

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

"Hasina's illness"

I totally agree with Mr. Hoque (Jan 13) that Hasina should not be sent abroad for treatment at the cost of the public exchequer. There are hundreds of thousands of people in Bangladesh with far worse illnesses than Sheikh Hasina's, some of whom are the only bread-earner of the family. Therefore, if the caretaker administration wants to spend public money on treating patients, those poor people should be treated first, not Sheikh Hasina or Khaleda Zia. Besides, why do they need to go abroad? Some of the best family doctors and hospital specialists in the UK are actually from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. So if Sheikh Hasina is looking for good doctors, luckily, she is in the right country. Whichever way you look at it, there is absolutely no reason for spending precious public money like this. We have

other urgent, life-threatening issues that are in desperate need of some government money.
Azad Miah
Oldham, UK

Advisers' role

In the present situation, we need to cooperate with Chief Adviser and all other advisers in his cabinet. We should not forget that the honourable advisers are here for the betterment of our country. Remember, the advisers are not politicians. Their responses to journalists should not jeopardize the roadmap for a democratic government or have a negative impact on the overall situation. Advisers are here on a temporary basis and for the smooth transition of power to a democratic government.

My sincere request to all journalists and everyone else, please help

them in whatever way you can. Otherwise, we will be responsible for the consequences.
W. Islam
Utara, Dhaka

Disappointing!

I watched the programme which was telecast live on the Ekushey TV on January 9, 2008 and became very disappointed with it.

Awami League leader Suranjit Sen and eminent journalist Ataus Samad were answering questions from the audience and questions asked by viewers over telephone.

Suranjit Sen's smug smile and posture was very unbecoming, there was no sign of 'leadership' in it. He was insisting on an early election and blaming the caretaker government for price hike, resignation of the advisers etc. We think the caretaker government should not be criticised, they took charge

when everything was disintegrating, people were passing their days in great fear and anxiety, not knowing what was going to happen, the country was in an unimaginable turmoil. The present government has a very difficult task to perform, clearing the debris which has accumulated during the Awami League and BNP regimes.

Both the parties want election to be held within a short time; it is very funny. People are still in shock amid disbelief by what they have learned about the politicians. Are the AL and the BNP thinking that people will rush to cast votes in their favour? They are living in a fool's paradise, until other parties are formed nobody will be interested in the general election.

They have seen the ugly face of democracy!

Nur Jahan
S.S. Khaled Road
Chittagong

Bangladeshi artefacts

The latest information from Paris is extremely alarming. The controversial Guimet Museum has reportedly decided to sell the whole lot of artefacts sent from Bangladesh for exhibition. According to various sources, Guimet authorities have already finalised at least three deals of selling extremely precious and the rarest Bangladeshi artefacts to prospective buyers. Initial value of these three items have already been fixed at US\$ 93 million. Guimet has also expelled the representatives from Bangladesh museum and abandoned any possibility of sending the artefacts back to Dhaka. It is also reported that a number of influential people are involved in such trafficking of national assets abroad, defying massive reactions and protests from Bangladeshis. Although the interim government repeatedly promised to the nation that the artefacts would return to Dhaka soon, it is already understood that the promise will not be fulfilled.

Sohail Choudhury
One-mail

Don't forget the Valiant

Radio Foorti was the media partner of the event 'Concert for Bangladesh'. I'm a regular listener of this radio station and came to know of this praiseworthy event as its jockeys circulated the news, saying the event location was 'Kamalapur Stadium'. The next day I came to know through a newspaper that the actual name of that stadium is 'Birsrestho Shahid Md. Mustafa Stadium'. Jockeys of Radio Foorti could have uttered the full name of the stadium with a hint of the precise location 'Kamalapur' and thus they could have expressed a little more respect and availed another opportunity to remind the listeners of the unparalleled sacrifices of our valiant martyrs for the cause of our beloved motherland.

Ahmad Ferdous Bin Alam
Dept. of CSE, DU

More work, less talk!

People were really expecting, the advisers to work very efficiently. But it seems that they have failed. The only reason for failure is unnecessary involvement and comments on some issues which could easily be neglected. Every position and designation should have a boundary line which shouldn't be violated. We saw some members' departure which really worries us. New members have taken the oath to work for the country under the caretaker government, new hopes are on for the people. The nation wants to say once again -- please work more talk less!

Mohammad Imran Hossain
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

Edmund Hillary

Edmund Hillary, the first man known to reach Mount Everest along with Sherpa Tenzing, passed away at the age of 88.

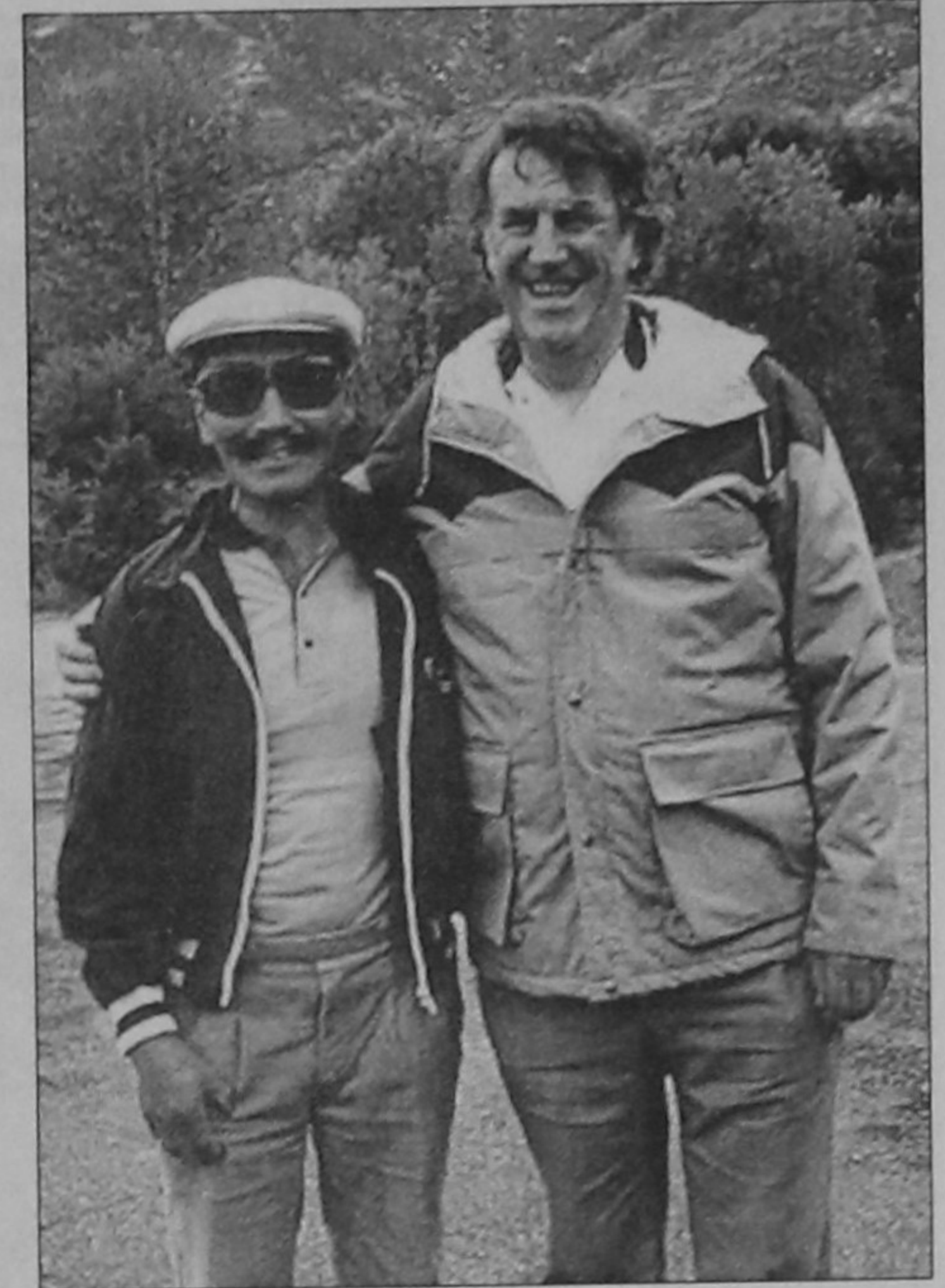
It's a profound loss to Nepal. Edmund Hillary was the undisputed hero of Nepal. The legendary mountaineer, adventurer and philanthropist.

He devoted all of his life to helping the Sherpa people of Nepal through the Himalayan Trust.

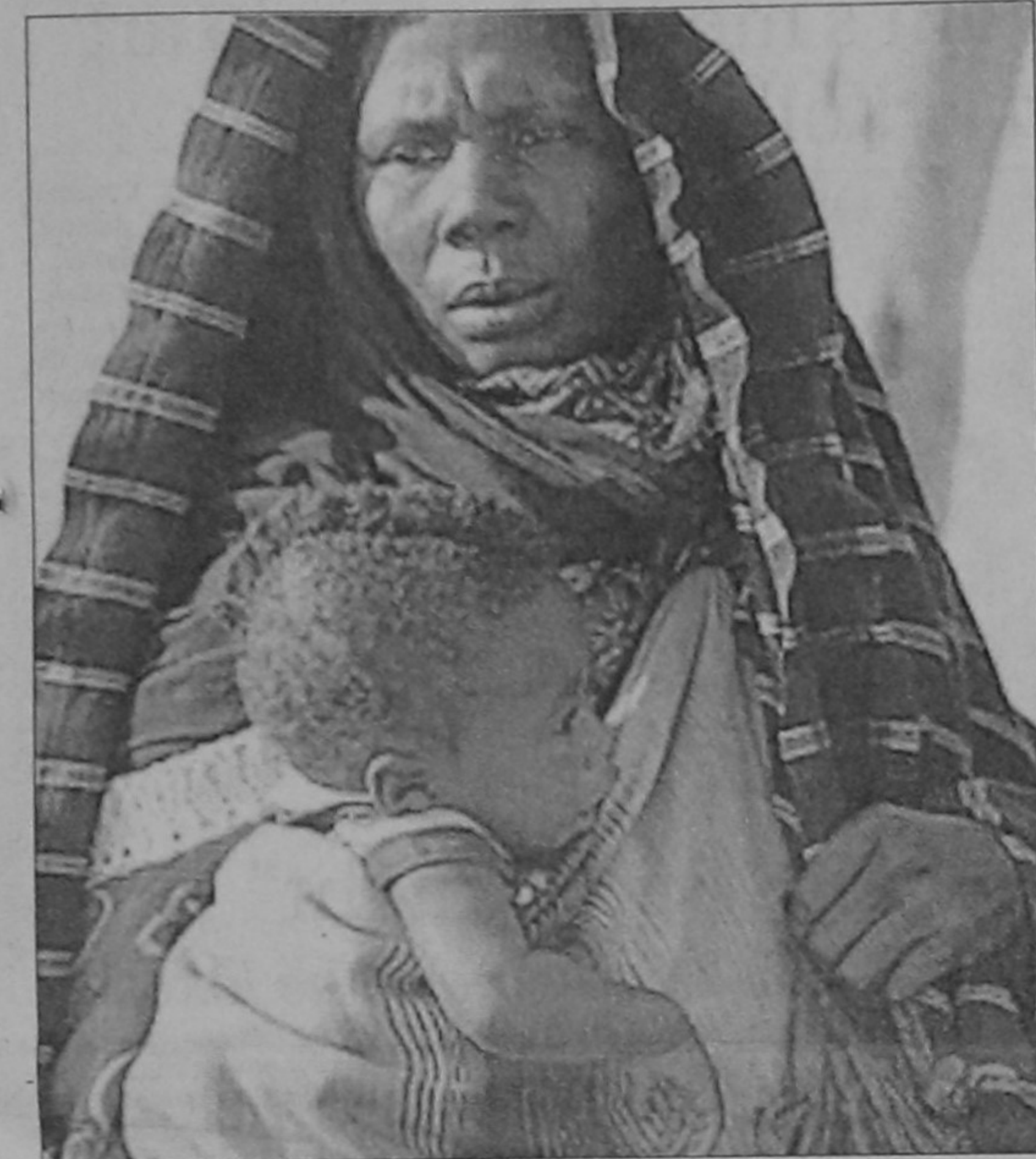
For decades from the 1960s, Hillary and his supporters raised funds and built schools, hospitals and other facilities in the mountains. Edmund Hillary was the first man to expose Nepal's mountains. There must have been countries and many peoples who had not heard about us. We are indebted forever to you, Edmund.

May your soul rest in peace.

Hridaya Nepali
Faculty of Pharmacy
Dhaka University



Sudan: a forgotten place?



Has the world forgotten about the crisis in Sudan? No one seems to care about this issue anymore. May be the rest of the world thinks that civil war, famine, poverty are just the fates that the people of the African continent have to embrace, whether they like it or not. The Darfur region of western Sudan has been the focus of international attention since 2004, when government troops and militia groups known as Janjaweed moved to crush rebels who complained that the black residents of the region had been neglected by the central government. The situation has got worse but still the people of the western world clearly deny the happenings of Sudan as acts of genocide. The same thing happened with Rwanda. When almost half the population was wiped out, the world then seemed to understand that it was genocide. How many hundreds or thousands of people need to be killed in order to call it a genocide? The western world could have taken severe actions long time ago to stop the crisis in Darfur, Sudan. Still they make statements that the happenings in Darfur are not acts of genocide.

It is already too late!

Minhaj Ahmed
Uttara, Dhaka

Highest peak?

I came across in DS dated 5 January 2008 that a mountain named Tlangmoy Swapnachura is the highest peak in the country, claimed by a group of seven members of a mountaineering club named Extremist. According to them, the height of the peak is 3461 feet higher than Keakradong. However, it must be mentioned that the highest peak is not Keakradong but Tajingdong located at Ruma upazila under Bandarban district.

Those energetic young men who have discovered the mountain deserve applause. Nevertheless, I was a bit confused with the location of the mountain. Because, the names of union and upazila are not mentioned. Besides, the name of the mountain is given Tlangmoy Swapnachura i.e. half of the name is a local term, whereas the other half is Bangla! The word Tlangmoy seems to be a Bawm term. My point is that one must not try to corrupt or distort the original or indigenous or local name of any location or thing in the CHL. Because there are 11 ethnic groups living in Bandarban district. All of them have different socio-cultural values. The indigenous terms always carry the identity of these indigenous inhabitants.

K. Rema
One-mail

No ultimate truth!

Have read with interest the 'Letter from Kolkata' by Rubana. Is there ever a single truth? Do the terrorists have one single nationality? Definitely they do not.

According to Bruno G. (1548-1600), it might be that we are in pursuit of 'knowledge', which is infinite, and the final truth cannot be established. So Professor Sen's focus was on the perspectives and on convincing his audience on how nationalism benefits one and condemns the other.

We can only hope that there will be emotion without malice. Accept the difference!

Chowdhury Shagana
One-mail

Let women lead

When the whole globe is undergoing some kind of turmoil -- this way or other -- natural calamities globally, rise in the prices of essentials, again globally, and the most dangerous one -- terrorism that is crippling the fundamental fabric of the human life and rights -- I have a proposal that is worth pondering.

Sit back and relax, of course with your extended antenna of mind working, you go back to the pages of history, and spot the so far natural thesis, that has been shaped by man, of male-based ruling of the earth. Your observation at one point might make you stop your rolling legs in uneasiness, realising the good, bad and the ugly rulers who had been the root cause of the great promotional works for humanity by the good ones, and the dooms on mankind triggered by the greedy and ugly monsters in many frames: you have Hitler, autocratic regimes in the western and the eastern parts of the globe. The appalling, if your neutral mind is aroused to think that way, fact is that it was all the males! Well, here is a point for you, me and the others that the males were the efficient ones to take the charge of those monumental tasks; they were deemed fit for the gigantic roles, or that they made themselves deemed fit -- males are superior to the females by the decrees of the divinity -- whatever the case is, however, you have to admit that it was the males that brought about the killings of the millions of innocent Jews at the very male hands of Hitler, and again it was the fertile male brain that helped make the fatal nuclear bombs and make them drop over the millions of innocent civilians in the Japanese cities -- Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Alright, you do not have to lose heart; there are good people across the globe doing good to the universal humanity that you take pride in. Yet, the question remains that it is all the males that we surprisingly see performing all these good or bad, or the worst. Lest you gather in your mind by now that my proposition yet to be revealed is a biased one, or with the intense fertility of your mind, guess that I'm going to tell something about the females -- you are just right!

No, there is nothing about the feminist point of view or anything of the sort in my proposition. It is rather a clear perspective as to ruling the earth peacefully, the act that has not been yet accomplished in the entire span of time that civilisation has been keeping its visitation on our mother earth -- I wish to see the women ruling the entire globe. You might, at this point, point your finger to the 'Begum Rokeya's dream' anecdote -- it is not that, though it might sound like that.

Interestingly, you have by now observed, with a sense of respect, that how the modern day women

are coming up in the affairs of the state across the globe. If one tends to name the list it will stretch to a moderately long one. One happily sees how women like Margaret Thatcher performed her duty as the prime minister of the UK. There are the worthy names like Indira Gandhi in India, Chandrika in Sri Lanka and many others in the western and the eastern parts of the globe -- the trend is on the rise, to the happy note of the people. The would be leaders like Hillary Clinton in the USA are the future aspirations of the American peace-loving people. There are a good number of worthy women living scattered because of the intimidations caused by the male rulers around the globe. Entrust them with your aspirations -- they will gently rise up to your expectations and guide the globe to a happy and prosperous future. Trust me, they'll stop the destructive mindset of the males -- no terrorism, no discrimination, no invasion and killing will remain on our mother earth.

Rafiqul Islam Rime

Agrabad, Chittagong

Jamaat's background

I am not surprised to hear the recent statements of some perverted Jamaat leaders, who committed 'war crime' during our liberation war. But I am astonished to see that the comments came at a time when the army-backed interim govt is striving hard to consolidate national unity. Jamaat leaders' false statements regarding our liberation war is nothing new, but the way they talked flabbergasted all.

The war criminals could utter those falsehoods because our political parties rehabilitated them into politics. After the liberation war, the govt took steps to try the war criminals who had opposed our liberation war and it is no secret that the Jamaat activists participated in killing and torturing our freedom fighters and collaborated with Pakistani oppressors. So, the party was banned. However in 1976, the Jamaat was given an impetus to run its activities. Since then the party has strengthened its position. During the last five years, the Jamaat, as part of the govt, organised its party activities and brainwashed many youngsters. It is the BNP that made a coalition with the Jamaat to retain state power. Due to Jamaat's presence in the government, the BNP faced many hurdles.

The Jamaatis well identified as a threat to our national unity since

its ideology goes against of our very existence and our constitution. Let us unite and try these war criminals.

Md Zonaid Emran
Dept. Of Political Science
University of Dhaka

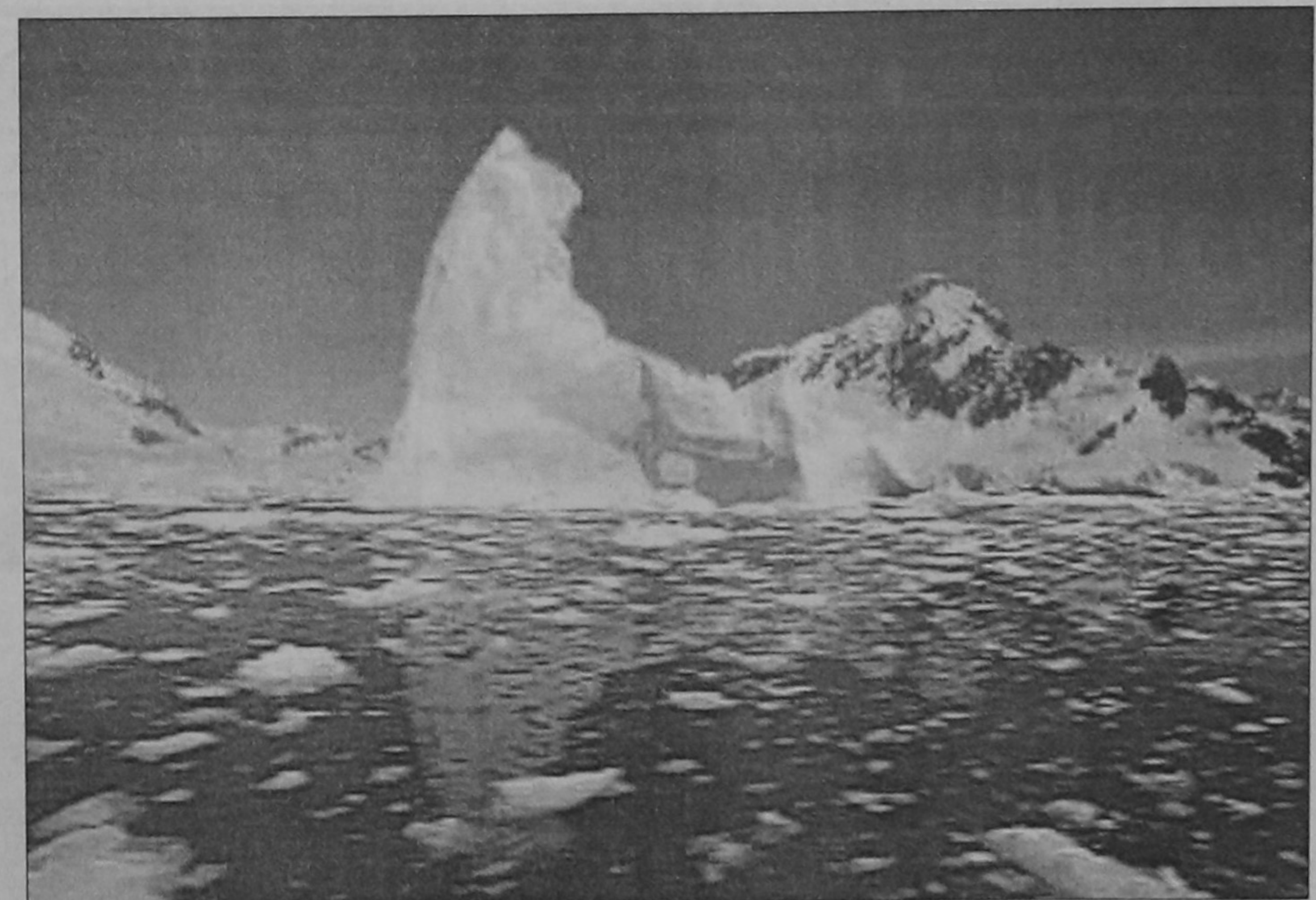
Suicide bombers

I was staring at a photograph printed in The Daily Star on 11-01-2008 showing Pakistani policemen standing amongst the dead bodies of their colleagues at the site of a suicide attack in Lahore where 22 police officers & four civilians were killed. Side by side, there was another piece of news from WHO source revealing that an average of 120 Iraqi adults died a violent death every day in the three years following the US-led invasion of March 2003. There is no doubt that most of those deaths were the outcome of suicide attacks. In Afghanistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka & recently in Pakistan, clandestine activities of suicide squads are claiming a lot of lives with the LITE of Sri Lanka being the pioneer in this deadliest work.

Hardly two weeks ago, Ms Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan was assassinated, also by two suicide attackers one of whom shot her to death just moments before blowing up themselves in an explosion. I have a curiosity to know how the suicide bombers carry out their mission of killing themselves & others. How they are motivated & committed to sacrifice their own lives that seems to be impossible to common people who are ready to do everything to escape death. The suicide bombers drive explosive-laden vehicles & even pilot planes knowing very well that within a short while they will die. Their success rate in hitting the targets is very high. What theories and tactics are applied by their masters to achieve this miracle? Whether they are doing right or wrong is a different question. Although they say there are fighting for a just cause, but the world is against them. But we can try to learn their motivation techniques and apply the same in our normal life to achieve our goals of a happy & prosperous life where high commitment & motivation play a great role. The leaders of al-Qaeda or LITE are out of our reach but is there anyone who can give us any clue to this highly sensitive matter?

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur, Khulna

Global warming



Global warming is now a major concern for all of us, especially for those living in South Asian countries. In this regard, Bangladesh is the most vulnerable. As a deltaic country, Bangladesh is very close to the sea. Due to global warming, the glaciers

are now melting away. And the melting will increase the sea level water. The Bali conference has ended up without any fruitful decision. The rich countries are the major contributors to global warming. Their indiscriminate use of

fossil fuels and various types of ACs and refrigerators cause different types of harmful gas emissions.

The emissions are increasing global warming. It is the poor countries, which are not contributing

to Greenhouse gas emissions, but they are the most vulnerable.

What is the developed world doing about it?

Md. Abdur Rahman
Womens' College para
Jhenidah