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## Down to Earth

### TV commercials may be irksome to some viewers

By A S M Nurunnabi

TV commercials form an inevitable part of programmes on different channels, be they satellite or otherwise. Such commercials are the obvious outcome of the policy of propelling up the commercial interests of the concerned TV channels. In this respect, they are sometimes found wanting in upholding proper standards in their contents and modes of presentation. Normal limits of good taste and sense of proportion are sometimes contravened, causing thereby feelings of utter boredom or repulsion. Hence the necessity on the part of the programme producers to be careful so that their programmes do not prove irksome to viewers.

The staple of our local TV commercials is mainly the consumer items like toilet and washing soaps, hair oils, tooth paste, edible oils, beauty aids, milk products, etc. Some of the advertisements for these products, say, soap and beauty aids, are so profuse in number and the claims of the competing companies as to their benefits are so much of a tall nature that they leave the consumers confused. When such advertisements are accompanied with the models' gyrations with their attractive faces and willowy shapes, viewers with some taste of good taste and sense of culture may be left utterly cold by such unseemly display.

A witty observer has stated

in respect of hair shampoos that the choice available in the market is so bewildering that, if in doubt, it would be wise for one to try a mini-pack for a trial. For the consumers, specially those in the lower income group, this may be a boon.

Among other sickening features of TV commercials, as observed by irked viewers, is the repetition of the same 10-second commercial several times within 15-20 minutes spans. Another vexing sight on some popular TV channels is the parade of a good number of commercials by several sponsoring agencies, interposed in the middle of an interesting serial or feature film. Such occurrences tend to destroy the mood of many viewers, sometimes driving them to switch off the TV set and fuming in suppressed anger.

Some aspects of the commercials as they appear from time to time in the programmes may strike some viewers as galling. The makers of some leading soft drinks are found to resort to ingenious and attractive commercials featuring well-known film actors and actresses and even famous cricketers. It is easy to imagine what a tremendous impact such commercials create on the minds of easily impressionable youngsters, particularly children. Sometimes such commercials include offers of prizes

for purchases, besides soft drinks, chocolates, milk foods, chewing gums, etc with concealed lucky numbers inside the packets in some cases, thereby keeping their buyers in suspense about the results of draws.

While we discourage smoking within the country, we notice attractive commercials about some brands of cigarette's telecast on satellite channels from outside the national borders. This may be considered unfortunate because the young viewers, who have easy access to cable TV, come under adverse impact on account of such undesirable commercials.

Of course, there are some positive aspects of TV commercials when they announce concessions in prices of some essential electronic items like fridge, TV, micro-oven, and other household appliances on festive or other special occasions, as they help in creating a desirable consumer culture for a better standard of life.

There may be no hesitation in admitting that, judging by the standards achieved by Western electronic media in the matter of presenting commercials, we have a lot to learn in eschewing the cruder forms of TV media publicity. The key-point is to make sustained efforts on the part of the TV producers to eliminate irksome elements in TV commercials.

### Special AL council now on June 23

The special council session of Bangladesh Awami League will be held on June 23 instead of June 3 at 3 pm at Paltan Maidan in the city, party sources said, reports BSS.

This was decided yesterday at the presidium meeting of the party with party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The council session was deferred in view of the Asia Cup Cricket Tournament to be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from May 28 to June 7.

### JCD calls 2-day strike at RU from today

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, May 19: Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Rajshahi University Unit has called a two-day strike at the university from tomorrow to press for its 15-point demand.

The demands include immediate holding of RUCSU election, reconstruction of Matihar Hall and withdrawal of enhanced tuition fees.

JCD brought out a procession on the campus and held a rally on the premises of Library Building this morning.

The rally was addressed by JCD unit convenor Tahirul Islam Tipu, joint convenor Atiqur Rahman Bulut, Ahmed Muid Shumil and others.

Meanwhile, RU Vice Chancellor Prof M Saidur Rahman at a press conference this afternoon urged all student organisations not to disrupt the prevailing congenial atmosphere at the university.

### S Korean PM quits over tax-evasion scandal

SEOUL, May 19: South Korea's Prime Minister Park Tae-Joon resigned today, two days after a court ruling that he had evaded taxes on his real estate, reports AFP.

His resignation was announced shortly after an early morning meeting with President Kim Dae-Jung, a reformist leader who has made an improvement in ethical standards in public life one of the main planks of his presidency.

President Kim received a letter of resignation tendered by Park Tae-Joon, presidential spokesman, told reporters.

"Finance and Economy Minister Lee Hun-Jai will serve as an acting prime minister until a new prime minister will be appointed early next week."

The prime minister has been under intense pressure to step down since Wednesday when a court ruled he had avoided taxes by entrusting real estate, including land worth 2.63 million dollars in Seoul, to a third person.

### One killed, 10 hurt as storm hits Muktagachha

MYMENSINGH, May 19: Storm lashed a union of Muktagachha upazila today, killing a man and injuring 10 others, reports UNB.

Over one hundred houses, including office of Dulla Union Parishad, were damaged and hundreds of trees uprooted by the storm that started lashing Kurigram and Mitua villages at 2pm.

Witnesses said Hasen Ali, 28, died and 10 others were injured when wall of a cinema hall collapsed during the storm.

Of the injured, Suruj Ali, 25, Jakeruddin, 20, Akbar, 18, and Shamir Ali, 50, were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

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### Risky for the mother and the newborn

More than 15 caesarian operations are done and over 50 delivery patients are admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) every day. But there are only 90 beds, creating an unusual rush and unhealthy condition because a mother even after normal delivery has to stay in hospital at least four days. The beds include 10 in eclampsia ward, 34 in gynae ward, 15 in post-natal ward and 16 in anti-natal ward. The number of deliveries is increasing every year. In the Caesarian Department, there were 3511 child births in 1996, 4286 in 1997 and over 5000 in 1998. Doctors say they handle over 80 deliveries a day but the facilities are too inadequate. The number of beds

has not been increased in the last 20 years, they said. There is no scope for diagnostic investigation at the DMCH after office hours, which puts lives at risk. Overhead OT lights do not work properly and OT tables are 'not fit for use'. The doctors also said that they are taking extra burden always. The department is the busiest one next to the emergency in the hospital but it lacks many vital devices and equipment used commonly. Drugs allocated for the 90 beds are also very scanty. The extra beds are not counted since those are 'unofficial'.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

### Manpower export Action against unscrupulous recruiters demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Welfare Association for Repatriated Bangladesh Employees (WARBE) has demanded punitive action against unscrupulous manpower recruiting agencies.

The Association also demanded of the government to bring back the Bangladesh workers detained in immigration detention camps of different countries, including Thailand and Saudi Arabia.

The demands were raised at a special emergency meeting of WARBE yesterday, says a press release.

The Daily Star earlier carried reports on detained Bangladeshis in Thailand and various malpractices by unscrupulous recruiters.

Referring to the recent observation of the Prime Minister that "Bangladesh workers should not be harassed in foreign lands," the WARBE meeting resolved that there should be representation of migrant workers in committees those formulate manpower related policies.

WARBE also opposed the idea of separate passport for foreign wage earners and exemption of travel tax for remittance senders.

### Atlantis lifts off

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., May 19: Just minutes before sunrise, the space shuttle Atlantis roared off the launch pad at the Florida's Kennedy Space Centre today, a brilliant ball of fire blazing across the eastern sky, reports Reuters.

### Israel now ready to give up 90pc of West Bank

JERUSALEM, May 19: Israel has told the Palestinians in peace talks that it is ready to give up 90 per cent of the West Bank, up from an 80 per cent offer made earlier this month, a senior Palestinian official said, reports AP.

The Palestinians rejected the latest offer, insisting to receive all of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, areas Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war, said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak, meanwhile, said today that he would only withdraw from three West Bank villages next to Jerusalem, as promised, if the Palestinians prevent violence during street protests this weekend. Newspaper reports said the handover could take place as early as Sunday.

Palestinian activists have said today and Saturday would be "days of rage" over Israel's refusal to release more Palestinian prisoners held for attacks against Israelis. Earlier this week, marches pressing for freedom for the 1,650 such security prisoners escalated into Israeli-Palestinian gun battles that killed three Palestinians.

in the worst violence in two years.

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators meeting in Sweden today resumed talks on the outlines of a peace treaty. A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said some progress has been made in previous talks in Sweden, led by Israeli Public Security Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami and Palestinian Parliament Speaker Ahmed Qureia.

In the previous round, Israel offered to give up 90 per cent of the West Bank but did not present a map or give details, including whether the land would be handed over in one or several stages, said the Palestinian official.

Earlier this month, in talks in the Red sea resort of Eilat, Israel offered to withdraw from 80 per cent of the West Bank, with 66 per cent to be handed over with the signing of a peace agreement and 14 per cent after a test period of several years. Under the Israeli proposal, the Palestinian entity would consist of several blocs linked by roads, tunnels and bridges.

The Palestinian official said the most recent Israeli offer provided for greater contiguity of Palestinian areas.

### Dalalpara bridge on Dhaka-Tongibari road collapses

MUNSHIGANJ, May 19: A bridge on the Dhaka-Tongibari highway in the Sadar Upazila collapsed this morning along with a truck, injuring five people, reports UNB.

Traffic in Dhaka-Tongibari, Dhaka-Bekta, Dhaka-Hasail and Dhaka-Baligaon-Lowha-jong routes was disrupted following the accident.

Witnesses said Dalalpara bridge, constructed during the British regime, collapse while the Tongibari-bound timber-laden truck was crossing it at about 7 am.

All the five people aboard the truck were injured.

### Dacoity at a city house

By Staff Correspondent

Dacoits looted cash and gold ornaments from a house at Nikunja Housing Estate under Badda police station yesterday afternoon.

Police said the gang entered the house of Mohammed Badsha Mian, former DGM of Sonali Bank and looted Taka 60 thousand in cash and 40 grams of ornaments during juma prayers.



### A leisure spot on the highway

A leisure spot on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway opens today. The Kanon Lake resort, claimed by its owners to be the first of its kind in private sector in the country, has been built mainly for highway commuters. The resort, about 14 kilometres from Comilla town, is located next to Jore Kanon Lake. It is built on a 15,000 square feet land, surrounding by a beautiful landscape. Minister for Civil Aviation, Tourism and Public Works Mosharraf Hossain will inaugurate the resort. Among others, local member of parliament Lotus Kamal and the communications secretary will attend the function. —Star photo

### Variant of 'Love Bug' virus spreading

NEW YORK, May 19: A variant of the 'Love Bug' computer virus has started spreading, virus experts said, and while it may not spread as fast as the original, it is much more destructive when it infects a computer, reports AP.

Computers at several large companies were infected late Thursday, said Dave Perry, spokesman at anti-virus software company Trend Micro Inc., in Cupertino, California. One company had all of its 5,000 computers infected, he said. He wouldn't identify the companies.

Like the 'Love Bug' scourge that spread to millions of computers two weeks ago, the new virus arrives in an attachment to an e-mail. However, it isn't given away by an "ILOVEYOU" subject line. Instead, the subject line changes to a random word or phrase every time a computer is infected.

"Each time the virus spreads,

it mutates itself to evade detection," Symantec Corp., another anti-virus software maker, said in a statement from its Cupertino offices.

The subject line of an infected e-mail starts with "FW:" and includes the name of a randomly chosen attachment from a previous e-mail on an infected computer. The e-mail will have an attachment with the same name, but ending in ".vbs."

Clicking on the attachment will activate the virus. Like "Love Bug," it will send itself to everybody in the user's address book. It will then destroy most of the files on the hard drive, rendering the computer useless until the operating system is re-installed.

As will the 'Love Bug,' only recipients running Microsoft's Outlook e-mail program for Windows are vulnerable and there's no danger if the attachment is not opened, virus experts said.

The larger size of this virus's attachments are more likely to crash e-mail servers, experts said. The 'Love Bug' had a small attachment, but crashed e-mail servers all over the world when it sent millions of copies of itself through the systems at once.

Perry said he hoped that increased awareness among e-mail users would hold back the spread of the new virus.

"Any time a virus hits a week after another virus its potency is diminished," he said. "People tend to be a little more cautious."

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### Chickenpox!

Vaccination can now prevent it.  
Ask your doctor how!

Issued in the interest of your child's health by

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SmithKline Beecham, Belgium

SKF  
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### Tribute to a rebel

Artists offering Nazrul songs at the birth centenary of the national poet at Nazrul Institute Auditorium yesterday. —Star photo

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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**Janata Bank**  
Dhaka Bangladesh

All patrons and well wishers are requested to transact Banking functions with the newly shifted premises.

## BRANCH SHIFTING

Janata Bank, Bandaikhara Branch, will be shifted tomorrow on the 21st May 2000, Sunday from the old address to new premises.

### New Address

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Khatian No. 379  
Mouja - Bandaikhara Kasba  
Union-Hat Kalupara  
P.S.- Atrai  
Dist.- Naogon

### Old Address

Janata Bank  
Bandaikhara Branch  
J.L. No-508/9, Dhag No-538  
Khatian No. 223  
Mouja - Bandaikhara Kasba  
Union-Hat Kalupara  
P.S.- Atrai  
Dist.- Naogon