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Attack on shooters



I was shocked on hearing that Asif, a gold medalist in shooting, was beaten up ahead of a major tournament scheduled to be held in December. Under no circumstances an attack on someone like Asif is acceptable. Surprisingly, even though he wasn't involved in the incident, he was beaten up mercilessly. And even if he was involved in the incident, for the sake of argument, considering the fact

that he made every single Bangladeshi proud in 2002, and that he is set to take part in a major tournament shortly, he shouldn't have been treated this way. We strongly condemn the incident and demand that the authorities concerned investigate the matter and take necessary action against the attackers. **Syed Nazmul Alam, Gulshan-2, Dhaka**

Managing the economy

"People of Bangladesh are like water; they take the shape of the pot" - said one of the economic thinkers of this country. Until they explode, this statement is very much true. But the time has come to be ready for the opposite scenario. Our overall economic and financial condition is very much vulnerable. This country is facing a lot of obstacles like general price level hike, overall energy (oil and gas) price hike, foreign currency price hike, call money rate hike, etc. Beside these obstacles, we have great imaginary development (?) hike in our government's eyes. Development of an economy mostly depends on the overall living standard of people. But we are consid-

ering only the GDP growth every year and making positive statements regarding development.

A few people are earning a huge amount of money. They are also getting priority from the financial intermediaries as credit-worthy borrowers. So it is obvious that the money most of the low-earning people are saving in the banks is going to those who already have money. Priority sectors get neglected in this process. The banking sector could not do a lot in this situation, because they are emphasising the profit earning functions. The other non-bank financial institutions can be examples for the banks. There must be a balanced distribution of the funds in every priority sector. In this situation, it is very much necessary to keep central banking operation out

of question. But the central bank is also under pressure from inside and outside sources. Money supply in the economy must be controlled by the central bank without any interference of local and foreign bodies. Foreign currency market is now enjoying floating exchange rate. But we should have known the perfect timing to implement this process. Immature decisions have created the situation that we are facing now.

This unstable situation in the foreign exchange market is discouraging international trade and finally it will slow down the economic development process as well. This country has a history of immature and imbalanced international trade position. But it was improving due to the efforts of some truly hard working people in the economic sector. Now the situation is going out of

control. A huge amount of money is going outside the country in the name of remittances and investments. The economy is facing a shortage of foreign currency for that reason. Some highly ambitious people in the country are not finding any suitable place to invest their money or they are not in the state of investing money inside the country. So why ask for it? They will invest wherever they want. No, it is not the situation we are facing here in this country. We are developing and for the sake of development we need to become patriotic first. We need to develop a policy that will encourage the local investors to invest inside the country. On the other hand, we have to implement rules and regulations to de-motivate people to earn illegal money.

Mohammad Salah Uddin Simon
Uttara, Dhaka

Students' account of SUST incident

We, the general students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, are not involved in any kind of political activities or organisation. As eyewitnesses, we would like to give you some authentic information of the undesirable incident that took place on our campus recently.

We reached the university main gate at around 10:30am. There we saw about 20-25 students (including some female students) sitting peacefully in front of the university gate, and thereby obstructing all kinds of movements into and out of the campus. It was a movement involving only the general students to protest against the uncertain situation prevailing in the university. The demand was only to have an accurate date (given by the university authorities) for resumption of normal campus life.

Several teachers tried to get inside, but the students, paying due respect, requested them to enter using an alternate way (Naya Bazar Road), but not through the university main gate. Some teachers did so and some stood still aside. Things were just peaceful and this situation went on for about half an hour. Then our Students Welfare Advisor along with a few proctorial body members and some other teachers came. They again requested the students to clear off the university gate and let the teachers get in. Again the students with tried to make them understand their demand. The teachers after a while started shouting and threatening the students. Then suddenly the teachers and proctorial body members opened the gate from inside and rushed towards the students. The police, inside the gate, were still standing still and watching. Then the teachers chased the students and started hitting them roughly. It seemed to us that some cadres had attacked the students and we had nothing to do, as they were mightier than us. When the students uttered "SHAME ON YOU SIR", then they were attacked again. We were watching the incident standing aside. They were not pleased by

only doing so, rather, they sent the police force to clear off the gate. We then moved on to the opposite side of the gate.

That's what we saw and were really shocked!
A student
On e-mail

Generators in residential areas

Along with the problem of frequent load-shedding, residents of DOHS Baridhara are now facing another hazard—the noise and fume of generators. I live in this residential area as a tenant. The Daily Star a few weeks ago published a Google earth picture of it, which resembled a container yard with row upon row of houses on both sides of narrow, treeless streets.

At ground level however one would see the six storied buildings almost touching each other as builders and owners violated building codes taking advantage of lax enforcement. Now, to deal with frequent power cuts many homeowners and almost all developers have installed generators that spew out fumes and add to noise as soon as the electricity goes out.

I live in the first floor of a house that has no generator but within minutes of electricity going off the entire floor is filled with smoke and noise from the neighbouring houses even if all the windows are shut. The smoke take hours to go away.

The Environmental Conservation Act of 1995 sets standards for air quality and noise level which is clearly exceeded by most generators. Apparently no one knows that environmental laws of the land are being violated by their investment in inappropriate equipments and that some day they may be taken to task for this.

Most homeowners are elderly retired people for whom a healthy environment is a very high priority. How can that be maintained in spite of huge proliferation of generators is an open question. Will the authorities please look into it?

Nasir Hamid
DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka

Road accidents

Road accidents have increased alarming in our country in recent times. Every day the electronic and print media cover horrifying news of terrible road mishaps occurring in different highways (here and there) causing death and injuries to a good number of people. Owing to these accidents, many invaluable lives are being lost and many other people are being subjected to different kinds of disablement. Nowadays, the roads and streets have become unsafe for the passengers of different vehicles and a sense of insecurity always prevails in their (passengers) minds.

In most cases, the accidents occur due to the negligence of the drivers as well as their reckless driving. They seldom pay heed to the wise saying that 'life is more valuable than time.' Many of the drivers are incompetent who have managed to procure the driving licences without undergoing proper and adequate training through bribing the corrupt officials. Moreover, some of the drivers are drug addicts and sometimes they are found to be drunk during the trips. These unfit drivers, more often than not, fail to control the unfit vehicles (in many cases) leading inevitably to the occurrence of the fatal accidents.

There are, of course, other causes or reasons behind the mishaps but appropriate measures should be taken to curb the menace of increasing road accidents, thereby ensuring 'safe roads' for all of us.

Mohammad Anwaruzzaman
Jhawtala, Comilla



North Korean nuclear test

We strongly condemn the nuclear test carried out by North Korea on October 8. This irresponsible and dangerous act seriously undermines both regional peace and stability, and global efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. All peace-loving countries will continue to work with the United Nations Security Council to address the risks to Northeast Asia and beyond caused by the North Korean nuclear test.

We urge North Korea not to proceed with a nuclear test, but rather to return to the six-party talks.

We believe that North Korea's security, economic and political goals will not be served through this latest provocation, but are best achieved through the framework of the existing six-party talks to address the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Gopal Sengupta
On e-mail

Islam and society



When the writer of 'Fatwa and its influence' (published on 5 October) said that Bangladesh is not the Bangladesh we dreamt of --he was quite right --but only in terms of its development.

As far as history is concerned Bangladesh is a Muslim majority state, and so the practice of Islam should continue.

This practice does not mean "terrorism" but the duties asked by the Almighty Allah to perform; and so it will be shameful for any Muslim to

think 'these duties' to be part of fanaticism and ask the already reluctant society to 'take a tough stand' against it.

When the Christians, Jews or the Hindu society do not consider their rituals and religious duties as "fanaticism", then why should Muslims think of their duties to be such?

As Muslims we should try to uphold and protect the true meaning of Islam.

Sarah Shakib
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

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8X2

8X3