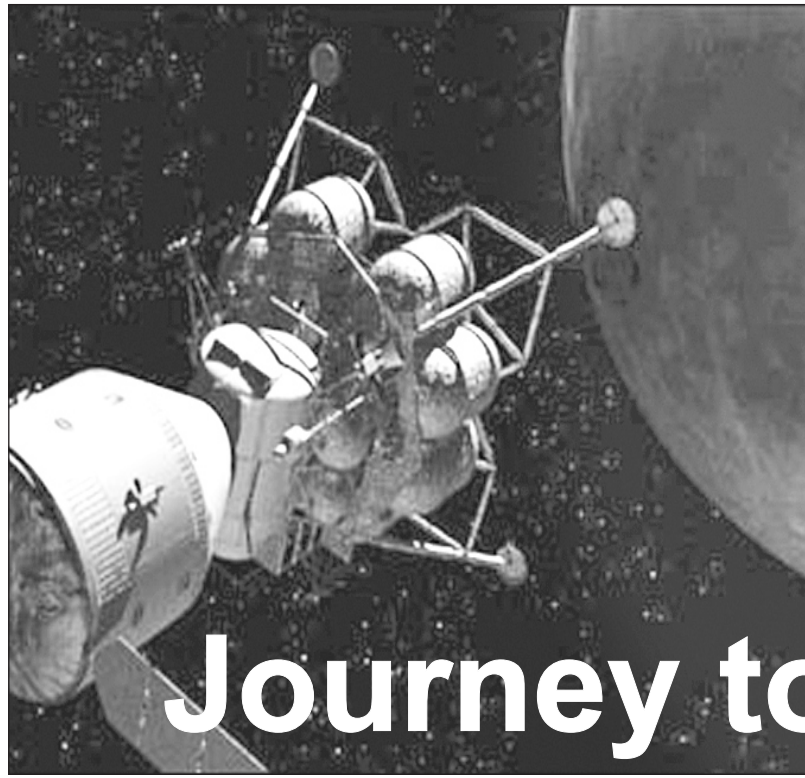


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



Journey to moon

"Is it thy face that launched thousand ships?"—this saying is quite true about the moon. For ages, mankind had endeavoured to reach the rocky moon, to conquer its mountains, and to hoist the triumphant flag over it as a sign of man's technological advancement.

That dream has become a reality today through several adventurous expeditions. A colony in moon is no longer a superstitious dream, rather a hardcore reality. The day is not far away when our successors will tread in its harsh exterior and will ensure the progress of mankind in a

new, innovative way.

In the annals of human evolution, the moon may one day prove as a potential source for human existence in this ever-expanding universe.

Rizwan-ul Huq, Farazipara Lane, Khulna



English education

I do not like to say anything about the importance of English education in our country. An image has grown up in our country that a person having profound knowledge in science subjects or even in computer science but unable to speak in English fluently is not considered a literate man. But a man who can speak in English fluently is favoured by all. Even the poorest and the most illiterate persons of a village hopes that his children will speak in English. Such learning of such an important subject is still limited to the elite class in the cities. Let us spread it to the doors of all -- high or low, poor or rich, in towns or villages free of cost. There are sixty-four district headquarters in our country and every town has two high schools and two government colleges. We may set up one English Training Academy in each of the district headquarters. The English teachers of the government schools and colleges shall impart knowledge of English grammar to the students in the Academy. The teachers of the upazila level schools shall be the students of the academy. Every school, college and madrassah within the upazila headquarters shall send one teacher to the academy for higher training in English grammar. They will attend the academy in the early morning



so that they may also attend their respective educational institutions and can teach their students grammar in the manner prescribed by the academy. After one year a large number of teachers shall come out from the academy well equipped to teach English grammar and spoken English too.

Infrastructure facilities of education are available at both district and upazila headquarters. If the plan suggested by me is implemented, within the span of two years the country will be self independent in English education. On the other hand, the

government will not have to spend anything for this big project. It may be mentioned here that both the teachers and the students will be government employees. The administration of the academy should be in the hands of both the district and upazila education officers.

The Ministry of Education should supply the printed materials needed for such a training programme.

Taher Uddin Ahmed, Khilgaon, Dhaka

Encouraging corruption

I came to know from a well informed person that there is no bar to purchasing any number of apartment or any quantity of land. The buyer has to only pay a negligible amount of source tax. What is more perplexing is that, his money becomes even white after payment of this source tax. It has given such a boom whenever one wants to pay the source tax. It has given such a boom to real estate business that it is making huge profits, in spite of an apparent economic slowdown.

Now, such a situation naturally frustrates citizens like me, who having led a clean life, cannot even dream of a plot or flat despite the fact that, I voluntarily retired from a prestigious government job. It is due to the inability to pay the exorbitant price of apartments which had witnessed a spiralling in the recent years. It is generally assumed that

when something starts coming up in large numbers, the price automatically goes down. But here a diametrically opposite trend is taking place because of a close nexus between government agencies and corrupt practitioners.

It is more than a farce to constitute tax ombudsman or even an independent Anti-Corruption Bureau in one hand and allow corrupt people to thrive on their ill gotten money on the other. It will only widen the gaps in the society as money is mostly being concentrated in the hands of a few, who earn it cheaply and spend it badly.

That is the reason why our so called filthy rich people do not show up in the list of highest tax payers or why neither they spend money on a free hospital or other social welfare activities. Will the government do something?

Md. Golam Mannan Chowdhury
On e-mail

FEMA's reply

FEMA notes with great regret that Mr. Noor-ul-Alam Lenin alleged in his article published in The Daily Star on 14 August, 2006 that FEMA along with a few other leading organisations is linked directly to the alliance government to further their cause of election. This allegation against FEMA is not only unfounded but also an attempt to undermine the dignity and integrity of FEMA. It is well known more or less to all in and outside the county that FEMA is a non-partisan, non-political and non-profit organisation and solely dedicated to the promotion of democracy and democratic institutions. FEMA is a democratic organisation having an elected council of 29 members and also a National Executive Committee of 15 members with Ms. Munira Khan as its president. Any member who directly or indirectly involves himself in politics ceases to be a member of FEMA. All the activities of FEMA are designed with clearance from the NGO Affairs

Bureau.

Another allegation of Mr. Lenin that FEMA has not played any role in the preparation of an accurate and updated voter list is also not correct. FEMA has been monitoring the voters' registration process in six constituencies located within six City Corporations and has published from time to time the reports in the newspapers pointing out the omissions and lapses.

The President of FEMA has always underscored the need for the preparation of an accurate voter list through press release and interviews with the news media. Besides, it formulated 47 pages of recommendations for electoral reform, which formed the very basis of amendment to some provisions of the electoral laws on the eve of the last general election.

Md Hasan Jamil Mostafi
Media Officer, FEMA

Bush and democracy
President George Bush has taught

us a new definition of democracy. Whatever does not satisfy him or fails to satisfy his greed is anti-democratic. As we know the world is divided in two parts; one is the part where Bush is the man to be worshipped by the leaders of the countries under American control, and the other is the free world.

Who are the terrorists? And who ought to be saved from them? President Bush's answer is certainly not acceptable to any sane human being.

A.S.M Ahsanur Rahman Rahat
Shahjalal University of Science & Technology

National Image?

I read the short letter under the title "Why this case?" published in your daily on 13 August '06.

According to Mr. Mahmudur Rahman, the litigant, it was done to uphold the 'National Image' (desher bhabmurti). Now, could someone tell Mr. Rahman that National Image

cannot be upheld by pressing unfounded charges against such prominent citizens of the country whose presence by itself is one of the very few yardsticks of our positive national image. If the prominent citizens, some of whom served as advisors to the caretaker governments of our beloved country in the past, went to jail, what kind of image Bangladesh would have to the outside world?

Walidul Haque Khondker
On e-mail.

Get the real picture

I am sorry but I will have to offend a few DS readers. Mr. Mohd. Masud Rana's example of feeling proud of Bangladesh because of having 4 million children not in school versus Pakistan having 8 million is like saying: My younger brother who just killed 5 people is so much better than my older brother who killed 10. In simple words, comparing two really bad things only makes one relatively

better than the other nothing that someone should feel "heartening over". Let me give you some stats and for the sake of argument lets compare ourselves with Pakistan I am sure you will feel disheartened:

GDP (per capita)- BD = USD 2,011; PAK 2,685 Population density-BD 985/kmsq; PAK 211/kmsq. Unemployment rate-BD 40%, PAK 8.3%.

Of course there are numbers like well being index, gender discrimination etc where Bangladesh might be ahead, but the simple point I am trying to get across is that the author could compare Bangladesh to Somalia and scream out in delight but that doesn't change us from being a dimly overpopulated, poor, ill governed and corrupt country. For more details you can visit UNICEF website.

Mr. Shadman, Commerce Court East, 10th Floor, Dhaka

Independence

of the judiciary

Since our independence the issue of the separation of the judiciary from the executive has remained an unresolved question. It is observed that when a major political party is out of power, its leaders speak for the separation of the two wings of the government. Once the same party is in power, the same leaders tend to forget the issue. This kind of chicanery has become a norm in our country.

During the period of enlightenment, some two hundred years ago, political philosophers emphasised the necessity of a separation between the three branches of the government. The point is that one man cannot sit as a judge, when he himself might be a party which seeks justice.

Zabedwali
Pahartoli, Chittagong

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