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 mastans who are both from

outside Dhaka University now? You

don't need a university to produce

powerless, useless and docile mem-

* * * * * *

"STUDENTS have been made

scapegoats of teachers' politics.

Teachers have been made scape-

goats of national politics and national

politics is making scapegoats of the

A teacher phoned me to tell me

this. "The students are too angry and

confused to understand what's going

I went to the University a couple of

weeks back after many a summer.

on. Maybe so are the others.

bers of the middle-class like us.



A significant Musharraf visit

The thrust is on economic cooperation

HE 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. The war posturing between India and Pakistan has been much less torrid than before but not guite de-escalated to a point as yet where one could heave a sigh of relief. The US Secretary of State Colin Powel's reincarnated mission to New Delhi and Islamabad following British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw's trip to the region earlier on bear testimony to the concern being felt globally about it all.

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. For its casts a shadow over SAARC agenda for collective economic development which holds the key to poverty alleviation among one-fifth of humanity. We are sure, in whatever little way Dhaka can play a role in lessening tension within the region, she will not hesitate to do it.

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. Any ice-breaking on those questions would definitely give a shot in the arm of Bangla-Pak relations.

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. What sounds auspicious is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) being on the cards between the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) envisaging emergence of a joint cooperation body. This will provide an institutional framework for steadier private sectorto-private sector interaction and cooperation.

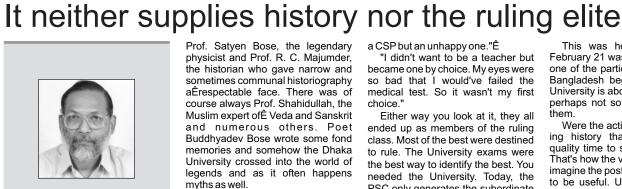
Dhaka and Islamabad are likely to sign two more agreements on enhanced cultural cooperation and regular consultations on bilateral matters. On the whole, it's a productive Musharraf visit Bangladesh is looking forward to.

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

IRST, 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. And yesterday, just when there was enough on our hands already they again cracked down upon agitating students near the Teachers and Students Centre (TSC). Some senior teachers, who had tried to protect students from the fiercely approaching law-enforcers, were not spared either. Their protestations got drowned in a downpour of boots, batons and abusive vitriol. Journalists on duty were targeted as well. Law-enforcers shoved at and roughed up correspondents of several national news dailies, even after being told who they were. In the end, a few journalists landed on hospital beds along with students and teachers. That was not all. Hours later, near the National Museum, a small group of university correspondents from different news dailies were to face police wrath. Their fault was they were in a group. The lawenforcers even tried to haul one protesting journalist into a police van parked near by. 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. The home minister owes the media and the people in general immediate explanation and apology. The police atrocities on the campus must end and end now. Thanks to injudicious handling by the university authorities and the government, the situation has already gone too far. Unless the marauding bands are reined in and proper disciplinary measures are meted out against them, it could snowball into a crisis going far beyond the government's capacity to contain. Act before it is too late.



AFSAN CHOWDHURY

HE 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. The infantry members of this section patrol the streets with guns in their hands and mobiles to their ears. Does anybody need the Dhaka University anymore? Has it outlived its historic role? Or

do we dare to ask the never asked question-- was it ever a centre of learning or was it always a place to brew political activism? When we liked it we called it glorious, when we didn't we called it anarchy.

"DHAKA University's history is a most glorious one. It's full of great moments. Its contribution to the Language Movement is immense. Unless the students came out at that time the revolt would not have taken place and the most important movement that led to Bandladesh would not be birthed.

'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 he memories of remembered pride.

He is right, right? It's about history making not learning history. Right?

PRAFUL BIDWAI

writes from New Delh

* * * * * * DHAKA University was born as part of the movement spearheaded by A.K. Fazlul Haque to provide a degree ofÊpride to the people of East Bengal in the face of overwhelming domination by the Kolkata based intellectual elite. It boasted of a number of fine scholars including

crisis of corporate

capitalism is ripping through

the markets, wiping out

"shareholder value", gutting savings

and livelihoods, and destroying

investor confidence. Ever since the

Enron scandal burst upon the world,

a tidal wave has pulled Western

capital markets down to almost one-

Giant after corporate giant is

peing humbled: Tyco, WorldCom,

fourth their level two years ago.

were very few people left who were legendary scholars but by then the post-1947 politics had started to overwhelm academia. A new history was about to be launched. Dhaka University was about to lead the fight against Pakistan. It had already begun to be imagined as a constructor of a new political imagination. It was already disappearing as an arcade of learning, a seat of academics

Why do we need universities?

Prof. Satyen Bose, the legendary

the historian who gave narrow and

sometimes communal historiography

aÊrespectable face. There was of

course always Prof. Shahidullah, the

Muslim expert of Ê Veda and Sanskrit

and numerous others. Poet

Buddhyadev Bose wrote some fond

memories and somehow the Dhaka

University crossed into the world of

legends and as it often happens

ars began to leave and soon there

But with 1947, most of the schol-

myths as well.

physicist and Prof. R. C. Majumder

IT was also the breeding ground of Pakistan's new class of rulers, the possible collaborators of the state Listen to the following voices:

"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. It was a great honour for the Bengali people.

"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. Later he lost his job in the 303 list of corrupt officers but after 1972 he was

reinstated" "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 upÊbeing

pro-corporate presidents, admits

companies have been "cooking the

books, shading the truth and break-

ing our laws". He says the business

pages of US papers "read like a

scandal sheet"; and yet "more

scandals are hiding in corporate

Clearly, the god of neo-liberal

market-fundamentalism has failed.

Rather than growth, wealth and

America"

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

a CSP but an unhappy one."Ê

choice.

"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

ended up as members of the ruling

class. Most of the best were destined

to rule. The University exams were

the best way to identify the best. You

needed the University. Today, the

PSC only generates the subordinate

bureaucracy. Without political clout

Either way you look at it, they all

During the Pakistan period the future administrators of the State were built at Dhaka to be polished at Lahore. The riff-raff could go into whichever oblivion they chose but what they wanted most was to hog the cream, never mind if they lost one or two due to myopia. * * * * * *

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

A person once told me that he had tried his best to get a job at Dhaka University but failed because of 'no vacancies'. When he had told them about a particular vacancy they had said haughtily, "It's the CSP vacancy. It's for those who need the job to

believe in itself. Maybe even didn't respect itself too much. It was also about politics that was

history. This ultimately was history.

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

> Dhaka University is a classic example where it's burdened with its past glory of political events and

This was how the morning of

February 21 was described to me by

one of the participants. And it's how

Bangladesh began. The point is a

University is about writing history but

perhaps not so much about writing

Were the activists so busy chang-

ing history that they didn't have

That's how the various ruling classes

imagine the post-colonial universities

to be useful. Universities are more

active in generating rulers and the

agitators but not much of scholarship

quality time to study original ideas?

them

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

smothered by a possible future. Where the teachers are no different than the students in gathering themselves in packs and defending the turf and participate in elections and are uncowed by the lack of a constant supply of intellectual out-

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

"WE had thought that we would run away but we didn't because we thought that we were poor people so who would want to get us? But as night came, firing started and the sound was horrific. It was so bad that we hid under the bed. It went on and on. After a couple of hours we thought we heard the sound of footsteps. We heard people were being dragged and taken away. My husband hid behind the almirah, but they found him and dragged him away. I never saw him again.

The woman who saw the scene broke down describing it for the TV

camera and us

Formulas derived from the

"Washington Consensus" have

been prescribed to some 120 Third

World countries. Common to all was

'market fundamentalism", the blind

faith that markets are the most

efficient allocators of resources:

Indonesia, and most of all, Argen-

Countries like Brazil, Ghana,

"governments bad, markets good".

ers-- Khoka, Passpartou etc-- were the first mastans of the Nilkhet valley. This was during the reign of Dr. M.O Ghani, who was later replaced by Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury,

they targeted everyone in the cam-

pus. The teachers, the students and

even the cleaners and sweepers.

The University was where the rebel-

lion had laid its best egg, where its

nest lay. It was about the glory of

history and politics and constructing

a new State not generate new

* * * * * *

DURING the era of Ayub Khan, his

East Pakistani satrap Monem Khan

National Students front whose lead-

built the knife-- armed members of

thoughts.

Between 1972 to 1975, the resistance to Awami League was at its peak here. After the fall of Sheikh Mujib, this was the same place where the Awami League built the first resistance against martial law. Use of

arms was legitimised here long before arguments against it were constructed. The Daily Star Dhaka University first coined the term "antel" the derisive word for

intellectuals. It never liked intellectualism, it liked activism. * * * * * * DHAKA University no longer produces the elite that the ruling class needs. Not just in studies but elsewhere as well. Bureaucracy is full of Ph.D.s so academics are not necessary to provide respectability to any institution in governing. Teachers are members of political party and really under the political discipline of their own students. Resistance has to do with guns and bombs and rarely with arguments. In Dhaka University, democracy always belongs to the winning side So much was done in the name of

> In Western Europe, there is ing faith in management, little growing popular disillusionment unionisation or job security, and with the privatisation of water, power poor-to-non-existent social serand healthcare, and talk of revices

The second, "social marketeconomy", model involves directed investment, extensive regulation, and well-developed social security.

This failure of the market-as-god calls for alternative solutions. Mr The first model is extremely Bush has just announced some dualistic, the second compatible measures such as more regulation with equality and social cohesion.

The world is witnessing the bursting of the myth that the neoliberal model is the sole route to

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

Former World Bank chief econo-

mist -- and 2001 Nobel winner --

Joseph Stiglitz has sharply attacked

the "shareholder value" model. He

says: "Corporate officers could

ensure that they were extremely

well paid, without ... taking out

anything from the ... bottom line. It

was almost too good to be true:

while executives were receiving

millions, no one seemed to be

When the Pakistan army attacked

market" neo-liberalism.

We sat near the Madhu's canteen made scapegoats of national politics and national politics is making scapegoats of the nation.".. and chatted and saw the comings and goings as the evening died. The A teacher phoned me to tell me this. "The students are too angry and confused to understand shanty-canteens are all gone. These canteens-- Sharif Mia's, Gafur Mia's and other ones which nurtured whatever originality the campus boasted of are no more

Tea boy Niranjan came and exclaimed in joy and surprise seeing me. It was another 'those were the days meet'. He asked for money, his later the President of Bangladesh. daughter had an operation he said. He needed money, he was desper-

nation.

ate. My friend interceded. "I hope you realise that he asks

everyone for money and why. My heart ached but I have learnt

how to ignore lost cases Afsan Chowdhury is a Senior Assistant Editor of

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position of the paper.

anti-autocracy movements within the

Global corporate meltdown: Market, the fallen angel

what we were doing was challenging

prepare for the exams." It's about a university that didn't

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.

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

This downturn is not just another recession. It follows a huge decline in corporate profits after the boom of 1997-2001. It involves large-scale skulduggery: despicable cooking of books, price-fixing and insider trading.

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.

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! The crisis of investor confidence, savs the conservative Fortune, is the gravest since the Great Depression. Mr Bush, one of America's most

The world is witnessing the bursting of the myth that the neo-liberal model is the sole route to development. Many Western Europeans, chafing at the negative consequences of the blind adoption of the US model, witnessed in the Vivendi collapse, want to try other routes... We South Asians must draw lessons from this: Markets can fail more disastrously than governments. Liberalisation of excessive regulation is one thing. Wholesale deregulation, globalisation, and

bearing the cost." prosperity, it is producing recession,

crime and destitution. The origins of the present crisis lie in the restructuring of corporations on a specific American model

over the past decade. At the model's centre is "shareholder value". This dictates that companies are to be run for the benefit of share-

holders, to the exclusion of workers, customers or local communities. Management would be remunerated with huge incentives in the form of generous bonus payments linked to stock options

This model's apparent early success created a bubble-boom. Enron and WorldCom were seen as its most spectacular examples. This "shareholder value" philosophy was spread through Europe by US investment banks.

This was a mirage. The commonest CEO trick was to create phantom companies that buy a corporate's stock at absurdly high prices poohed. to generate huge profits, which are

used to inflate share prices -- and raise CEO bonuses. Huge CEO incentives led to a "massive misallocation of resources" The bubble is now bursting. A historic disconnect has opened

up between the real economy and corporate market transactions. A vicious cycle of criminalised capital accumulation today stretches from boardrooms to government offices, and from accountancy firms to the IMF, World Bank and WTO -- themselves the authors (with the US treasury department) of the "Washington Consensus", US-style "free-

tina, were cited as proof of the neoliberal model's success. Many economists warned that neoliberalism is "both bad economics and bad politics". They were pooh-

Then last December, came the biggest peacetime economic collapses in the world -- in Argentina. This process has destroyed half of Argentinian livelihoods and devoured presidential careers. The neo-liberals cannot begin to explain why this happened.

Today, the OECD, representing the world's 30 richest countries. has itself signalled growing concern about "policy failures" associated tion by financial institutions). with the "regulating reform agenda", admitting that markets don't work the stockmarket for finance, on well.

lessons from this: Markets can fail and stiffer punishment for fraud. more disastrously than govern-These don't address the crisis' rootments. Liberalisation of excessive causes. Other measures have been proposed, including corporate regulation is one thing. Wholesale transparency, and separating deregulation, globalisation, and privatisation, especially of technoconsultancy and accountancy firms, and investment and commercial logically sound core-sector enterbanks.

nationalising public services -- e.g.

Britain's Railtrack and France

Telephone.

prises, is quite another. However, the best solution would Our ministers are viciously be to aim resolve a big differattacking the public sector with privileged information -- thus lowerence/tension between the Anglo-American model of capitalism, and ing the stock values they are meant other models such as the Japanese, to raise. They sing hosannas to neothe Asian "Tigers" (reliance on liberalism even as it bankrupts the prudent state intervention), and the world's people. This must change. Continental European (involving a We must oppose core-sector and sizeable public sector, and interven-

public services privatisation. The time to do so is now -- before all the The first model relies solely on Navaratnas get wantonly privatised.

Praful Bidwai is an eminent Indian columnist.

TO THE EDITOR TO T TO THE

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." Then let's look at the editorial 'DU campus rocked by political violence' (July 26). I would quote from your writing "The police women stormed into Shamsunnahar Hall at 1.30 am and swooped on female students until 3 am. There are allegations of police in riot gear dragging students from their beds and beating and abusing them with the reckless abandon 'of being under some orders.' While a few hundred may have been beaten up at least 50 girl students received injuries that

were visible.' 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

the history of Bangladesh. Organised "midnight assault on our sisters" by those who feed on our tax money-- the news petrified me!

We accuse the politicians and statesmen for distortion of facts. People don't believe the politicians and the future generations will know the truth eventually from history. Media has a larger responsibility to report the facts and thereby build history for future generations. When we have confusion over the history being told, we seek refuge to media reports of that time as the last resort. Zakaria S K Hondker North Carolina, US

An editorial has to be read in whole not in any truncated part. Its direction and thrust, and the point it finally makes, are the stuff of which editor rial authenticity is made.

Indeed, the first burst of entry into Shamsunnahar Hall was that of "police women" which was of course followed by male police storming into the dormitory.

I am sure if the letter writer reread the editorial, he will get to the logic of the above observation. Editor

The government is taking too much

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. It seems that we are living in a land where police has the supreme power.

If the VC is found responsible for this dark episode, he must resign. A prompt action from the government side is essential and all those including the responsible police should be

* * * The sufferings of the female students of Shamsunnahar Hall deserve our sympathy. The protest of the general students for the nightly police (female) raid is also

incident may occur again.

Oli Md. Abdullah

Khasdobir, Sylhet

Chowdhury

justified although this is not the first time that police entered a hall. But the partisan Teachers of DU are taking full advantage to grind their axe and instigating the students to more disorderly conduct, which has resulted in the closure of DU.

The press in their usual partisan reporting is creating sensation out of this incident. The embarrassed government has constituted a udicial enquiry, let's wait for their inding. But one thing the students should take note of that is they lose our sympathy as soon as they indulge in hartal politics.

strengthened the case for banning politics in educational institutes. Sakhawat Hossain, Dhaka

"Of workplace and sexual abuse of

This is the second time Shonku has mentioned P.J. O'Rourke and his book "Eat The Rich" to attack columnist Afsan Chowdhury. I suppose some people can relate to PJO and his books but you have to be a seriously anti-poor racist to recommend him so many times.

"Eat the rich" is a book that even the US critics said were funny but

unfairly scathing about all local people and their traditions. He in the end endorses the eternal stereotype that the Americans are looking for. That only Americans are smart and the rest are dumb.

"Eat the Rich" is homage to Wall Street, the haven of cheats as Americans are finding out now with Enron, Worldcom, etc A lot of spin doctoring is on but how do you write off the reality of the market! Even Alan Greenspan admitted that 'greed had become untenable' for US markets and the rich aren't hesitating to steal from the consumers. The names of companies under investigation are so many that the markets are simply not going to put up with. Only three months back people would have laughed if people said that Wall Street is so corrupt. Now Enron to Xerox are all fighting criminal

charges, Who's next? What has PJ said about this?

Nobody has provided any concrete argument that globalization is pro-poor. I am particularly hurt because I have personally seen like Afsan Chowdhury what Structural Adjustment Programme has done to Africa. There are many books that have been written on the issue but for some strange reason Shonku thought PJO was the best example to quote on this system if denial

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. That's why even the US government backed the African Initiative to end debt driven problems. It has become so bad that Africa can no longer be able to create markets which the Western world needs to sell its goods. People take the first iob in such situations. What else is there left except to do whatever is available, no matter how sexually unsafe that is? I thought Afsan Chowdhury has made this point again and again when he writes aboutAfrica

Ruby Khandaker, Dhaka * * *

am glad to read Mr. Afsan Chowdhury's column regarding sexual abuse of women at workplace (July 23). It is really a matter of regret that this sort of abuse at workplace is very common in our society. Some examples given by Mr. Chowdhury reveal the real

picture of the cruel fact. I am sorry to say that we, men are vet to consider women as equal Even some educated male as well as some female are not ready to accept

this fact and they are the main culprits We can easily fight this discrimi-nating attitude. All we need to do is

come forward and convey our due respect to our women colleagues. Women should also come forward to resist such kind of evil act and raise voice against the culprits. Only then women would be ensured a safe workplace

Parimal Chandra Debnath. Dhaka

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. A huge mass of unemployed people will be then be involved in sex trade, which

may help spread HIV/AIDS WHO forecasts that by then 90 per cent people of Bangladesh will be infected with TB due to malnutrition and population explosion.

Hope the government is aware of these facts and will soon take measures to fight this menace. K Anam, AKM Khairul Anam

Dhaka

development. Many Western Europeans, chafing at the negative consequences of the blind adoption of the US model, witnessed in the Vivendi collapse, want to try other routes.

We South Asians must draw



This development at DU has

brought to justice. Otherwise, such women"