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## Students politics

Students are the founder of any state, they indicate the direction of the state policy. They are a large and concerned class of the society; society expects contribution from the students. In a way, they protest injustice and try to root-out corruption. In the Language Movement and the Liberation War students proved the necessity of their participation in politics. But, now-a-days, student politics is spoiled and corrupted. Students are now only the "teddy doll" of the powerful political leaders. Here, most of the politically involved students don't attend their classes, they are simply wasting their time and ours. They obstruct the general students in pursuing their studies. We, the general students, suffer mentally, financially and are deeply worried about our future.

**Pavel Chakma**  
Department of law and justice  
Rajshahi University



PHOTO STAR

## Fly-overs to solve city road traffic jams

From the city of mosques to city of rickshaws to city of mosquitoes, Dhaka has now been elevated to city of flyovers. After construction of Mohakhali and Khilgaon flyovers, our authorities concerned have now finalised construction of another mammoth flyover from Jatrabari to Gulistan.

Do the flyovers help and reduce the road traffic jams? May be to some extent in certain places for a handful of affluent persons, the car owners. CNG taxi and bus passengers who travel easily but many people of Dhaka continue to suffer terribly due to tortuous traffic jams all over the city.

Don't we find and come across queues of rickshaws, different motor vehicles stranded and lying idle for long, long time awaiting their turn, signal or chance for movement? This obstruction and disruption of movement of vehicles is the root cause of frequent and numerous chaotic, haphazard and undisciplined road traffic jams in different places and areas of the city causing untold sufferings to the city dwellers.

I strongly believe that unless and until the aforesaid root cause of road traffic jams in different places is solved, construction of dozens of mammoth flyovers would not help in easing the traffic congestion of Dhaka city.

The authorities now should carry out a survey to find out and make a list of all important, busy and

crowded road junctions, road squares, railway crossings, zebra crossing and construct small over bridges and under-passes, as many as possible and wherever possible for movement of vehicles and pedestrians without any hindrance, wastage of time, energy and money.  
**O H Kabir, Dhaka-120**

## Chittagong Port: Demands a positive change

Chittagong Port, once associated with the ancient history according to historians like Fa Hien, has recently become synonymous to corruption and inefficiency. The economic growth and flourishing largely depends on proper as well as efficient use of the port as the port deals eighty percent of our exports & imports. It is thought to be the life blood of Bangladesh economy. But a research with regard to Chittagong port conducted recently by TIB is thought provoking as well as terrific for our glorious port.

The research work has unearthed huge irregularities and tangles in transportation of goods. The report shows that the shipping companies or agents have to encounter terrible shocks for using the harbour. The fact that they have to offer tips or bribe on, at least, eleven spots.

There are ten pilots in Chittagong port who were appointed long ago, directly control ship berthing and taking a ship to the outer anchorage.

They charge Tk 5000 each time for bringing the ship into berth and Tk 5000 for taking the ship to outer anchorage. An ex-chairman of the port once commented that the port is hostage to ten people. If they say the weather is bad then there is no hope for the ship to enter the port, but if bribe is offered then the weather automatically becomes good.

The research work has also uncovered huge informational data which may help to take punitive measures against the culprits who are liable for the illegal activities in Chittagong Port. This is the time to think whether we are taking enough initiatives to make the port efficient and corruption free or letting it to the hand of the culprits who are regulating this port for the fulfillment of their own interests. The government should contemplate over the matter in order to bring about a change in the existing scenario of the port for the betterment of the country.

**Siraj Ud-Daulah**  
NCCB, Sylhet

## Watch import dumping

The official monitoring agencies have to carefully watch the dumping of non essential imported goods by exporters who have large stocks of old and unsold items; which are available at cheap discounted prices as packaged deals.

There are many examples, but a few would suffice. Electrical goods are mostly old models. 'New' refrigerators in the Dhaka stadium are as old as 1999 models! took me half an hour to squeeze out the information. The huge bulky telephone sets are not new models. No manufacturer's literature (leaflet/catalogue) are available even at the big show-rooms owned by famous local groups of companies; and the sales staff are not technically oriented to provide the tech specs of each and every item (can't remember all the data depending on human memory).

Purchase of capital goods is a slow process. Consumer goods sell fast and at quicker intervals. The sellers (shops) are looking for the new rich buyers. Another problem is the absence of authorized service centres, with trained staff. The names of the authorized agents or importers are not publicised.

It is a grey market, and the government is rather indifferent to the negative implications faced by buyers and consumers (what is CAB doing?). The imported milk powder (surplus stocks in the developed countries) should not be date-expired. The soyabean oil is also surplus abroad. And these are dumped into the third world with preconditions for further aid (the pressure is indirect). We are exporting spectacle frames, but the shops stock mostly foreign brands. Are all the labels genuine? "Made in Bangladesh" ready-made clothes are hardly sold in the posh dept stores, while we are clothing the EU and the USA!

Smash the grey market, if not the black market.  
**A Mawaz, Dhaka**

## Rape case

Raping is one of the most heinous crimes. We see news of rape incidents in the newspaper almost everyday. It is very disgusting that the some police officials are sometimes involved in such rape cases. This is a brutal and a shameful act. What is our government doing? Is our government blind? Why such crimes keep on plaguing our society, where is the punishment?  
**Zahid Mollik**  
Tangail

## Supporting Pakistan

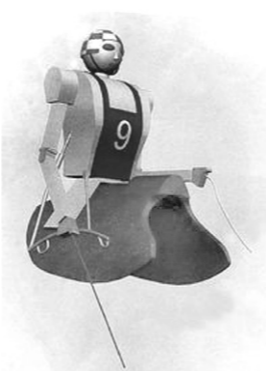
A while ago, the Pakistan cricket team visited India. They played three test matches and six ODIs. We were also, as always, very excited about the match. I watched several games in my hall TV room with my friends. But I am sorry to say that maximum students were supporting Pakistan. Have we forgotten the atrocities of Pakistani occupation forces during liberation war already? Should we forget the heinous attack on the night of 25<sup>th</sup> March in 1971. Why should we support the Pakistani team? More-

over, without the help of India, would it have been possible to get our freedom?  
**Abdul Malek**  
Ekushey Hall  
DU

## "Tele-no-talk"

BTTB's new fashion baby and

## Robot as camel jockeys



It is heartening to learn that a special type of Robot has been developed to replace young children as jockeys on racing camels. A very good move indeed!

I am sure that Robot Jockeys will provide more excitement and entertainment to the players and fans of the popular sport, i.e. camel racing which is played in the United Arab Emirates and some other countries in the region.

**Prof. M. Zahidul Haque**  
Chairman  
Department of Language  
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money spinner Teletalk mobile telephone service is still going through its birth pangs. The separation of umbilical cord (from the mother BTTB) is under court examination. There are other types of illegitimacies too besides other problems. The private mobile operators have snapped the temporary interconnection with Teletalk, as it was allowed for initial testing period only. The formal signing of the agreement is awaited, as per news report (DS, 24/4). The soft launching of Teletalk appears to be a ruse, to whip up public demand, using the gracious presence of the Prime Minister. The non-

transparent way in which the new company has been formed and launched has been questioned in the court by conscientious objectors.

The fixed line telephone is now open to private investment. The new WLL (wireless local loop) facility will attract the subscribers. BTTB deliberately ignored this new tested application, as a large percentage of cables and linemen would be gone. Now the government has also allowed private generation and sale of electricity, a very belated concession of the entrenched ruling class! The very initial motivation in the huge public sector is suspect. The opposition is a lesser evil.

The railway optical fibre link is coming very handy for the private operators. When the sub-cable link is opened in the near future, BTTB should collapse doing public business, and end of government monopoly, sided by a section of the powerful bureaucrats, who are also politically polarized.

The authorities are not being charge-sheeted for winding up the jute, paper and sugar factories. The impending collapse of the notorious BTTB is being watched by millions of disgruntled subscribers. Uproot the anti-public evil centres in the government network. Can't fight evils and devils? Need nursing? The governance is already naked and unashamed.

**Abu Abd, Dhaka**

## Women's voting right in Kuwait

It is undoubtedly a joyous tidings for the Kuwaiti's females that their 50-member house consented at last to provide them with the right to vote and candidacy in municipal election, although obviously they have not been granted yet the right to vote in the parliamentary election. A key ally to the US in the ME, the state has been under long pressure on behalf of the US to give its women wider suffrage, since the US thinks the lack of women representations has fostered violent Islamic militancy in the Persian Gulf State. This development will strongly encourage the females of the state to demand the voting right in the parliamentary election and for the right to candidacy in the same as well. Similarly, it will become an instance to the women fighting for establishing their rights equally with the men in other ME countries.

The women are generally suppressed and tyrannized in the ME, this decision of Kuwait may become a milestone in the women's development history in the ME.  
**Mosleh Uddin Shamim**  
Lecturer in History  
Chittagong University

## Onslaught on embassy

I really appreciate your editorial trying to understand the casus belli of Kuwait's Bangladesh Embassy incident. When most of the governments of the world are trying to be responsive to the need and desire for their people, our bureaucrats and politicians, allegedly, are isolating themselves from the people more and more. So venting the mounting frustration of the people in undesirable way might become inevitable.

I urge the Kuwait government not to treat those arrested as scapegoat and mete out unduly harsh punishment, instead, I request them look into their mode of governance specially in matters of the poor unfortunate expatriates toiling in their country.

**M.A Islam, USA**

## Savar tragedy

Few days ago a 10-storied garment factory in Savar collapsed killing many workers. I saw this incident in Canadian National TV, CBC News. We rarely see Bangladeshi news item in Canadian TV. The US and Canada are importers of Bangladeshi clothing and these countries are very much concerned about workers' safety. I guess that such incidents may have adverse impact on Bangladeshi garment export to these countries.

News reports suggest that the owner built the 10-storied building without permission of the appropriate authority. The soil condition in that area was not suitable for such a high rise building and there was no proper foundation. These issues should be investigated. However, the problem is that the owner is closely related to the ruling BNP. The Commerce Minister, without proper investigation, defended the owner. The ruling party MP Mr. Mahbubur Rahman, who is the father-in-law of the owner, also defended him. That is why I am doubtful whether there would be a proper investigation and the culprit will be punished.

We talk about Jainal Hazari, Shamim Osman. They did not face trial during AL period in spite of their alleged criminal activities. I wonder whether the situation has changed during the Coalition regime?

**Rashed Choudhury**  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

## Resolution against Bangladesh

It was amusing to read some news reports during the last few days about a draft resolution against Bangladesh that was tabled by some MEPs at the European Parliament (EP). Reportedly, the said resolution was formulated at the Concord Tower, Dhaka, with inputs supplied by the EC Ambassador in Bangladesh. One newspaper clearly identified the opposition activists who, during the last three-four months, shuttled between Dhaka and Brussels to lobby the members of the European Parliament (MEP) to adopt the resolution.

Whether the draft was made in Dhaka, whether the EC delegation in Dhaka supplied any input and whether some dishonest MEPs were bribed into tabling the motion for the Resolution is subject to investigation. However, this is a very serious allegation and must be duly addressed. I believe there will be clarification from the EP and the EC delegation in Dhaka on this very controversial issue. We are eagerly looking forward to that.

**Matiur Rahman, VUB, Brussels**

## A different cool 'New Year'

The 'Pahela Baisakh' is celebrated in Bangladesh with due gusto and pomp. It's an occasion for rejoicing for all Bengalis irrespective of religion, creed and caste. The Bangla new year visits us in the high summer. The weather is hot, dry and is often accompanied by



PHOTO: AFP

## The New Pope

The Catholic Church finally elected the New Pope Benedict XVI from Europe. As a Christian from the 'two-third-world', our expectation was the New Pope would be from a Latin or Afro-Asian country. By electing a Pope from Africa or Latin America, the Vatican Council could make the world understand that Christianity is not a white man's religion. The reason for electing Pope from Europe is to revive European women, marriage for priests, homosexuality and gay marriage etc. The Vatican Council's aspiration is that the Pope from Europe will salvage the European Church and Christianity from these challenges. Now, I wish that the Vatican Council's decision is genuine and their hopes and dreams would turn into reality. Pope John Paul II was also from Europe but he was only successful in dissolving the Soviet Empire.

My expectation was that a Pope from beyond the periphery of white Christianity would reduce religious tension, halve poverty, hunger, diseases and the gender issue of the 'two-third-world'. John Paul II clearly understood the need for younger leadership for the present troubled world. So, he called the younger leadership at the Vatican. But now the clock has turned back and we got a Pope who will turn 78 next Saturday.

**Peter Paul Sarker**  
Senpara, Parbata, Mirpur, Dhaka

storms. We can not change nature's game. Sometimes the heat becomes quite unbearable.

While keeping the celebration of the 'Pahela Baisakh' intact and uninterrupted, may I suggest that a similar festival may be organised in the more tolerable 'cool month', say at the end of December or early January. The 31st December or 1st January can be declared as 'national fraternity day' and a holiday, and may be celebrated differently, without the undisciplined parties and drunken brawls, without the accompanied 'hungama' of the gate crashers, vandals and the unruly

lots. Colourful rallies, dramas, musical and dance sequences, other decent programmes can be the highpoints of the celebration/festival. It will be another secular, no-bar, peaceful festival, which will surely be welcomed and enjoyed by the younger generation and people at large. We would welcome comments on this suggestion. Let peace, happiness and love prevail.  
**S N Mamoan, Dhaka**



## The sweetest word

Do you know the sweetest word of the world? It is 'Mother'. Yes! In English it is called 'Mother' or 'Mom' or 'Mama' or 'Mummy' etc. In Bangla, 'Ma' or 'Mau' or 'Mago' or 'Ammu' or 'Ammu'. In Hindi the term 'Mother' is expressed as 'Maji' and 'Ammaji' in Urdu. Actually different people use different language to call their most loving person -- their mother.

Mother is the nearest and dearest person for every human being. She goes through immense pain before giving birth to us. When I was a child, my mother looked after me without neglecting any of my wants. Actually all the mothers around the globe are ready to do anything for the welfare of their children. A lot of times, mothers in poor countries sacrifice their own meals to feed their children.

Unfortunately most of us take our mothers' love for granted and never return the affection showered on us by them. Some of us even forget the sacrifices they make for us. They neglect their own mothers in old age. There are some people who leave their mothers in old-home. They come to meet her once a year. Some of them don't come at all. Human nature is really very strange!

Mother is the best blessing from God for us. In 1971 through a bloodstained nine months long war we got our independence. At that critical time all the freedom fighters fought for their motherland and motherland is similar to our mother.

Now I am 400 kms away from my mother. Mother I really miss you. I love you mother! And I will never be ungrateful!

**Sadat Shahriar,**  
EEE, RUET,  
Rajshahi

## DARK PARKS



PHOTO: STAR

The DCC has no transparency even in the lighting sector! The city's parks are dark in these insecure nights. Of course, the flood lights have been installed, but the operation and maintenance are very poor, with long intervals of non-operation. The street lighting is also not properly supervised.

There is a 40 percent shortage in the garbage disposal department and the replacement of light bulbs/lamps take too much time. How far are the local ward commissioners responsible for monitoring and chasing action? They show their faces only once to solicit votes during the election campaign. They never make house-to-house visit even once during their tenure (I am living for 15 years at one address). The location of the WC office is not even publicised, and the PR is abysmal.

The Mayor hardly talks about the huge systems losses in the DCC. This is the general picture everywhere.

Is the honest and dedicated new generation interested in Municipal service as a career? Why not make it more interesting and attractive? DCC image is poorer than that of the slums. Who can remove the bugs to motivate the Mayor and his camp followers?  
**A Mahseen, Dhaka**