

Manavzamin and freedom of press

This is in regards to Mr Saanee's letter (29 May) defending the courts verdict on Manavzamin.

I am actually amazed that so few people have protested regarding this issue.

The courts cannot demand to know the source of a leak or story. That is a violation of one of the most fundamental rights of a free press.

Anyway the courts verdict appears to be such because one of their own was implicated accepting bribes.

Editors and journalists, much as one may despise some of them, have to be protected from those seeking revenge for revelations that have hurt them.

I am not a lawyer but I do not have to be one to say that this verdict was

Finally the Registration Certificate will be issued by the Registrar of Inland Vessels who is also under DOS.

So, to get a passenger ship built three set of people come in the picture and they have no interaction or co-ordination among themselves and they are answerable to none.

As per the Report, ISSA should be an autonomous body under Dept of Shipping (DOS) with full complements of Marine Engineers, Naval Architects, Ship Surveyors and Inspectors.

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ment in addressing the problem.

People tried to over simplify the problem by blaming overloading of passengers thereby putting the blame squarely on the unfortunate passengers.

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I connection to Aslam Pervez's letter (May 17) about the plight of the Biharis in Bangladesh.

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children, office goers and factory workers. The turning from Bijoy Sharani on to Begum Rokeya Sharani is especially congested since all the traffic from the far wider road has to be squeezed into a road a third of the size.

However, amazingly for Dhaka, you hardly spend more than three to four minutes at most getting through this choke point.

This morning at 8:45 am, I had the privilege of seeing a biscuit coloured 2002 model Toyota Land Cruiser with furled flag and State Crest go down the wrong way on Begum Rokeya Sharani.

But you want to know what made me proud? Even though traffic was completely backed up on the other side, not one other car or tempo followed his example.

Don Quixote Dhaka

Newspaper holiday

Mr. S. Chowdhury spoke my mind. I fully endorse his suggestion.

On May 26 noon (Pacific Standard Time), I logged on to the Internet to read my favourite newspaper, all to discover that there will be no issue.

For us expatriate Bangladeshis, The Daily Star is the most sought after source of news and views from Bangladesh.

Imagine BTV and ETV following the footsteps of the newspaper industry, cancel their evening news broadcasts on holidays.

AA California, USA

Reviewing channel ban

I have been most interested to read the arguments for and against the banning of television channels on the grounds that their programmes are 'against our culture'.

It is quite natural for many of us to worry about the quality of the programmes our children are watching.

The education trade

Dhaka-- a fertile land of producing private universities

The Private University Act 1992 has a prolific ingenuity. Due to the charisma of the act umpteenth private universities are seen in the nook and corner of Dhaka City.

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University is a zenith of moral faculty. It is our duty to come forward to rescue the future generation from the hands of the Pied Pipers.

Hierophant On e-mail

consider the potentially criminal classes! What will the nation come to, if this stuff is lapped up? Are we not responsible, as a society, for what we allow into our sitting rooms?

Many UK Christians, and others whose standards and values were offended by the increasing number of programmes that, in our opinion, were 'rubbish', protested and deplored.

Angela MV Robinson Halifax

And they're banning music channels!

In our country we are regularly exposed to murder, prostitution, extortion, kidnapping, drug abuse and unbridled corruption.

It's ludicrous to think that MTV and Channel V can ruin our culture more than getting shot in the head through crossfire while crossing the

religious and non-religious, are as appalled as any, even in Bangladesh, about the values that are transmitted by some programmes.

However, even though those of us in the High Standards Brigade may groan, the battle is not lost and there are things that can be done in the UK and may work here also:

1. Religious and other charitable organisations can subsidise - and otherwise encourage (e.g. through using their own networks for advertising) - good quality programmes in order to keep the standards up.

2. Parents can be helped to educate their children to be selective viewers, and know when to insist the television is turned off!

3. Parents of children who are friends with each other and who are in and out of each other's houses frequently, can come to an agreement about what programmes they can watch and what they cannot.

4. Politicians do have a duty to draw up laws that are effective against the worst excesses - and these have to be agreed internationally these days because some broadcasting knows no national boundaries and, through the Internet, all sorts of awful programmes can be accessed - including 'hard' pornography and the abuse of children.

Also insist on police being alerted about those who are watching child pornography, downloading it and distributing it through their own networks which practice child abuse.

Julian On e-mail

Banning cable channels

In a perverse move the government decided to ban several satellite channels. In a nation where the population is starving for alternate sources of entertainment the government's decision was ridiculous to say the least.

Saad Hossain Motijheel, Dhaka

Liberty does not mean license

When there were tremendous debates on the issue, whether the German Chancellor used hair die or not, the Chancellor's hairdresser made the most notable comment. He said, "If this is today's debate, then I must say that it proves we have no other problems as a nation."

Few opinions in the Letters to the Editor against the banning of some TV channels were simply rubbish, partial and nonsense.

Something good is always followed by some bad. Alien (Evil) cultures by the way also entered our drawing rooms.

S. Arif Mahmud Haji Mohammad Muhsin Hall, DU



Good luck with your boots and balls

Something has just occurred to me about the England football team's bad luck with their foot problems.

Has anyone checked to see if there is a problem with the football boots that they are all using?

Perhaps there is a fault with the design, if there is someone had better sort it out quickly to provide a better boot!

Julian On e-mail

never to come back again. And their parents go on lamenting, when their sons (and daughters) will come back home.

The youths, the satellite channels viewers, don't feel to understand the problems our country is now beset with, let alone to give a thought to finding the way out from them.

These alien satellite TV channels portray those societies and countries, which are so different from that of ours from every respect.

Saad Hossain Motijheel, Dhaka

Exhaust from diesel engines causes asthma

Health experts have long known that exhaust from trucks, buses and other diesel-powered vehicles aggravates asthma in people who have the disease.

Gina Solomon, a medical doctor and a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defence Council in the USA, has co-authored the study, which looked at how people's respiratory systems react to diesel fumes.

The sooty particles that come out of diesel engines have toxic chemicals attached to the outside of the particles, which seem to trigger inflammatory and allergic responses in the airways.

There are certain changes that are triggered by diesel exhaust, which can be permanent. They can include alterations in the types of T-cells in the lungs and the responses of those cells to other kinds of allergens.

Solomon says that this can result in asthma and that kids are very much at risk. We have seen the most dramatic increases in asthma in young children, children under the age of six.

Diesel exhaust might be partly responsible for the rising rates of childhood asthma. Some other studies have shown that diesel fumes can combine with other environmental contaminants to cause lung diseases.

M. A. Obaydullah Banani, Dhaka

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"Talk or no talk, AL should join parliament"

I read your Editorial "Talk or no talk, AL should join parliament (May 29)."

AL, then BNP and then again AL during a decade of otherwise successful democracy in Bangladesh have created a bad precedence of boycotting the parliament on the plea of non-congenial atmosphere in the parliament.

Perhaps the opposition, of whichever party, is afraid to face a parliament and deliberate because it needs lots of homework and research to be in a position to debate.

Well Mr. Editor, given the present trend it will be necessary to



No talk, join change the quality of MPs first.

Bibek On e-mail

a sad event in our judicial history and a mark of shame for our country.

Cervantes Dhaka

Port strike

Again the extortionist trade unions of Chittagong port are holding our country hostage to their demands.

In event that the unions call the governments bluff, the port should be put in the hands of the Navy to ensure that our nation's commerce is not destroyed by some goondas.

Peter Dhaka

Boost up fisheries sector instead of goats

Recently the government has taken necessary steps to increase the number of goats. Though it is a good initiative in an economic viewpoint but the authority should be concerned about some matters such as goat grows very slowly and become mature in a long-time for reproduction and also goats are the threats to the culture of vegetables if they are not controlled.

Mamun Chowdhury On e-mail

Floating danger

I refer to your report by Morshed Ali Khan (May 14). After the worst ever disaster of Salahuddin-2, a lot of dirty linen are being washed in public but understandably, nobody could come out with any objective suggestion for prevention of such tragic accidents.

As somebody who had been closely associated to Inland Water Transport (IWT) in various capacities, I would like to offer my humble opinion as below:

For building an inland passenger or cargo ship there exists an anomaly in that the drawing or the blueprint has to be approved by IWTA. But during construction in a shipyard the supervision, at least on paper, is done by a free-lancing member of a panel of Naval Architects.

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It should ensure that the ship-- both passenger and cargo-- built according to the approved drawings and have all the requisite navigational, fire fighting and life saving appliances for safe operation.

In order to enforce the safety administration, the Engineer and ship Surveyors and Inspectors should be posted at all major river ports. The Surveyors should carry out annual surveys and renew "fitness" certificates.

Salahuddin Ahmad Dhanmandi, Dhaka

Plight of the Biharis

As regards existing vessels, their inclining test must be carried out and only stable vessels should be allowed to ply. Some of the launches with questionable stability can be modified to improve stability to acceptable level may also be allowed to ply.

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