minister, which will receive sleeping city fathers to wake up from a large part of our GDP are suptheir slumber and do something posed to help reduce the budget concrete turn our metropolis into a deficit. Tightening the monetary policies and proposing such pro-All obsolete and useless banners grams have one implication in my should be removed. The city looks experience; there will be an in-flow like a city of festoon. These billof foreign aid and development boards and banners should be loans in the middle of the programs.

I am not convinced how the defence budget has been reduced. given the amorous relationship of the defence forces with the present government's heritage. Here is a simple mathematical relation that may clear the apparent claim; look at the defence budgets of FY 1991-1996 and FY1996-2000. Compare the increases and decreases and subtract inflation from the sum amount. The finance minister has reduced the defence budget indeed, but close to the FY1995-96 level. That's not called "reduction". That's the accounting trick students learn in their second day of Accounting 101 class. If I am to presume that the

defense forces will do with a reduced fund, whereas the govern-

For the jail teachers

In every central jail (10 central jails) in Bangladesh teachers are appointed by the government to educate the prisoners. A jail teacher is equivalent to the headmaster of a government primary school. But the teacher post in jail is very neglected due to different reasons. 1) It is blocked post. There is no

promotion in this post. 2) There is no need for PTI course for the jail teachers. So, they do not get facilities like a govt. primary school Headmaster.

As a jail teacher, I request Education Ministry to take proper steps to improve the standard of jail teachers.

Abdus Salam Teacher, Central Jail, Mymensingh

"Two days weekly holiday"

I support Ms Nur Jahan's view (June 2) on two-day-weekly holiday. The new office timing of one-day weekend is really inconvenient and absurd.

To say the least, the government officials are ill paid and those who solely depend on their salary (no access to easy money) cannot afford to maintain their families in the cities. These families live in villages. Don't these people have any right to spend some time with their near and dear ones at least once a week? With the prevailing one-day weekend it is virtually impossible. Isn't there anything the govern-

ment can do about it?

Nargis Begum Comilla

Killing of an expatriate

The news of killing of a poor expatriate who died after the muggers threw him out of the taxicab (July 2) reminds us of how much anarchy is prevailing in our society. The victim Abdul Hve was returning from Malavsia after three years, whose dream was to meet his family remained unfulfilled forever.

I don't know how long these poor people will continue to suffer first at the airport lounge by the white collar people and then at the hands of those so-called taxicab drivers outside the airport. Is it possible for our Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment to open



Basketball: Please cover tall men in shorts

No basketball news in your Sports Page

The Daily Star is the best English news daily in Bangladesh. It has a wide coverage on many topics including sports. Your Sports section often has good articles and offers good reading, but surprisingly I never saw the sports section mentioning anything about basketball.

As a great fan of that sport, I find it very disappointing. Just recently the NBA league got over with a very interesting final. But your paper didn't mention anything about that. Is it because you think basketball is not very popular in Bangladesh? If you think that, then you're mistaken. Basketball is quite popular in some cities, especially in Chittagong, where many Bengali and English medium schools participate in regular basketball competitions.

Please do something to change this. Surely you have some sports writer who knows about basketball.

agement. Canada could balance its

books. Before Mr. Martin took over

the country was running a \$42 billion

deficit and now Canada is the only

country in the world having a budget

surplus of \$10 billion. He has proved

to be the most successful finance

Similarly, in Bangladesh, a poor

developing country, democracy

seems to have taken a blow when

the ruling party forced President

Badruddoza Chowdhury to resign

because he wanted to maintain the

and commentaries in The Daily

Star, it is clear that Prof.

Badruddoza Chowdhury enjoys

minister in recent history.

Quadir A Chittagong

failed to pay toll to the extortionists. Later the husband committed suicide due to such barbarian act of the extortionists. It is alleged that the criminals get

support from the politicians as well as the law enforcers. I urge the PM, the Home minister

and the law enforcement bodies to take immediate stern actions against the extortionists and save the country from ruin.

M.S.Uddin Nagoya, Japan

Mosquito eradication

During the rainy season, mosquito appears to be a serious problem in our country. In the year 2000 dengue, a deadly disease caused by mosquito bites, broke out in almost an epidemic form and took its toll on many

Still the government has not learnt its lesson. They have remained as nonchalant as ever. In the meantime, mosquito menace is increasing and so are people's sufferings. Will the new Mayor Khoka please do something about

Power failure

Dipti Rani, Bashabo, Dhaka

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Wake up call

Mahmood Elahi

Chowdhury.

President.

its neighbours

There is a mixed concern in the subcontinental diplomatic circle concerning the future of the Indian policy towards its neighbours when the current Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee will be gone. This anxiety has grown further after the recent cabinet changes with L. K. Advani's elevation to the post of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party from a Hindu nationalist party to an all Indian political entity is phenomenal and the role played by Mr. Vajpayee is unique in this respect. The traditional Indian democratic values, despite its numerous weaknesses, were strong enough to mould it into a political force acceptable to the general masses. Mr. Vjapayee has shown himself as a great politically matured person with honesty and simplicity. Religious extremism, which is the ugly side of poverty and ignorance, did not influence his political wisdom

I had some wrong notion about L. K. Advani as a politician, but during the height of the Indo-Pak military stand off he came to the United States and gave an interview in the television. I found him knowledgeable and absolutely rational. His vision about his country vis a vis the role India would play in the future was unique and understandable. think if he becomes the next Indian Prime Minister he will play a very responsible role may be more sophisticated than his mentor. His past as a Hindu nationalist will have no negative influence on his abilities to perform his duties as Prime Minister

non-partisan nature of the highest Akbar Hussain office. From the deluge of letters Toronto. Canada

On budget

I am from a middle-class family and I'm not very much concerned about whether the tax on new car increases or not. My concern is whether I can buy the necessary household provisions as usual. Like Mr Neaz Al Rahman ("National Budget and Kiwifruits", June 21) I too don't know much about economics. And we are concerned about the 80 per cent people of the country who are struggling for food, for a decent living.

I think the economists must pay attention to these 80 per cent and try to bring a change in the national economy.

ment has proposed to increase the defense programs and forces, must be missing the influential and powerful linkage.

I have no prejudice against present or past governments of the 90s. The language of economics bears no political ideologies, at least

On e-mail

dents

poor and live in villages. And majority of the students study in local, non-government educational institutions. Most of them manage their educational expenses with much difficulty. We are happy that the government has given the opportunity for girl students to college education without tuition fee.

We request the Prime Minister to start a stipend for the boy students in every educational institution so that the students can be benefited, especially the poor students will be relieved from the crisis of economic problem.

I like the new law in Pakistan

A couple of things, which Musharraf is implementing in Pakistan, shows he is a true leader. If the same law is implemented in Bangladesh, it could possibly solve a lot of political

The new law states that no person would be able to hold the presidential office for more than two terms and all politicians must have a university degree in order to run for a sit in the parliament. I know implementing this law in Bangladesh would be rather difficult since a lot of our political leaders have very little educational qualifica-

tion (or a valid university The growing band of banned degree) and they would strongly oppose this.

But if BNP decides to implement these laws for the next Parliament Election it would send a message to the people of Bangladesh that they really do want good political leaders to come to power. I think it would be the boldest and best political decision ever taken.

Best of all it would bring about educated MPs in the parliament who would be more equipped to handle the problems of this impoverished country and bring end to political dynasty.

Qazi Rubayet Ahmed New York, USA

was suitable President for the country or not. BNP has committed a great blunder by asking a neutral and appropriate President to resign.

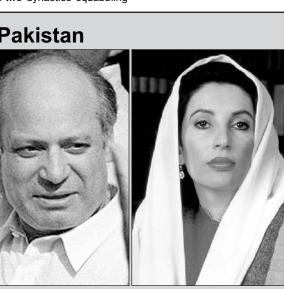
Md. Jasimuddin Moulvibazar

Musharraff and a lesson for us

A few months ago, I wrote a letter to this paper, stating the opinion that Gen. Musharraf is doing something unprecedented in post colonial or 20th century history

Since that time, my obvious admiration of the man has abated somewhat. Although I still think he's the best thing to have happened to Pakistan in a long time in spite of his farcical referendum.

There is a lesson for us here. Bangladesh may well be another Pakistan in the making. Here we also have politicians trying to make capital by stoking communalism and abetting fundamentalists. We also have a corrupt despotic democracy similar to Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. We also have not one, but two dynasties squabbling



ment increase my salary? If not then what am I supposed to do? Take The political and criminal godfabribe? thers behind the scenes must be

Enough is enough

For how long would we watch such

nasty political dramas played by the

political leaders whom we voted to

power and who love to serve their

our future. We have been fighting all

these years for democracy not for

We just cannot let them play with

family and friends not the country.

SBS

Mymensingh

dynasty.

Dhaka

Chowdhury KN

No favour to own members Whom are the politicians working for-- the party or for the country? There is ample evidence that most of these politicians have amassed wealth through dubious means. How about declaration of asset by he politicians?

Student politics and labour fronts must be banned.

Why is our leadership like a balloon-- high up in the air controlled by a thin fragile string? Sit down and work-- without publicity. The beneficiaries would sing automatic praise in due time.

Tax and development

am with the Finance Minister when

he says that we must pay tax for

development. So, a person who

earns barely Tk 6,500 per month

(and cannot even afford a doctor for

his ailing child) must also pay some-

thing. Ok laccept it.

Partisan push-out of the President

Like many I read with shock, if not with total dismay the recent incident of the resignation of the President.

Ironically, the sycophantic BNPPPs that regarded the 'neutral' act of the President as an expression of "disloyalty" simply followed its arch rival AL's lead in partycentric politics. The result has been that together, BNP and AL, have now reduced the political culture of the country into a most abominable level of ruralism, tribalism, cronyism and indeed, cultism.

From the time of the independence of Bangladesh, each ruling party seemed to have used the garb of democracy (sometime, not even that) and the so-called parliamentary majority to employ the most naked form of sycophancy and thuggery to perpetuate its own hold on power. Enmeshed in this culture of political tribalism, especially the way the two main political parties have now locked horns with each other and the way each is trying to outsmart the other with meanerthan-thou means to regain and remain in power, the outlook for the future is indeed quite bleak. With the current culture pervading and the current actors prevailing, scope for reform from within or to expect anything positive to come out of this vicious nexus is anything but bright.

Where do we go from here, then? Is there a way out of the AL/BNP quagmire? What can be done to save the country from the throes of the current self-perpetuating and self-aggrandising political tribalism?

Adil Khan Brisbane, Australia

problems.

great public support and most would like to have him continue as the In Canada, the public will have an opportunity to speak out their minds in the next election and I am sure most Canadians will elect Paul Martin by a margin. But people of Bangladesh may not have such an opportunity to demonstrate their preference for Prof. Badruddoza

at my end. Cyrus Zulkarnaian

Help the poor stu-

Most of the people of our country are