



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.

Tipaimukh dam



Recently there have been protests from different forums and groups about the dangers and consequences that the Tipaimukh dam will cause to Bangladesh. The prime minister of India laid the foundation stone of this dam on 24 November, 2004 and the Indian government is already going ahead with the controversial Tipaimukh dam project with a target to complete it by 2012. The dam will be over the cross-boundary river Borak, 100km upstream of eastern border of Sylhet district. It will be 1500 feet long and 500 feet high and will cost around Indian Rupees 9,000 crore. Once constructed, this dam would spell an ecological disaster for Bangladesh through desertification and flooding in our eastern region.

Bangladesh has been suffering for decades from the Farakka Barrage, another death trap made by India. There were many protests, meetings, the historic long march, against Farakka, but all were in vain. Now, we are at the mercy of India about the share

Muslims in the region

In the recent Indian election, Indian Muslims voted massively for the ruling Congress Party despite their reservations about the Congress. This was mainly because they were stunned by Taliban slaughtering fellow Muslims in neighbouring Pakistan and they wanted a strong government to face such extremism spilling over to India. Slaughter of fellow Muslims by the Taliban must have made them apprehensive that Islamic extremists may also make India their target with disastrous consequences as happening in Pakistan.

As Zafar Hilaly, a former Pakistani ambassador, recently wrote in Lahore's Daily Times: "Created as a homeland for Muslims, Pakistan is ironically being destroyed in the name of Islam. In the course of a few months, the writ of the federal government has ceased to exist in four of the seven tribal agencies that comprise FATA, and is being seriously challenged in the remaining three. ... A discredited provincial leadership, an incompetent federal government, a con-

fused public and, not least, an army ill equipped to fight this war make up a lethal mix, presaging disaster. Under the circumstances, it is small wonder that impoverished and angry segments of the population had turned to Islam for deliverance, and into the waiting arms of religious charlatans that promised not only a living in this world but also a glorious life in the next; visions of a new dawn; the privilege of being God's warriors chosen to visit retribution and mayhem on His enemies, in this case the state [of Pakistan]."

Pakistan tried to appease the religious zealots by allowing the Taliban to impose their version of law in Swat. But after a spate of bombings and beheadings by the Taliban, it is now trying to dislodge them from the Swat Valley. But with Taliban deeply entrenched in the mountains, it will be a long fight before the fanatics can be brought under control.

Indian Muslims must have been terrified at the sight of the Taliban slaughtering fellow Muslims in the name of Islam. They know the terror can spill over to India with its large Muslim minority. They

Rivers gobbled up

The Daily Star published a series of reports on grabbing of rivers. The grabbers occupy these rivers which are essential for maintaining natural balance. Furthermore, we see that along with illegal trespassers the govt. officials play a role here. This is a punishable offence!

The civil society has come forward to protest this illegal act which is highly praiseworthy. So, to stop this kind of illegal acts we must unite and resist the criminals.

Thanks to The Daily Star for the mission that it has embarked on.

We wish you every success.

B Singh Amit
Department of Law
Chittagong University

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