# SOUTH ASIA

INDIAN

### Mamta's clouts enter the clouds

ZAGLUL A. CHOWDHURY

HE POLITICAL future of fire band Indian politician from West Bengal, Mamta Baneriee, seems once again plunging into new uncertainty following her decision to quit the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) of which her Trinamool Congress was a constituent of the rainbow coalition. Of late she distanced herself from the NDA and the differences widened further over the election of country's vice-president on August 12 when all the nine MPs of the Trinamool chose to stay away from the voting, taking an anti-NDA line. Despite this attitude, NDA candidate B.S. Shegawat won easily defeating the Congress candidate S.S. Sindhe, who was supported by most opposition parties

Mamta's role in the election has further alienated her from the ruling coalition which will not take the position of the Trinamool leader kindly. This has dismayed Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpaye and other key figures of the NDA, who are likely to adopt tough posture to the leader from West Bengal. On the other hand. Mamta Baneriee too was also giving vent to her feelings by dropping hints that her

party may not remain with the NDA. Finally, she announced the decision to quit the NDA. Consequently, the political future of Mamta has once again been embroiled in uncertainty with many predicting a difficult course awaiting her ahead.

Her problems with her NDA government arose some days ago over the bifurcation of the eastern railway as she protested the development, saying its head office must remain only in Kolkata after the federal government brought about changes in the present set up. Mamta, a former central railway

minister reacted sharply to the decision, describing it as a setback for West Bengal state but railway minister Nitish Kumar said Mamta's anger stemmed from her failure to return to federal cabinet in the recent reshuffle. She called a bandh in the West Bengal, which is ruled by her bitter political rival Left Front, which also opposed the bifurcation but called Mamta's approach to the situation as populist. The front also alleged that she herself had once agreed to this decision while as then federal railway minister of the NDA government, a charge Mamta denies.

Mamta Banerjee's rise in the political scene in India has been meteoric in recent years. She Eastern railway bifurcation issue broke away from the main has angered the NDA leadership. Congress and formed the Mamta said she is leaving the Trinamool Congress a few years ruling alliance and return to it only if ago and took West Bengal, particuthe decision on railway is rescinded larly capital Kolkata by storm, by which is extremely unlikely. relegating the main Congress to third political force state after the

Left Front and her own party. But

her relentless crusade against the

Leftists in West Bengal could not

cut much ice as the Front once

again swept back to power in the

state last year facing a stiff resis-

tance from the Trinamool

Congress. This was a setback for

her since Mamta was aspiring to

become chief minister of the state.

Earlier, she had quit as railway

minister and the ruling NDA with

the hope that it would help her in

the state polls. She lost the federal

ministership and the chance of

coming into power in West Bengal

In the meantime, the party also

faced internal problems as her

once time key aide former state

minister for external affairs Ajit

Panja parted ways with her taking a

pro-NDA stance. Mamta later

returned to the NDA alliance and

speculations were rife that she may

again be taken into the central

cabinet. But did not happen. On the

contrary, her position on the

also did not meterelise.

Even she had not guit the coalition, the NDA would have come down heavily on her centering the voting in vice-president's elections. Exit of the Trinamool from the NDA would not affect its rule because the alliance still has enough majority to govern. Caught between separation from the NDA and long wait for next assembly elections in the West Bengal, Mamta, known for her simple living and oratory skills, faces a difficult political situation. Some analysts say that there could be revolt in her small West Bengal-based organisation sensing the uncertain future. Then again her supporters say Mamta weathered many a storm in the past and her determination will again see her through the present uncomfortable course

Only time can say that whether she will succeed. But there is little doubt that Mamta is facing a bad time and this may continue for long unless the conditions are unexpectedly reversed in her favour.

#### The refugees with nowhere to return

M ABDUL HAFIZ

HE most ugly phase of communal carnage in Indian state of Gujrat might have ended thanks to the countrywide waves of protests and protracted stormy debate in the parliament bringing the NDA government almost on the verge of collapse, but its painful longterm effect has just begun. During the violence most of the Muslim population of the state (89.5% of the state's population is Hindu and just 8.5% is Muslim) were attacked by sword and spear wielding Hindu mob led by BJP associates and had to flee their homes with nothing but clothes on their back. Many of them were chased by the statesponsored hoodlums of VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) and Bajrang Dal and halked to death. Those who could survive by hiding themselves in the forests, fields and city crowds finally found refuge in some of the miserably managed relief camps.

Although the Gujrat government claims that there are only 16 such camps housing 16, 495 people all over the state ostensibly to show the reduced scale of violence the Citizen's Initiative, e NGOs providing supplies to the camps, counted in a survey conducted on 19 June as many as 30 camps in Ahmedabad alone sheltering as many as 38,200 homeless people affected by communal violence. The government also claims that there are only six camps in the rural areas whereas on ground many more exist. The blatant lies the state government resort to is apparently its attempt to hide the enormity of the carnage, to prove that the state has returned to normalcy and to convince the Election Commission that the state is ready for state assembly election.

The state government wants to take advantage of prevailing Hindutva wave in an early election and the chief minister Narendra Modi already dissolved the local legislature in mid-July to cash in on the support of majority Hindu

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population, with the same intention to make the state election worthy, Modi is now adamant about closing down the refugee camps in the state. As a result, the refugees are rendered virtually shelterless in absence of any governmentsponsored rehabilitation plan. Even if they have no immediate place to fall back, the inmates of the camps are already told to

But they are reluctant to return

to their homes most of which were burnt down or destroyed. In last four months the vacant sites and shops of many of the Muslims have been taken possession of by their Hindu neighbours. Those who left the camps and went to their devasted homes are coming back because they are no more welcome even in the towns and villages they have called home for generations. Many have been told that their only chance of regaining normal life is to withdraw accusations of rape and murder committed by their Hindu neighbours during the violence. The returning Muslim refugees also reveal that they were threatened by the local leader or had to face so social and economic boycott by the majority Hindus. Some found the charred vacant site of their home transformed into makshift temple. When police help was sought to get back the site they politely refused to take the risks. Even when the vacant sites were available to their lucky owner they were in dilapidated conditions and not worth occupying immediately.

Although the government claims that the victims were given the cheques of money for compensation to repair their plundered homes and also sufficient time to construct for compensation to repair their plundered homes and also sufficient time to construct their homes, where necessary. But according to the realities on ground 70% of the affected people did not receive an compensation and in the case of those who were given the cheques the amount was often as low as Rs 71 and averaged between Rs. 2000 and 3,000

hardly enough either to repair or construct house. Yet the chief minister. Narendra Modi claims that 95% of the rehabilitation works is complete, even though the rehabilitation does not mean only distribution of cheques for com-

In Halol camp, for example, several refugees wanted to return home before the monsoon. But the Sarpanch would not let them return even after the police arranged meetings with them. They say they do not want any Muslim in their

People from Radhikapur in Panchmahal district also ere not able to return home. Many have camped in nearby village after their camp in Godhra was shut down. They are still waiting for the tempers to cool down and to be accepted back into their ancestral village. Several VHP leaders in the area have been named as accused in the cases of mass murder, rape and looting of Muslims in the village and these people are trying to intimidate the victims into getting the police cases withdrawn. In the few places where the voluntary organisations are helping people rebuild their houses they are finding if difficult to recruit local workers who are scared of having any interaction with the Muslim community.

Apart from the enormous problems of rehabilitation, the stray incidences of violence continue. In Vadodara at least four clashes occurred in June. The appointment of KPS Gill, a former super lop as security adviser the state's did not prove effective as was projected by the media. The legal actions are hard to be taken because in most cases of crime committed against the Muslims the police did not accept the FIR even if the complaints were lodged. Even now a prominent association of lawyers said that it would not take up complaints from Muslims

In the meantime the conditions in the relief camps here the Muslim survivors of the carnage are presently putting up and are under pressure to leave are most inhos-

pitable. With the advent of monsoon the inmates of most of the camps live under the open sky except where the voluntary bodies provided some tarpaulin to give succour for the ill, women and infants. In consonance with the government's policy for an early closure of the camps it has already 'stopped the supply of electricity, water and food in the camp', said Amanullah Khan, an organiser of Vadali Camp in Sabarkantha district.

The camps need Rs 30 worth of ration per person daily whereas the government provides (both in cash and kind) worth only Rs 7. Medical care is also inadequate. The paucity of rare drinking water has already caused jaundice. But the government remains unconcerned. "Short of throwing people out in the street, the officials are using every trick to pressurise the inmates into leaving," said an organiser of Citizen's Initiative. "They have stopped ration and water supply. Monsoon shelters haven't been built. They tell people that they will not get three months' free ration to which they are entitled, unless they leave the camp. Even the registered are not supplied the full ration quota. At Shah Alam Camp in Ahmedabad, the biggest in Gujarat, the government supplies ration enough for 7300 people, although the camp shelters 12,150 refugees.

Yet, the inmates are stubbornly clinging to these miserable camps for barely shelter and safety. Where else can they really go? They have been turned into stranger in their own country -thanks to Hindutva's genocidal impulse. In all the camps, however, the inmates speak of their longing to go home. Who would want to stay in inhuman conditions of the camp? But who would provide them safety? The state government of Modi which has stained its hand by perpetrating the pogrom of Guiarat?

Abdul Hafiz is former DG of BIISS

SRI LANKA

#### A truce on test

V.S. SAMBANDAN in Colombo

WO YEARS ago, Sri Lanka was a nation on the brink. All eyes were on the island's where fiery battles raged between the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the security forces for territorial control over the Jaffna peninsula.

Today, as the island-nation nurses slender hopes of peace, the spotlight is on the east: the volatile region that can either ruin the current peace process or set the pace for effective conflict resolution.

"If the ceasefire breaks, it will be in the east," said a resident of the eastern town of Batticaloa. It is not merely a common person's prophesv of doom: in Colombo, a military veteran shared the same percep-

The A-5 was opened for civilian traffic on July 15, and now the mode of travel from eastern to southeastern Sri Lanka is expected to change. Earlier only private vans, with passengers and goods packed like sardines, were available. "If government bus services are restored, life will improve a lot," said Varadarajan, chief clerk at the office of the local governing body. "An estimated 5.000 students who go to the 12 schools located in this stretch will not have to walk long distances if public transport is restored."

Given the sensitive nature of the ethnically mixed eastern region, the two were also confident that problems could be sorted out through dialogue

"We have a very close dialogue with the LTTE's political leaders of the east. I am not saying that problems will not come. But with understanding, I am confident that we can sort them out." Tennakoon said. Karikalan said, "We are in close touch with high-level officers. Whenever there are problems we talk and work out ways to solve

On reaching LTTE-held territory, the order of the convoy changed. Armed LTTE motorcycle outriders and guerillas in open jeeps led the convoy. The Tigers were making the statement loud and clear as to who controlled which territory. Karikalan pointed to areas that had not seen development for decades. There was only one hospital for the entire area and there was no power sup-

It was also time to reciprocate the Army's hospitality. At an abandoned church, the rebels organised a reception. Soft drinks and snacks were served as the men in uniform and LTTE cadres sat across each

With the ice broken, the fighters from the two sides broke into bits of conversation. The general theme was to reiterate each other's efforts towards peace. Outside the church, armed rebels stood guard. For some soldiers, it was their first interaction with the rebels Language proved to be a source of division. Capt. Diyamenthie, a volunteer doctor, keen to know a woman fighter's view, posed a question in Sinhalese, which did not elicit an answer.

Along the route, posters protesting against the positions taken by some parties in the south, one of them aimed at the left-radical Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, which opposes the peace process, were on display. Songs criticising the war

efforts were also played.

At the end of the 36-km journey, near a Sri Lankan police checkpoint, Karikalan, when asked what was required to transform the present truce to lasting peace, said, "There should be unity within and among the Sinhalese during the current ceasefire and the emphasis should

say goodbye to Gen. Tennakoon and Karikalan, who went to their vehicles parked under a tree.

THE optimism generated by the access to the A-5 was jolted at Valaichchenai. A row of burnt-out shells stood where once there was bustling business. Valaichchenai became the victim of communal violence, the first since the ceasefire agreement. The violence was quelled only after curfew was clamped that night. While there are conflicting versions about what happened, it is agreed that the

army for not controlling the situa tion"

The violence claimed 11 lives and a considerable extent of property was destroyed. The question now on the minds of the residents is whether there will be a permanent divide between the two communi-

However, Hyder Ali, a primary school teacher, asserted: "We cannot be inimical to each other". A merchant concurred: "Yes. The Tamils will need us for trading their produce and we will need their

clientele. Hanifa, a trader, is reluctant to pin the blame entirely on one community. "Everyone is responsible," he said. Another trader is concerned about his debtors who "do not even come this side" and the dues that

Although an agreement with the eastern security forces and the LTTE's political leadership has brought the situation under control, uncertainty prevails.

run to more than Rs.2 lakhs".

'The Tigers should implement what they have promised," a policeman said, adding that unless the assurances are carried out on the ground, the sense of distrust will continue to prevail.

Yet, there is a visible difference brought about by the ceasefire. The checkpoints, especially those on the routes to the north and the east, are now fewer and far between. Even where they exist, armed soldiers and policemen are confined to their bunkers.

Hopes of peace are high. Yet, the realisation that all it takes is a gust of violence to shatter the peace process is palpable.

In a way, the manner in which Sri Lanka alternates between peace and war is predictable. After intense battles of attrition, truces are signed. Statements are made that there can be no military answers to a situation that essentially needs a political solution. Talks are guided by an eye on attrition, with each side hoping to wear down the other. Simultaneously, military build-up takes place on both sides. Then comes the build-up to a return to war. Charges and counter-charges fly before the final assault is launched for resumption of vio-

Central to peace will be the response from the Tigers. Across both government and rebelcontrolled areas of the east there is a mixture of emotions. Happiness that the war has stopped, grim reminders of the past, and a feeling that the Tigers are giving in too easily.

Given the speed with which Gen. Tennakoon and Karikalan worked to make peace, one could not but wonder if the clasp of goodwill will remain firm. Peace in Sri Lanka is evidently going to be harder than

By arrangement with the Frontline magazine of

## **Unfriendly fire**

MOHAN MAINAL in Dhading

T is a steep two-hour uphill from the Prithvi Highway to Jogimara in Dhading district. And even from a distance, we can sense the stillness in the air. The village has only older people and children, they all wear a haunted look. They sit on their front porches, with shocked listlessness.

It has been nearly six months since 17 young men from Jogimara were killed while working on an airport runway at Kalikot in western Nepal. Their families don't have any tears left, but grief stillsears their hearts. Almost every family has lost a breadwinner, but no bodies were ever returned. There are 10 widows, 18 orphans and 14 bereaved parents at Jogimara

Today, they are trapped between the need to come to terms with the deaths of their loved ones, a future of destitution and despair, and a government that calls them relatives of terrorists.

On 24 Feburary, 800 km away from home, the young men found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. Piecing together information from survivors, it is clear that the killing was a tragic combination of mistaken identity and other errors. And half-a-year later, this Dhading village is proof of the senselessness of the violence that has been unleashed on the Nepali people in the name of Maoism, and the callousness of officialdom.

In late November, just when the Maoists broke the truce and attacked the army in Dang, Jogimara's poorest of the poor were getting ready to go to Kalikot. They went because they trusted the subcontractor, Kumar Thapa. They knew him, he had never cheated them, and he was even willing to pay an advance. And they needed the money. Of the 20 Jogimara men who left, only three returned alive. Among the dead were nine who were under 21 years old.

A month later, the Maoists attacked Mangalsen and Sanfebagar, killing 137 soldiers and policemen. The security forces went on a three-pronged hot pursuit northwards. The fleeing Maoists

infiltrated the construction workers in Kalikot, and fired on an army helicopter flying overhead. Fearing army retaliation, the contractor told his men not to come to work and everyone had their identity papers ready in case the security forces came looking for Maoists.

be on the need for peace. Then

sive politics, this appears more

difficult than the firm hand shakes

exchanged by Gen. Tennakoon and

Karikalan. Subtle undercurrents

were in evidence."I do not know

what is happening. Our leaders told

us to open this road, we are opening

it. Ask them for details." an LTTE

leads to government-held territory,

rebels expressed their desire to

travel further. Initially the police

were reluctant as the agreement

prevented uniformed rebels from

entering government areas, but on

Gen. Tennakoon's request the

Tigers were let through. The

Sinhalese villagers, who saw the

'kotiyas' racing down the road for the

down this road". Karikalan said. "In

the 1990s. I went on a one-day trip

leads to Badulla, it was time for us to

all around this area.

"It has been years since I came

Further down, at a junction that

first time, were naturally shocked.

At the police checkpoint that

cadre in plainclothes said

Given the country's highly divi-

there will be permanent peace."

On 24 February, an army attack force stormed the quarters, thinking the workers were Maoists. According to eve-witness reports given to the National Human Rights Commission, 17 workers from Dhading, seven from Sindhupalchok, and 11 local villagers were killed. Among the villagers were the ward chairman from the Nepali Congress, two Sherpas from Solukhumbu who were working in Kalikot and two minors. Two workers from Sindhupalchok managed to survive. All the Maoists had fled by the time the soldiers arrived. That week, the Defence Ministry statement said 67 Maoists had been killed in encounters in Kalikot.

A senior army source told us that the security forces had reliable reports that the Kalikot area was where many of the Maoists who took part in the Mangalsen attack were hiding. "The Maoists had infiltrated the workers," he said. "But in hindsight, it is clear that the Maoists were provoking us to attack the workers and make it look like we were killing civilians." The survivors say that the Maoists had been coming around regularly to threaten them to stop work on the airport. They would refuse, but the Maoists would demand a meal, after which they would leave

The fact that the Maoists shot at the helicopter using the workers as human shields bolsters the argument that the rebels were trying to trap the army into attacking civilians. But all this is of little consolation to the families, and it is clear that the attack in Kalikot was a colossal blunder. For the families of the dead in Dhading and Sindhupalchok, the wounds haven't healed with time. This is mainly because they never got the bodies of their loved ones. No one ever came to apologise or tell them that it was a mistake. And to make matters even worse, as far as the government is concerned,

their sons and fathers were all "terrorists"

Tigers' writ runs in the eastern

region. A political leader put it thus:

"We cannot firmly say that the Tigers

were behind this, but one thing is

clear, if they wanted they could have

eastern province is evident from the

cascading effect of the distur-

bances, which began at Mutur in

Frincomalee district, 80 km north of

Valaichchenai. Irked by what

Muslims saw as the LTTE's reluc-

tance to protect them and the "extor-

tion of traders", a call was made for

a general closure of all business on

A police officer saw the violence

as a round backed by the Tigers who

"wanted the hartal to fail".

Disagreeing with this, a Tamil resi-

dent said that unlike the past, the

because they did not have to fear

arrests because the ceasefire was

on". Muslim traders were guarded in

their remarks. Some blamed the

"forces backing the Tamils" for the

violence and "the police and the

Tamil youth were out on the streets

The fragility of the peace in the

stopped it.'

Dambar Bahadur Thapa lost his 17-year-old son. He says, "They were guiet kids, they never got into any trouble, they were just working hard to make some money to send back to their families." Gvan Bahadur Biswokarma lost two sons aged 30 and 25, and has only now decided to hold a funeral service for them. Shankha Bahadur Gurung lost two of his five sons, one 21 and the other 19. He had decided to go to Kalikot to see for himself after hearing the news, but the other villagers stopped him. Most other villagers have by now given up on their sons being alive, and are

carrying out funerals on ritual pyres. As the priest makes final preparations for Raj Kumar Shrestha's funeral, his mother is weeping loudly inside the house. Rai Kumar's wife Gita gave birth to a girl a month ago, but the baby died. His father Bel Bahadur is assisting the priest. "Console yourself," the priest mutters in between chants. "The dead don't come back no matter how much we want them to." That makes things worse, and the weeping is louder. Raj Kumar's five-year old son Amrit and his younger brother are playing marbles with a friend nearby, oblivious of what is going

Eight of the dead are Praja families, and they still don't accept the deaths of their loved ones. They refuse to carry out the funeral rites and hope against hope that their sons will one day appear. "Kumle had promised to come back by the mid-April, in time to help with sowing corn," says his mother Ninna Praja, tears welling up in her eyes. "We will wait for him forever, there was no

reason for him to die.' Fourteen-year-old Govinda Praja lost his 60-year-old father Chitra Bahadur. "I still hope my father escaped, maybe he could have been delayed because of the difficulties of coming back," Govinda told us. "We had tried to discourage him from going so far away. However, Chitra Bahadur, decided to go because there was no work his debt was piling up and he had no more cattle, goats or crops to sel

Govinda's mother Sukmaya is so torn by grief and worry that she hasn't spoken to anyone for months. In addition to his four little borthers and sisters. Govinda now also has

to take care of his mother. Two young teenage widows, Kaman Maya Praja and Syani Praja, still have terrified looks. They are living with their joint families, unsure of what lies ahead. Indra Bahadur Thana lost his 16-year-old son Gvan Bahadur in Kalikot, "Before leaving he had asked us to take good care of the cattle and not to borrow too much money," Indra Bahadur told us before looking away to wipe his tears. "He wanted earn enough to pay for his school-

It was only after the news of the death of innocents rocked parliament in March that Singha Darbar took notice. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba told parliament on 6 March that the government was taking care to ensure that the innocent were not killed, and that if that happened, they would be adequately compensated. The Prime Minister's Office also set up a special committee headed by Rishikesh Gautam to hear and investigate complaints. When we contacted the committee for comment, its members were still unaware of the men from Jogimara who were killed in Kalikot.

Shree Kanta Regmi, secretary of the committee, told us that his office had not received any application from the families of the deceased The bureaucracy's wheels don't start turning until a formal application is received, and Regmi told us that newspaper reports were not enough. "We will look into the cases as soon as we receive complaints, he assured us. Shocking as the tragedy is, what

is even more appalling for the families in Jogimara is the government's indifference to their plight. As we prepared to leave, one villager told us: "We've not just lost our children, but the government has branded them terrorists. Where is justice?"

By arrangement with the Nepali Times

#### dealing with local government in India, the auditing of accounts was a critical issue. Local government had to be backed up by accountants and other professionals or they would be in a

taking place in Bhutan. He recalled that, while

HE Indian foreign minister, speaking

during an informal moment in Thimphu.

noted the dramatic political changes

**Negative trends** 

India's experience and, in fact, the experiences of all our neighbours, are not unknown to us. We are aware that they are all facing major challenges, including wide-spread corruption.

Judging by the overall trends we have seen in Bhutan, most of us anticipate that we will face similar problems, on a much smaller scale but with proportionately the same implications.

Kuensel began reporting urban crime in Bhutan as regular stories since 1991. Since then, there has been an up-turn, but largely involving petty crime. Apart from the occasional act of violence, the trend has been predictable.

The severity of crime in Bhutan took a leap with the theft of religious treasures, more painful as an act of desecration than for their material loss. Usually master-minded from the outside. spiritual morons have been willing to rob the country of its religious heritage for small amounts

Yet another unfortunate source of emerging news has been sex-related crime, emerging mostly from schools. It is no consolation that most of the school teachers involved, in this

case, are not Bhutanese nationals. The issue is first step to solving them. that our children are growing up in such an envi-

And now, with the decentralised Plan just launched, many people believe that we are now on the threshold of a new era in crime, white collar crime, often a greater plague to society than even gruesome acts of violence.

With administrative and financial power devolved directly to GYTs and DYTs and the process of decision making shifted to a new section of the population - local leaders - we expect problems. It does not even shock us, today, to hear outright predictions that some elected officials will end up in jail.

As we reflect on the impact of change, we confront many questions.

Are our ethical standards really deteriorating ? In fact, is white-collar crime a new trend? Could it be that wrongdoers in the past have just not been caught or have not been brought to justice? Could it be that we are seeing, and sensing, an increase in criminal activities merely because we are now more transparent?

Given the climate of open discussions which characterise political and socio-economic developments in the kingdom today, we are realistic enough to accept that these are genuine and potential problems, that we are facing. What is re-assuring is that these issues are out in the

Serious questions

We believe that acknowledging them is the

It is easy enough to spot problems. It is not so easy to decide what can be done about them and often even more difficult to decide who should do

As one visitor points out, Thimphu may be changing rapidly but there is at least something that remains unchanged. The roads are always dug up and never re-filled.

For residents, this is a deteriorating problem because of the rapidly growing congestion of both vehicle and human traffic. Meanwhile, when roads are constructed or repaired they do not appear to last very long. Several parts of Thimphu, including the main stretch above Changlimithang, was full of potholes soon after it was constructed.

Another problem for urban dwellers, violence in the night clubs, is not a trend we are proud of. We are reaching a stage where going out at night might not be so much fun any more. Phuentsholing faces the same challenges

and it is likely that all our towns, sooner or later, will have to deal with the same problems. The residents of Bhutanese towns would certainly appreciate some discipline as we grapple with this rapid growth.

Courtesy: Kuenselonline