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Expulsion from Eden

'Non-cooperation' with the JCD leaders allegedly cost the jobs of four teachers of Eden College. The teachers stood against their illegal activities. Allocation of seat in exchange of money, leakage of questions, allowing admission of disqualified students are some common practices of the ruling party student wing. It seems even girls are not lagging behind in such activities. The BCI had their time when the AL was in power, now it's the JCD's turn.

Some teachers came forward to put an end to these unfair practices. They tried to allocate seats to the students on the basis of merit and need and also tried to evict the illegal boarders. The unexpected interruption in the 'business season' irritated the JCD leaders. They reportedly contacted the education minister and drove out the 'corrupt' teachers from the campus.

An educational institution is supposed to be the place for imparting knowledge of ethics and morality, so that the students can become worthy citizens of the country. Sadly, it is now used as the breeding ground of followers of political parties. Anyone, teacher or student, trying to oppose this culture is facing unpleasant consequences and the nation is losing in the long run.

Saif
Dhaka

Load shedding

The countrywide perennial problem of load shedding is going on unabated this summer. A few days ago the situation was even worse. In spite of DESA's initiatives to repair and upgrade the faulty underground cable network in Dhanmondi area, the solution to this long-standing problem still remains an elusive goal. The energy minister maintains that this load shedding problem will be solved within a few years, just as his predecessors used to say. And as usual these few years seems to be endless. All our ardent pleadings, vociferous demands and earnest requests yielded no positive results at all. And writing on this topic has become some sort of litany to many and as a result more and more people are growing despondent over this. The problem, if anything, is worsening every year.

I was amused when I heard on the BBC about the major blackout that occurred in some cities of the mighty America and Canada. The disaster struck in late evening and forced many people to spend the night outside, on the roads, subways, stations and pavements or any space under the open sky. President Bush himself said no terrorist attack was behind this incident. Authorities said that this extensive technical failure might have been caused by lightning or small fire. It was a rare occurrence. No such incident was reported since 1965. After that some back-up measures were taken but all of them failed this time.

Power grid operators said that negligence in modernising some power-transmission infrastructure, which runs on a fairly old method, let this happen on a

greater scale. However, it was amazing that America, despite being at the helm of global power, experienced such catastrophe because of poor and old infrastructure just like our unfortunate third world country. So we cannot blame our authorities much and it is proved that even the most advanced countries of the world fail, rarely though, in power transmission. But in our case, it is a regular phenomenon.

Jinaan Khadeejah
East Ashkona, Uttara, Dhaka

Entertainment for children

In Dhaka city, there are a few parks

recreation facilities for the children.

The prices of foods are also very high. Even a plate of 'futchka' costs Tk 25. We expect that children should have the opportunity to enter these places free of cost.

Hasna Hasan
Dhaka

Bush and Blair

The newly elected prime minister of Spain took very little time to order the withdrawal of 1,300 Spanish soldiers who were deployed in Iraq under the command of the US. Honduras and Dominican Republic also announced the decision to withdraw their armed personnel from

the history of the UN, it looked so helpless.

What is the scale of damage that the war of Iraqi freedom has caused? To say in one sentence... it has simply devastated one of the world's most blessed civilisations. The number of deaths will never be known correctly. The infrastructure of the country was brought to the dusts by heavy bombardment. The oil resource of Iraq was targeted and is being exploited.

Recently, the evidences of brutal torture and sexual abuse of the Iraqi PoWs by US and British soldiers have revealed the ugly faces of the invaders. This is nothing less than war crime. Though Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair vowed that

students' 'free-hand' writing skill. The new 'communicative system', introduced to emphasise creativity rather than memorising, isn't being as effective as it was supposed to be. Sixty marks out of 200 are still there in their hands, which they just memorise and scribble down onto the answer script, with their merit completely unused. The schools still provide the students with some ever-trite syllabuses for compositions, paragraphs, letters, applications and so on. So, to get the highest mark in the class, almost everyone memorises those. Memorising is something that silently snatches away creativity. Students with high prolific composition books get better marks than those who try themselves. But often those so called 'good students' are seen sweating when asked to write a single mistake-free sentence in English. Doesn't it look like a memory test? Even though there are no precise English syllabuses for the SSC exams, the students still go on memorising. They memorise a number of those items, wavering between 30 and 40 each year, because the topics covered in the SSC exams are common, almost the same every year and easily predictable. Unless some unknown, unseen and interesting topics replace those known, trite and predictable ones, the students eventually can never improve their English.

Ahmad Raiyan
Khilgaon Govt. High School, Dhaka

Law and order

The law and order situation in the country is simply alarming. Despite its sincere efforts, the BNP government has failed to restore law and order to any reasonable level. A number of people are dying every day at the hands of hardened criminals. The common man is living in fear and anxiety. With every passing day, things are going from bad to worse. And it is unlikely that things will improve in near future. So the only course left for the government is to call the armed forces and hand them the responsibility of restoring law and order as was done about a year before. There is no doubt that some people were killed during the anti-crime operation, but that was far fewer than the number of killings at the hands of terrorists.

When one has to make a choice between two evils, one has to go for the lesser evil. Human rights organisations criticised deployment of army at that time. But by that action they helped, in effect, the cause of the terrorists. One has to judge a country by its context.

Mrs. Momtaz Jahan
Fulbari, Sylhet

Time for a second liberation war?

It appears that the liberation struggle in 1971 has not yet emancipated us fully, even after more than one generation of crude and fine tuning. We have fallen into a political trap, which has turned and set into a vicious circle. The dissipated political leaders have neither the means nor the method to get out of this political cyclone. The national leadership is bankrupt for reasons known to the informed citizens.

Three supportive ingredients are missing in the political mortar handled by the public: moral support, empathy and sympathy. The communication gap between the politicians and the electorate is wide, and it is getting wider with the spread of terrorism in society. Politics today is terror-oriented and not voter-friendly. Locally, the inner casualties have already started, hence the political leaders are feeling insecure as could be gathered from daily cumulative press reports. This consequence is not abnormal as violence returns to the source, as proved from the time immemorial.

One aspect is clear; there is no chance for evolutionary politics to develop and flower in the right way, as the bitterness, intolerance have frozen frigid. That is the disadvantage of bipartite politics backed by charismatic leadership. The patter is second hand: transferred through dynasty rule. This waiting period is also a moral punishment for this young nation: it appears we have not yet been tested enough for the abolition to be acceptable.

Thus the topical question comes up: what are the preconditions for a change in the debased political culture? In a polluted environment, where the new untainted leadership will come from? The alternate politicization processes have strengthened this bipolarity into unholy cults. Both the leaders and the citizens are trapped. With the foul contenders rattling sabers in between. There is no space between Satan and the sea.

This scenario raised a side query, irrelevant in the background but a hot focussing point in the foreground. Is it necessary for a genuine working leader to be ambitious? Compare the mother-child relationship. The mother is not ambitious. Where and when is the time to think about it? Human mortality cannot be turned immortal. Give way for the spring to come again. There were world famous leaders who were not ambitious but they led to peaceful existence.

How the people can relax when the parties are warring in peacetime?

Anyway, the local leadership in Dhaka today is under severe test to produce and deliver. Otherwise, there would be no winners, only losers.

Abu Abd
Dhaka

My little guesthouse

My father had built a straw shack outside his mud house so that I could live there and study, occasionally if any relatives came to visit they too could sleep overnight. As the time passed by, it became like a village guesthouse.

One day without seeking permission from any, I converted this guest house into an open house for the village people. Sometimes at the middle of the night people would come from different parts of the village and they would hold a meeting.

The chairperson would be the one who did not commit any crime for that day. It was indeed hard to find someone among them who did not do any wrong. Among the attending members, one would be a thief, one would be a dacoit, captain of the village football team, gangsters of the village and some of the unemployed youths. Sometimes a village mullah would stop by to smoke tobacco from a hukka. Occasionally, a vagabond from another village would come and sit to smoke biddi, or to see if he could steal anything.

I would sit with them all night long to listen to them, talk about their miseries in life such as destructive cyclone and about their bad winter harvest. The demand of the village people was very small, smaller than anyone could imagine. They would ask me for a taka, sometimes even less than a taka. Their needs were nominal. They were happy with whatever little possession they had acquired in life. They lived one day at a time.

Since I did not have any money to give them, I would give them my table clock, my lungi, my T shirts, so that they could sell them at the local market and in exchange they would get a small amount of money. Sometimes I would sit to watch them suffer because I could not give them anything. It was a shocking experience of my boyhood.

Slowly the village people started to steal my books, my hurricane, pillowcase, then the pillow, bed sheets, then the bed; finally they took away my last pair of sandals, which was especially carved for me by my father. By the time the village people finished stealing my belongings, I had nothing inside my guesthouse. Everything was stolen by them.

One day my father walked into my guesthouse. He found me sleeping on the exposed mud floor. He wanted to know as to what had happened to my belongings. In reply I told my father that my village friends needed them more than I did.

Now as I look back to those days of my life, it seems to be a dream. My little guesthouse probably has been washed off from existence.

Saleh Ahmed
On-e-mail



Let us live

One of the most popular Awami League leaders and MP, Mr. Ahsanullah, popularly known as Ahsanullah Master, was killed at his hometown Tongi by a group of assailants last month. We are stunned as well as worried. Again, the incident showed that the political situation in the country is turbulent, on which general masses have already lost their confidence. The miscreants gunned down a sitting MP. It was really barbaric. At the same time, a schoolboy also died and five others were critically injured in the indiscriminate firing. The murder of Ahsanullah Master stirred the general masses. Naturally, a violent reaction was witnessed in and around Tongi area and Gajipur. Angry mobs started breaking shops and torching vehicles. Police also retaliated by firing tear gas shells and rubber bullets, causing two more deaths and several injuries. Terrorists gunned down two men, and police killed two people to bring the situation under control. Aren't these too much? Couldn't police avoid the action against the protesters? Here, we have also seen the common episode that two leading parities, instead of cooling the situation, started blaming each other immediately after the incident. On Friday night, the ministry of home affairs in a press note blamed internal party feud for the killing. Without proper investigation, such a comment was not at all desirable. Besides, the Awami League blamed its political rivals for the killing without producing any evidence in favour of its stand.

We don't want such a childish quarrel among our honourable leaders. We want the culprits to be punished.

Cader Sabir, Rajshahi Cadet College

drain was changed several times. The present system has been constructed by laying RCC pipes under the pavement with manhole covers at a distance of about 70 feet from each other. For a year or two, the system worked satisfactorily.

But as no cleaning was done year after year the pipe became nearly filled up by accumulation of foreign bodies like mud, sand, leaves, bricks and mortar etc. etc. As such even before the advent of the rainy

season a little heavy down pour causes knee-deep water logging on the road for several hours, causing immense sufferings to residents, and other users of the road. Immediate cleaning is needed from its starting to the end point (i.e. up to the storm sewer).

After that, it may be cleaned once a month. The City Corporation is requested to arrange for its immediate clean up.

President
Dhanmondi R/A.



"Licensed" to do everything

The International Criminal Court was set up to try perpetrators of the world's worst atrocities: genocide, mass war crimes and systematic human rights abuses. One hundred and thirty-five nations are signatories to it.

"Uncle Sam" believes it can be used as a tool for "politically motivated or frivolous suits" against US troops. US 'peacekeepers' so far have been exempted from prosecution. Washington is hell-bent on renewing it.

Now US troops can do whatever they wish. They can build Abu Ghraib in every corner of the world. The US administration will be there to save them from 'politically motivated' charges.

Human rights, ethics, morality...these words sound a little weird when Americans utter them.

Sumon
Dhaka

Sex workers

It is known to all that there is a licensed brothel in the heart of Tangail town. More than one thousand inmates earn their livelihood through prostitution. My question is why, in spite of a fixed place for them, the whole town has gone under the wings of howling sex-workers. After 10:00pm, they are seen at Pouroudhyan, new bus stand area and even on streets. They are polluting the healthy environment of the town.

The law enforcers are not doing anything to solve the problem. They should look into the matter to rid the town of an unwanted civic nuisance.

Md. Shafique
Karata, Tangail

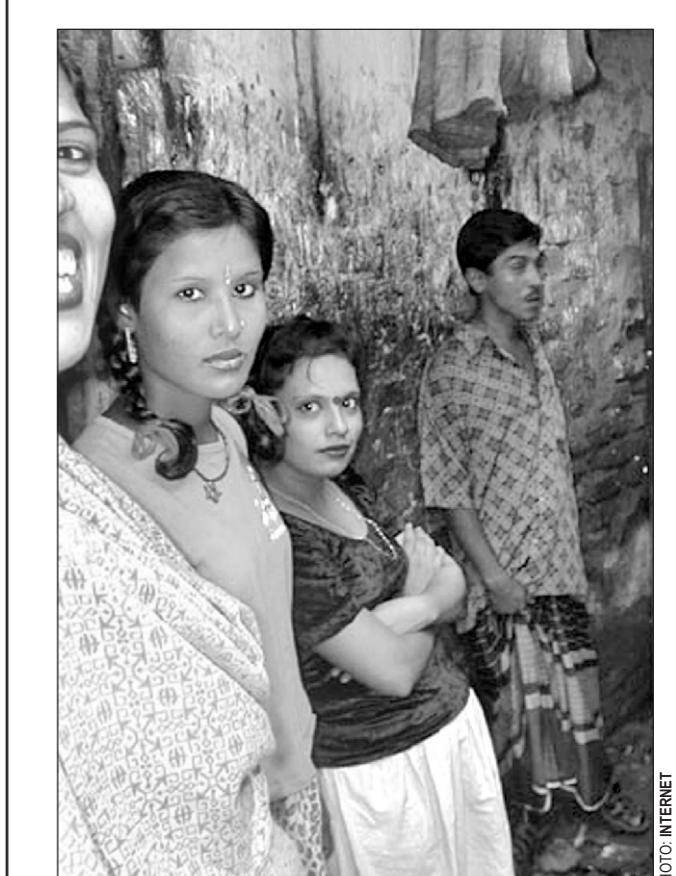


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