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# Demonstration or devastation?



The political parties are organising demonstrations. But what we watch is devastation. Because the demonstrators burn vehicles and destroy valuable national assets. This not expected in a democratic and developing country. Demonstrations take place in other countries also, but seldom do they turn into free-for-all vandalism as is the case here.

**Md. Mehedi Hassan**  
BUBT, Mirpur

# BAEC needs detailed website

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), the national organisation for the peaceful use of atomic energy, is a pioneer research organisation of the country. Many of its scientists are somehow related to the national and international scientific communities. A significant number of scientists are pursuing their higher studies and research in different universities and institutions of many countries of the world. In most of the cases they do not know what is happening within the organisation they represent. As a member organisation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), BAEC has to represent the country in that international scientific arena too. To fulfil the demand of all the responsibilities it incurs, it needs to exchange information with the national and international scientific communities. Most people of the country, many of them are highly qualified though, do not know what BAEC is and what it does for the country. The BAEC should let the people know what responsibilities it performs for the country. The effective, and obviously the most scientific, way to do so is to enter into the Internet era. In developed countries, each and every institution ranging from an old-bicycle shop to a government organisation has its own website. But unfortunately BAEC does not have a full-fledged website though it loves to enjoy the pride of being the first user of computer in the country. It



claims to have a web address clicking on which one can find a one-page site without any details and sufficient information. The most ironical thing is that it has an institute for Computer Science. I do not know what this institute does for the Commission which cannot even think of designing a full-fledged website having a professional look for the Commission.

So I, being a well wisher of the Commission, humbly urge the authorities to take an initiative to launch a professional and full-fledged website for the Commission.

**Anonymous**  
Ottawa, Canada

## Transparency in politics

Transparency increases the acceptance of any subject to people and if it is a political issue there is no alternative to it, because that is related with every aspect of our national interest.

Are our politicians at all concerned about the issue?  
**Roney, Ibrahimpur Dhaka, Cantt.**

destinations. If our engines are too noisy for you, on passengers' request we can arrange to turn them off!

We regret to inform you that today's in-flight movie will not be shown as we forgot to record it from the television. However, for our movie buffs, we will be flying right next to Emirates Airline, where their movie will be visible from the right side of the cabin window.

There is no smoking allowed in this airplane. Any smoke you see in the cabin is only the early warning system on the engines telling us to slow down! If you see water dripping from the top of your head, don't think it is raining outside, it could be AC, that is leaking water and if you notice that you are feeling so hot, that means the AC is not working,

case." "Thanking you all for choosing "Biman" to fly for the first and last time"

**Amalash Dhar**  
University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Science  
Vienna, Austria

## B. Choudhury's house on fire

The house of the former President of Bangladesh, former Secretary General of BNP and present chief of Bikalpadhara, Prof. B.Choudhury, was set on fire. According to his son Mahi Choudhury's statement- "The window pans were broken from outside and the house was set on fire by sprinkling gun powder to kill us all."

Ministers and civil servants have talked about a programme to introduce machine readable passports (MRP) several times over the years. As of today, Bangladesh is still issuing passports with barely any security features to prevent tampering or fraud.

While the government of Bangladesh takes limited steps, if any at all, other nations have initiated programmes to issue electronic passports containing biometric features. In fact, our embassy in Washington proudly stated that the biometric passport requirement did not apply to Bangladesh but did not mention whether or not the government had taken any action for issuing new passports. While major developed countries have begun

Fairfax, Virginia

## Wanted: better service

Thanks to your website I am abreast of happenings back home. It is a dismal picture that you paint, albeit true, of the state of affairs in Bangladesh regarding corruption. But in line with Rupert Brooke's famous lines "That there is some corner of a foreign field, that is forever England" I was doubly dismayed to find Bangladesh missions abroad following it to the letter and spirit.

On Tuesday 9th May 2006 we undertook an hour's journey to Manchester from York for matters relating to passports. I shall not

once at Manchester, the dealing clerk at the counter refused to discuss the requirements stipulated in the form from London .... "This is Manchester High Commission and not London HC," he stated. My mind flashed back 35 years to Paki (a derogatory term here in UK) dominance of Bangladesh. Is this what we fought for? I enquired if this Mission was representing BD or some other country. Seeing my rage and aggressive countenance he meekly saw my papers and said everything was in order and that as stipulated I will have it back after the expiry of 14 days. I wanted it to have it posted to me but they were unable to provide that service though it is mentioned in the form. He, however, gave a valid (in the context of

Deramore Drive West, York, UK

## Violent protests

Horrible!! Outrageous!! My heart has been shattered looking at these pictures on the newspapers. I believe many of you feel the same way I do. Protests have so many languages, so many colours in the world around, but definitely none of them is so frightening, wild and awful like this one. I am talking about damaging cars or setting public transports on fire in Bangladesh. A few days back I saw a picture on The Daily Star showing a group of people vandalising a private car, some standing and jumping on the car. They vandalised about 50 cars this way. I am not going to argue about who were to blame police for charging a peaceful procession or those

other relative. Who the hell on earth has got a right to attack and hurt them or even cause a simple bruise on their body this way? Where do these people get the mandate to attack and hurt innocent people and damage their property in such a barbaric manner? I have never heard any of our top leaders saying anything against this kind of protest. Maybe they show indifference because their cars and properties are not the target of attack and they always move with protection. Then where is our hope? Who is going to stop this madness? Each time an excuse is made that the other party attacked the peaceful procession. Well, if that's the case resist the attackers in a manly fashion...repulse them if you have got the guts. Why resort to violence or damaging innocent people's property? They did not attack you! Instead of resisting those who attack your so-called peaceful procession when you vandalise cars, sets fire to properties, it just says that you guys are not man enough to face the real attackers. That is why you go berserk... but that's the sign of pure frustration, that's the face of a pure loser. Any kid with a stick can break a car apart. Any kid with petrol or fire can set a car or store on fire...he does not have to be a man to do all these. So, let's start propagating this message from today, let's make a commitment to ourselves, we will protest every injustice, we will seek solutions to each and every problem that impacts our life, but it would be with respect to other people's life and property. After all, what glory can anyone bring by being himself a cause of pain and destruction to others?

**Mostafa Shami Bapi**  
Texas A&M University, Texas

# Why this violence?

The little girl was returning from school with her mother. They were waiting at north gate of Baitul Mukarram. They had to stay inside the car, the road was blocked and it was intolerable traffic jam, because of an opposition rally. The opposition demanded uninterrupted electricity and water supply around the country. The rally was moving from Muktangan to Motijheel.

Suddenly, some demonstrators from the rally started to break the glasses of cars and buses. People started to run away. That little

girl also ran for shelter. Their car was smashed by the demonstrators.

The need for water and electricity is a fundamental one. People are suffering due to water or electricity crisis, whether he is a politician or an innocent citizen. The government has failed to solve the problem. But chaos and violence won't help us.

How long will the citizens suffer?  
**Hasan Hafizur Rahman**  
Dhaka



## A Biman flight

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. This is your Captain Mahmud: Welcoming both seated and standing passengers on board "Biman". We apologise the four-day delay in taking off, it was due to bad weather, engine problems and a part time job I have in a fast food restaurant. This is flight 707 to Dhaka. Landing there is not guaranteed, but we will end up somewhere in Bangladesh. And, if luck is on our side we may even be landing in your village! Bangladesh Biman has an excellent safety-record!!! In fact, our safety (and security!) standards are so high, that even terrorists are afraid to fly with us! With pleasure I announce that starting this year, over 30% of our passengers have reached their

please feel free to ask the airhostess for a hand fan. We apologise for the inconvenience!

In order to catch important landmarks, we try to fly as close as possible for the best view. If however, we go a little too close, do let us know. Our enthusiastic co-pilot sometimes flies right through the landmarks! Kindly be seated, keep your seat in an upright position for take-off and fasten your seatbelt. For those of you who can't find a seatbelt, kindly fasten your own belt to the arm of your seat. And, for those of you who can't find a seat, do not hesitate to get in touch with a stewardess who will explain how to fasten yourself to your suit-

The incident reminds us of similar acts of arson by sprinkling gunpowder first and later on setting an object on fire. It happened in a mini bus near Demra where a number of passengers were burnt to death. A double-decker bus was set on fire near Hotel Sheraton in similar fashion. Bangabazar market in the recent past was 'sanitised' in the same manner for huge financial gain.

The method of arson is a trademark of nefarious criminal activity of a certain group. We can only hope for justice in the future.

**TKM, On e-mail**

## Bangladeshi passport

issuing or will issue these e-passports within the next year, other nations such as Burma and Nigeria are seriously considering issuing them as well.

It is time for the government of Bangladesh to seriously consider upgrading our passports. Bangladeshi passport holders are harassed enough (I've even had the authenticity of my passport questioned in a European country) and with the world developing standards and even setting aside special lanes for e-passport holders, I believe that it is only a matter of time before foreign nations refuse to accept our out-dated passports.

**N. Bashar Chowdhury**

delve here on atrocious costs of that neither the illogical pricing ( the issue of a new passport and a renewal are the same) of various services but what transpired there should be sufficiently self-explanatory.

Accompanying me were two dual (UK-BD) passport holders. They needed a replacement passport (expiry of ten years) and I needed a renewal only. While leaving York we rang up ( incidentally the phones in our missions in Manchester & London will ring endlessly till someone responds) to discuss the requirements but nobody answered. We had a copy of a form from our mission in London and

Bangladesh) reason for that (just in case it gets lost!). Millions of passports are dealt with by the UK Home Office and Royal Mail and nobody so far has expressed any apprehension as such but why BD Mission?

I was told umpteen times by restaurant owners in UK that BD Missions all over UK were extremely helpful for a very paltry amount of greasing. I assured them that such practices are not what we should be encouraging and I shall exert pressure from the top to streamline those at the bottom. Alas, it appeared that this paltry greasing at the base of the pyramid defies gravitational pull!

**A.F.M.A. Harris**

"psychos" in the procession demanding electricity. Whatever may be the cause of the protest, under no circumstances do they have any right to damage innocent people's property. Not that we have never seen this before. And every time I have seen this I have felt ashamed about who I am and where I belong to. I have wondered where we are heading for as a nation. There could have been an infant in that car, could have been a seriously ill patient who would have no way to run for a shelter. Well, forget all these-- there could have been anybody, not necessarily the ones who are weak and unable to get out of the car; there could have been our father, mother, brother, sister or any

# Sachin Tendulkar

Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar is playing Test and one day cricket for the last seventeen years. Sachin picked up a heavy bat at a very tender age and played the first Test match in Pakistan some 17 years ago. When his friends and classmates were going to school he was hitting a cricket ball with a heavy bat so that the ball travelled faster and hit the rope. He shot into fame quickly and became an idol unparalleled in the history of sub-continent cricket. The sponsors and agencies laden with sacks full of money offered him bounties. He got the taste of big money when he ought to have been in school or college. Run begets run and money begets money. He is rich beyond imagination.

Sachin was operated upon for elbow injuries a few times. Seventeen years of hectic cricket schedule of Indian team was equal to 30 years of normal game of cricket. It took a heavy toll. His form fell. Sachin repeatedly failed to perform and was jeered by his home ground spectators in Bombay recently.

Interestingly, craving for wealth did not cease. He signed a 4 million dollar endorsement contract last month and visited a temple in Karnataka for the last resort--divine blessings!

We urge upon the superhero of yesterday to retire gracefully before he is hooted out and make room for other aspirants.

We will always admire and remember him as a brilliant cricketer who broke all the batting records and entertained greatly.

**SN Mamoon, Dhaka**

# Music maestro Naushad

The article on Naushad by Shahnoor Wahid was very enjoyable and brought old memories back. Here I would like to mention a few facts, which his memory might have betrayed. The song 'Kahi deep jale kahi dil' doesn't belong to 'Mahal'. It was from 'Bees Sal Baad' whose music was composed by Hemanta Mukherji who is known in Hindi filmdom as Hemantkumar. Incidentally, the music of 'Mahal' was composed by Khemchand Prakash who gave Lata her first break and made her famous with the song 'Aayega Anwala' which was played in the lips of Madhubala, the heroin of the film. Among the contemporaries of Naushad, he should have mentioned the names of S.D. Burman, O.P.Nayar, Madanmohan, Roshan, Anil Biswas, Salil Choudhury, Hemantkumar among others. Laxmikant-Pyarelal was much younger and came to music arena in the late 60s with the film 'Dosti'. In the title of 'Pakeezah the credit of music goes to Ghulam Mohammed, not Naushad.

I would like to congratulate Mr.Wahid for his well-written article.

**Dr. Bakul Sultan**  
Indira Road, Dhaka

