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After the building collapse...

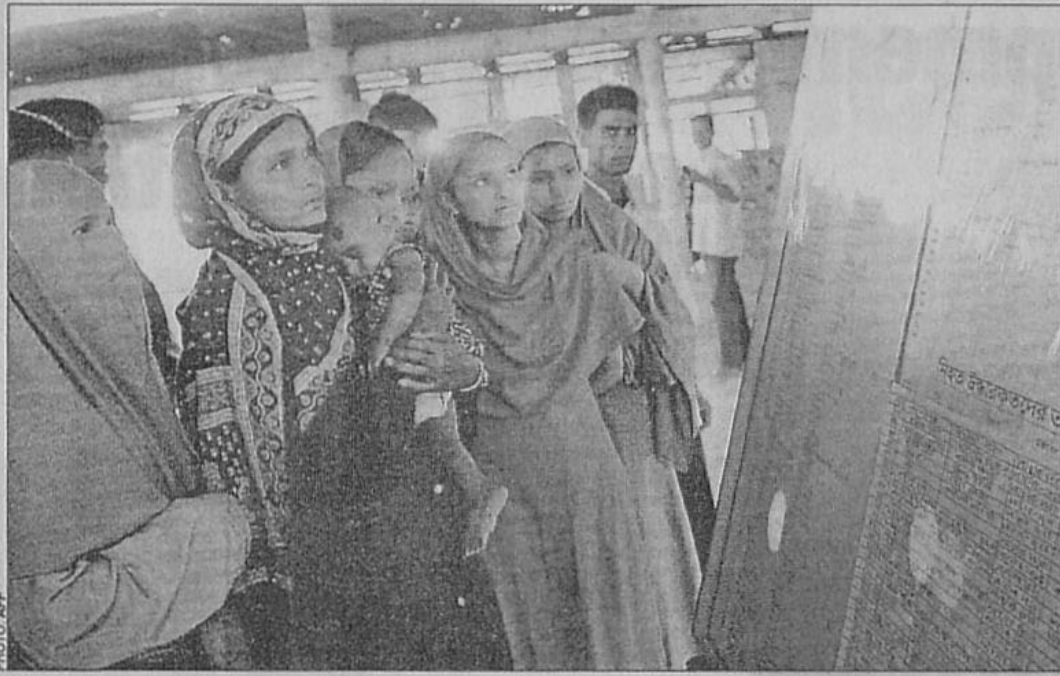
We have just watched a building collapse. Seventy-four people died and 97 are missing. I don't know how the families of these 171 people are passing their days. But I tried to think that if I were to lose my son, the pain would have been intolerable. Time passes, we forget, we remember, we forget and then we forget to remember. Can we do something after this tragedy?

There is no control over design and construction of any structure in our country. If anybody wants to raise any structure he can act on his own, employing any type of people. What is Rajuk doing? It is approving only the layout plan drawing. Sometimes it is taking the structural drawing not for approval but as a formality. This system cannot guarantee the safety of the structure.

definite period of time to learn the design aspects and approach. After successful completion of internship the qualified engineers can design the foundation and structures. Construction also needs experience. Anybody cannot construct a safe structure. There are lots of things to take care of during construction work and the absence of this quality control will make the structure unsafe.

From my working knowledge of 17 years after passing from BUET, I am observing that more than 50 per cent buildings under construction in Dhaka city are unsafe in some respect or the other. Sometimes I thought that I should try to draw the attention of the owners and clarify the situation.

I think Rajuk is the right authority to take care of it. Rajuk must adopt an action plan to ensure safe designing and construction. Once Rajuk tried to register the list of Architects/Engineers so that people could avail the services of those



engineers for design. But it did not succeed. I don't know why the move failed. Rajuk must do it again and make submission of foundation and structural designs mandatory along with drawing by the registered

engineers for any structure. Construction of those structures should comply with the design and should be monitored by the registered engineers. The engineers should have qualification system.

If we cannot learn from the lost 74 + 97 lives we may lose many more in future. Look before you leap. Please take this matter seriously.

Md. Monayem Hossain
Kalyanpur, Dhaka

leaders with dubious and misleading designs.

Ahmadiyyas are well organised, better educated and financially better off than many. In Pakistan, in the fifties, they were occupying twenty percent of the jobs and business, and the riot initiated by Abul Ala Moududi served more than one purpose. It incited the misinformed Muslims into performing acts of 'Sawab' and also marginalised the Ahmadiyya business people to some extent. We could only wish, if the 'Beeshbrikha' members Moududi were hanged in 1953, there would have been less trouble now. Alas! That didn't happen.

In any case, the civil society and all the right thinking people should rally round and resist these self-seeking devils with more might.

Let there be flowers of all kinds in nature's garden.

TKM
Dhaka

Strengthen BDR

The current border situation shows that we need a stronger Bangladesh Rifles. BSF is stronger than the BDR. They are more than 100,000 strong while BDR has only 30,000 members. Again one third of BDR is involved in internal duties in the CHT and other regions. So I suggest that Bangladesh Rifles should be withdrawn from internal security duties. The Bangladesh Army should replace the BDR camps in Chittagong. Some Armed police Battalions and Ansar Battalions can be attached with the BDR.

If possible recruitment to the BDR should increase. BDR can be given a small aviation unit also. The government can think about a separate officer's cadre for BDR.

Sabir Abdus Samee
One-mail

BCS exams

Some of our national dailies have published news and letters about the new system that will be adopted by PSC for the coming 27th BCS. A debate is going on about elective subjects and academic attainments. It is a very good decision to withdraw elective subjects as it is a very lengthy procedure and not an effective way of measuring the merit of students coming from various disciplines. But nobody is talking about the preliminary exams. Like special BCS preliminary exams may have 200 marks and we can add this marks with written exams in case of general cadres. It will be good if math and gen. science exams are taken separately. Here marks of math will be 100 and gen. science with social science will carry 100 marks.

Professional cadres will get their academic attainments and here marks of preliminary will not be added. Thus we can get rid of the debate of elective subjects and academic attainments for gen. cadres.

We expect PSC will adopt an effective way to find out the very best.

Dr. Ziaul Huque
RMC, Rajshahi

Savar factory collapse

A lot has been written about the collapse of the nine-storied garment factory. However going through the various news reports, there are still certain facts, which needs to be clarified to get the real background of the matter. It seems that the Cantonment Board did not approve the construction plan submitted in 2001. Three years later when the owners submitted a new plan, for constructing a four storied building, the Cantonment Board instructed the owners to conduct soil and related tests before the approval could be given. Here begins the root of non-transparency. What are the related tests? These cannot be expressed in generalities, but in specific data required. Where were these test reports submitted and scrutinised and approval for the four storied constructions given? This needs to be clarified.

If the answer is in the negative,

then obviously it was an illegal construction. The next question is what steps did the Cantonment Board take to legally stop this illegal construction? Did the Cantonment Board even after all these discrepancies and non response of the owners kept its eyes shut 'to see no evil' and defacto allow the nine storied building to be built? If this is the case then the Cantonment Board is an accessory to this act of criminal negligence. No wonder, no one seems to be at fault. At least the police sources do hint that the owners are too big to touch! Possibly it will all wash down to 'an act of God' and except for platitudes the powers that be will conclude, 'qua serasera; what will be, will be'.

S.A. Mansoor, Dhaka

CCC election

CCC election will be held on 9th May. Now Chittagong is very busy with the election related activities. Chittagonians are enjoying it. They are going to elect the mayor. They are arranging processions with noisy speakers. There is door-to-door movement by the commissioner candidates.

We hope everything will take place peacefully.

M Nazmul Huda Azad Mishu
Dept of ELL, IUUC



An appeal

We, the people of greater Sylhet, ie. Habiganj, Maulvibazar, Sylhet and Sunamganj, would like to request our Communications Minister, Barrister Nazmul Huda, to kindly alleviate our sufferings by restoring and improving the inter district trains like Paraboth, Joyontika and Upobon. At present the train service on Sylhet-Dhaka route is really miserable, besides the train fare is also exorbitant.

So please do something about the problem that we are facing.

Syed Rofiqul Hussain
Fiala Shaheb Bari, Habiganj

Making parliament effective

My regards to Mr. Abdul Latif Mondal, a former secretary of GoB, for initiating the very important issue of making parliament an effective institution. It will be good if we can have more view points on this issue. Personally, I fully share his prime concern about the role of speaker in making parliament effective.

However, the role of individual members is also equally important to make parliament a useful institution.

A Bangladeshi
One-mail

Arms race in the subcontinent

This is in response to Mr. O H Kabir's letter about arms race in the subcontinent. I strongly disagree with Mr. Kabir's opinion/suggestion to upgrade Bangladesh Air force with F-16. We need to strengthen our economy alleviating poverty, improving education and the socio-political structure at first. We can't afford to buy F-16 or expensive things like that at the cost of 14 crore Bangladeshis.

If I ever have to agree with you to get into the arms race then I would rather go for acquiring nuclear power so that our neighbors think twice before violating our borders, depriving us from our share of international water etc. Certainly you can buy (not earn) respect from the entire world by just having nuclear capability; would you like to have one?

Delwar Hossain
San Francisco

Indo-Pak series

It is always nice to see two giant teams collide when it comes to watching cricket; and one of the biggest cricketing clashes is the India-Pakistan series. Indians took on the Pakistanis on home soil. The ODI series had six matches, while the Test series had three. The Test series turned out to be a tie (1-1) which was broken in the six one-dayers. Indians won the first two games- two more wins would have given them the series, but they did not succeed. The Pakistanis bounced back to win the series 4-2!

I don't know about others but I consider myself lucky to be able to watch such a series.

Mohammed Fahim Hara
Eskaton Road, Dhaka

Draft resolution against Bangladesh

It was amusing to read from some Bangla newspapers during the last few days that a draft resolution against Bangladesh has been tabled by some MEPs at the European Parliament (EP). It was reportedly formulated at Dhaka. One newspaper clearly identified the



Royal wedding

The recently held royal wedding has united two long time lovers Prince Charles and Camilla Parker. After the wedding, Camilla Parker becomes the Duchess of Cornwall and she will become Queen when Prince Charles takes over as the King of Britain.

Let us hope for the best. My congratulations to Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla.

Prof. M. Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka-1207

opposition activists who during the last three-four months shuttled between Dhaka and Brussels to convince the members of the European Parliament (MEP) to adopt the resolution.

Whether the draft was made at Dhaka, whether the EC delegation in Dhaka supplied any input and whether some MEPs could be convinced into undertaking 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 delegations in Dhaka on this very controversial issue. We are eagerly looking forward to that.

Matiur Rahman
VUB, Brussels

Queen's English

The above captioned letter by Dr Richard Murphy is a refreshing change from the usual run of the mill dry and didactic pieces. However in one point I disagree with him that knowing English is not a prerequisite for success. As a poor and overpopulated country, we have to sell our workers to the outside world. Their poor literacy standard and lack of basic knowledge in English handicap them. The South Indians and Sri Lankans have an edge over us.

Going back to the letter, it is a good example of English sense of humour-- they can crack jokes about themselves and also not sparing the Americans. I do not know whether any other language is such an excellent vehicle of jokes and limericks without which our life, hard as it is-- will be reduced to drudgery.

The Queen's English enriched by so many four-letter words contributed by ancient sea farers and buccaneers help to release pent-up frustration. We must thank Dr Murphy.

Sakhawat Hossain
Gulshan, Dhaka

DU English Department

The English department at DU is one of the places from where a number of students come out every year and they are playing an important role in building our country. This year the number of seats has been increased. I would support it if the department could fulfil the aspirations of the students. Some teachers think that in some classes they cannot teach properly because of the large size of the class.

The classrooms are also small and it is not possible to make sections. So how will it be possible to impart proper education to these students?

Jahid Hasan, DU

Employment in Kuwait

Kuwait has a very good record of paying lucrative salaries to our expatriates. The government needs to investigate the cause of the recent lawlessness taking into account the sensitivities involved, in particular

of those in private employment contracted through our embassy in Kuwait.

Similar problems may be brewing in Lebanon where, reportedly, there is more than 5,000 Bangladeshi expatriates.

AR Shams-ud Doha
Tripoli, Lebanon

Public money

Every day the prime minister and other ministers are visiting different parts of Bangladesh using public money. However, they are using most of their valuable times talking against the so-called conspiracy of the opposition party. According to them the opposition party is creating anarchy in the country and thus is destroying the economy.

Ahmadiyyas are being attacked in different places in Bangladesh. Many people were hurt in the violence unleashed against them. The government seems totally unconcerned about this issue and does not consider these attacks as anarchy. The Ahmadiyya Jamat has claimed that Jamaat-e-Islami, a partner of the ruling coalition, is behind all these attacks.

I am really perplexed when I see the government talking loud against occasional hartal by the opposition, but remaining silent about the attacks on a section of citizens.

Rashed Choudhury
Winnipeg, Canada

Ban student politics

Needless to say, ours is a developing country. Every day people are coming to the capital from villages to find jobs. We need to build more and more profitable sectors and employment. We have to close the non-profitable sectors, those from which we are having no profit. Moreover, some of the enterprises and institutions are a source of drain on our resources.

Student politics is something that can be compared with any losing concern. We are not getting any benefit from it. Good and brilliant students don't do politics nowadays. They find it 'worthless'. Students, who study subjects that have no market value and job warranty, get involved in student politics. Because they know they won't get jobs with good salary. Moreover, they need money for their daily expenses. That's why they resort to politics. Their is no question of ideology (?) here.

I feel sorry for the puppets. When

their Masters will throw them out, the puppets won't find any way back. Political shed does not help every time.

Cantara Wali Rubi, Dhaka

Wail of a son

I would like to thank Molla Mohammad Shaheen for his letter captioned 'Wail of a widow' that was published in the Friday issue of The Daily Star. I completely agree with the author and would like to add the fact that I can realise the anguish and pain of Mrs. Asma Kibria--a widow, Dr. Reza Kibria & his sister- grieved & mortified off springs of the great patriot and former finance minister, SAMS Kibria, who was brutally assassinated. I feel the piercing pain at heart of a son who lost his father as I myself lost my father about 11 months back. Though, my father died a normal death yet I, being the son, feel the loss that's irreparable. In fact, the eternal vacuum the ever-increasing pain can never be appeased and expressed. This great loss can be lessened a bit only through humane gestures from fellow beings. At this point of time, we as a nation feel extremely ashamed and humiliated to become the mere spectators to a heart-rending scene. They are appealing to the government for justice. But nothing has been done so far.

The clouds of doubt obscure the announcement from the government that it was inviting the FBI for the probe. Family members of a high dignitary are helpless and humiliated in their independent motherland.

At this critical juncture, I fervently urge all citizens of the country to stand together to uproot the criminals from our motherland and thus do justice to the Kibria family and the spirit of humanity.

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

Anti-Ahmadiyya campaign

I have a blunt question. What are the organisers of the anti-Ahmadiyya movement likely to gain from the recent violent and virulent attacks? They have the audacity to challenge a democratically elected government. They are holding the police and district administration hostage. These misguided, ill-motivated bigots have created a law and order situation. Like most of the redoubtable Muslim fundamentalist outfits they are 'equipped' with

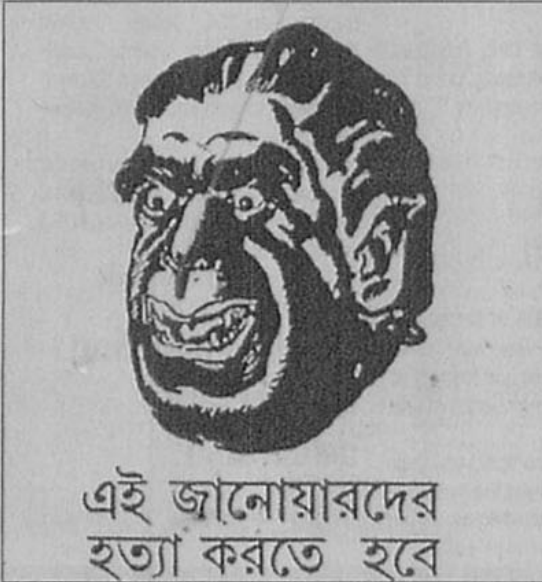
Can you change your history?

If anyone asks this silly question in any civilised society, people would laugh at him. But it is happening here in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh our history is changing every five years! It is strange but true. 1971. The most glorious year of our life. Our war of liberation took place in 1971. We lost a lot but won an independent motherland.

It is our bad luck that we, the young generation, do not know the real history of 1971. In school life I knew something and finally I came to learn that it was not true. So like many others, I am greatly confused.

Textbooks must not change with a change in government.

Sadat Shahriar
EEE, RUET
Rajshahi



এই জানোয়ারদের
হত্যা করতে হবে

