

A significant Musharraf visit

The thrust is on economic cooperation

THE substantive part of Pakistan President Parvez Musharraf's three-day visit to Bangladesh gets underway today as he has formal talks with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

An important highest-level contact between Pakistan and Bangladesh is being flagged off here. In the first place, the regional backdrop to the meeting is characterised by a continual tension in South Asia, a matter of concern for the SAARC region as a whole.

But Bangladesh as a member-state of SAARC and the initiator of the regional grouping idea way back in the early eighties feels perturbed over a serious potential for trouble existing in the region.

That said, we turn to the bilateral arena. The visit bears special significance for the expectations held in Dhaka that it will produce some forward movement on two long-standing bilateral issues: settlement of our claims to assets and liabilities worth US\$ 4.5 billion dating back to birth of Bangladesh in 1971 and repatriation of Pakistanis of Bihari origin stranded in Bangladesh since that point in time.

We look forward to breaking new grounds in the economic cooperation domain. Bangladesh seeks duty-free access to some of her traditional products which had been in high demand in Pakistan earlier on.

Dhaka and Islamabad are likely to sign two more agreements on enhanced cultural cooperation and regular consultations on bilateral matters.

We will, however, urge him to restore democracy to Pakistan at the earliest.

Police excesses at DU again

Culprits must be brought to justice at once

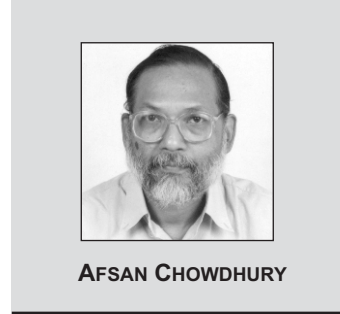
FIRST, they swooped on the Shamsunnahar Hall at the dead of night on Wednesday. Later that day, they resorted to baton charge and lobbed teargas canisters to disperse students protesting police atrocities at the hall of residence for female students and demanding immediate resignation of Vice-chancellor Professor Anwarullah Chowdhury and Proctor Professor Nazrul Islam.

We are fast running out of strong enough words to condemn such diabolic highhandedness. We want to know why have the police been authorised to run riot on the university campus.

Act before it is too late.

Why do we need universities?

It neither supplies history nor the ruling elite



AFSAN CHOWDHURY

THE Dhaka University doesn't produce members of the elite class anymore. The future ruling class studies abroad and its lesser cousins at least study in the private universities.

"DHAKA University's history is a most glorious one. It's full of great moments. Its contribution to the Language Movement is immense.

"You are saying that from 1948 onward, the country was in turmoil and the Dhaka University was in the forefront of the movement?"

"Yes. The history of the political movement of this country is the history of Dhaka University."

His voice trembled and shook with the memories of remembered pride.

It's about history making not learning history. Right?"

DHAKA University was born as part of the movement spearheaded by A.K. Fazlul Haque to provide a degree of pride to the people of East Bengal in the face of overwhelming domination by the Kolkata based intellectual elite.

Prof. Satyen Bose, the legendary physicist and Prof. R. C. Majumder, the historian who gave narrow and sometimes communal historiography a respectable face.

a CSP but an unhappy one. "I didn't want to be a teacher but became one by choice. My eyes were so bad that I would've failed the medical test. So it wasn't my first choice."

This was how the morning of February 21 was described to me by one of the participants. And it's how Bangladesh began.

They targeted everyone in the campus. The teachers, the students and even the cleaners and sweepers.

precincts of Dhaka University that anything is jayez now if it's a popular movement. So why would you need the University if you don't need rulers and masters if you are both from outside Dhaka University now?

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

You don't need a university to produce powerless, useless and docile members of the middle-class like us... "Students have been made scapegoats of teachers' politics. Teachers have been made scapegoats of national politics and national politics is making scapegoats of the nation..."

A teacher phoned me to tell me this. "The students are too angry and confused to understand

were very few people left who were legendary scholars but by then the post-1947 politics had started to overwhelm academia.

you can't go ahead enough so that you are transferred when caretaker governments are installed.

Hordes of students crammed into rallies demanding the world to be changed so that the status quo can be maintained.

ers-- Khoka, Passpartout etc-- were the first mastans of the Nilkhet valley.

IT was also the breeding ground of Pakistan's new class of rulers, the possible collaborators of the state.

IT was and always has been primarily about politics and state building and rarely if ever about anything else including academia.

We have a great political history but what is our intellectual history?"

DHAKA University first coined the term "antel" the derivative word for intellectuals. It never liked intellectualism, it liked activism.

"I joined the university as a teacher but the salary was so low that I left to join the civil service. I didn't want to but what was the option? I became a Secretary in the Pakistan government.

A person once told me that he had tried his best to get a job at Dhaka University but failed because of 'no vacancies'.

"WE had thought that we would run away but we didn't because we thought that we were poor people so what would we do? But as night came, firing started and the sound was horrific.

DHAKA University no longer produces the elite that the ruling class needs. Not just in studies but elsewhere as well.

"I told the young fellow that unless he gave up politics he would not get a first class. He was brilliant but more keen about politics so he got a second class. So he became a CSP.

It's about a university that didn't believe in itself. Maybe even didn't respect itself too much.

The woman who saw the scene broke down describing it for the TV camera and us.

So much was done in the name of anti-autocracy movements within the

"When the teacher gave me less marks I told him, do you want me to be a CSP or a teacher? I didn't get enough marks. So I ended up being

was also about politics that was on to construct the imagination of present Bangladesh.

"IN 1952, we were not afraid and as we took to the streets, we were shaking literally. We had no idea that what we were doing was challenging history. This ultimately was history."

When the Pakistan army attacked

Global corporate meltdown: Market, the fallen angel

PRAFUL BIDWAI writes from New Delhi

A crisis of corporate capitalism is ripping through the markets, wiping out 'shareholder value', gutting savings and livelihoods, and destroying investor confidence.

pro-corporate presidents, admits companies have been "cooking the books, shading the truth and breaking our laws".

Former World Bank chief economist -- and 2001 Nobel winner -- Joseph Stiglitz has sharply attacked the "shareholder value" model.

Formulas derived from the "Washington Consensus" have been prescribed to some 120 Third World countries.

In Western Europe, there is growing popular disillusionment with the privatisation of water, power and healthcare.

ing faith in management, little unionisation or job security, and poor-to-non-existent social services.

Giant after corporate giant is being humbled: Tyco, WorldCom, Global Crossing, Vivendi, QWest, Xerox, Merck, Halliburton... US bankruptcies are growing by the week -- 113 companies so far this year, with assets of \$149 billion.

prosperity, it is producing recession, crime and destitution.

The world is witnessing the bursting of the myth that the neo-liberal model is the sole route to development.

These don't address the crisis' root-causes. Other measures have been proposed, including corporate transparency, and separating consultancy and accountancy firms.

However, the best solution would be to aim resolve a big difference/tension between the Anglo-American model of capitalism, and other models such as the Japanese, the Asian "Tigers" (reliance on prudent state intervention), and the Continental European (involving a sizeable public sector, and intervention by financial institutions).

Our ministers are viciously attacking the public sector with privileged information -- thus lowering the stock values they are meant to raise.

These mega-scandals involve some high-profile "New Economy" or information technology-based companies.

The origins of the present crisis lie in the restructuring of corporations on a specific American model over the past decade.

The bubble is now bursting.

Today, the OECD, representing the world's 30 richest countries, has itself signalled growing concern about "policy failures" associated with the "regulating reform agenda", admitting that markets don't work well.

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This downturn is not just another recession. It follows a huge decline in corporate profits after the boom of 1997-2001.

This dictates that companies are to be run for the benefit of shareholders, to the exclusion of workers, customers or local communities.

A historic disconnect has opened up between the real economy and corporate market transactions.

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The crisis has dented the credibility of all institutions of corporate governance and even political leaders -- witness President Bush's involvement in the Harken scam.

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The stock rout this year has erased \$2.4 trillion in "market value". This represents one-quarter of America's gross domestic product, and seven times India's!

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Mr Bush, one of America's most

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TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR

Distortion of facts

First let's quote from the front-page headline of The Daily Star 'Dark episode at DU' (July 25) saying, "Many students had their dresses ripped while being dragged by the policemen. Besides physical torture, the police also verbally abused the female students, some of the victims said."

The report clearly mentions "policemen"; meaning male police attacked the dorm. The editorial however says, "police women" attacked the dorm. Who is right here?

We expected a stronger language from The Daily Star editorial about this unprecedented event in

Dhaka University episode



Streets lit by protest

time to solve the DU deadlock. The University authority has failed completely to handle the situation and the police played the most barbaric role.

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Parimal Chandra Debnath, Dhaka

When jobs are wiped out and families have no social security to fall back upon because state money to generate employment is spent on paying debts and societies break up.

HIV, TB and population growth

According to UNDP if the present population growth rate remains static by 2025 Bangladesh will have 260 million people and the death rate will be equal to birth rate.