

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Street children's future



My letter is about one of Bangladesh's main problem- "Street children." There has been an alarming rise in the number of street children in the major cities all around Bangladesh. The main reason for this is urban population of Bangladesh which continues to rise alarmingly year after year. The plight of these street children has become a great concern for domestic and international aid agencies.

The rubbish dump that we have in Demra on the east of Dhaka is where one can find most of the street children. The stench that comes from the dump is overwhelming and as one goes nearer one feels like vomiting! It is difficult to believe that anybody can survive in this environment. But every morning groups of children walk across this vast mound of rotting rubbish scavenging for used plastic bottles or similar rubbish. Then they sell these to nearby second hand shops for a small price. Around 20 children or more live in the dump. Most are orphans and some live with their families. They spend their whole day working in the dump looking for rubbish. While working in the streets they are also exposed to all sorts of dangers - from pimps to people involved in criminal activities, and as the numbers rise we are finding it increasingly difficult to help them reach their potential.

The situation here can only improve if the authorities realise that children have a right to be protected. So I fervently request the Bangladesh government and the NGOs in our country to help these children for a better life and a better future.

Labiba Rahman
Dilu Road, Maghbazar
Dhaka

Cultural aggression
One of the various aspects of aggression by the neo-colonists is cultural aggression. When the ex-colonies were becoming independent one by one in the aftermath of the Second World War, the neo-colonists accepted the policy of cultural aggression as one of the tactics to remain/sustain their influence and market. Specifically, after being defeated in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Mozambique etc, the neo-colonialists became sure that at present it is very difficult to win by dint of military might alone against a nation. Rather, it is easier to weaken and bring under control the nation by destroying its culture. So they infuse into the LDCs sexual perversion, drug-addiction, pornography and porno-films, mentality to depend on the neo-colonialists, brain-wash intellectuals etc. They try to divert the people of LDCs, especially to keep away the young minds from revolution or any change in life. The cultural aggressors think that preventive power of nation will certainly be destroyed, if its culture is destroyed.

Now, the readers! Let us be conscious about our future and present day practices. What are we doing, where are we going? Our youngsters are being misled, but we aren't protecting them! Cyber sex culture has already occupied the young minds. Many incidents of making porno film by cheating girl-friends are reported by the newspapers. The days aren't far away when our children will take their sex partners inside our home and introduce them to us, like they do in the western world.

Engr. Mohammad Ariful Islam
Ramdebpur, Tangail

Reporting on ministries

We are disappointed to have observed that so far all the reporting about the performance of the different ministries in the last 4 years of the present government has been negative. It's not all that bad. The way all these reporters have written simply suggests that they are not objective. There are a lot of good work done by the present government which your reporters and columnists do not appear to have recognised. For example, LGED's sanitation campaign, allocation of funds for Union Parishad, appointment of graduate UP secretaries, Education ministry's anti copying campaign, Environment ministry's anti pollution campaign, Drive against food adulteration, Home Ministry's anti terrorism campaign etc should have received due coverage.

I must also say that medical treatment and care at the hospital was very good. No wonder I find patients from all over the world at this hospital. As for me, after a two-hour flight from Dhaka or Chittagong, I find a totally different world of kindness and care and at a very moderate charge as compared to Bangladesh and the outside world.

I would like to draw, if I may, attention of the Highest Medical Authorities in Bangladesh to find out why in spite of so many thou-

should also be projected. I don't belong to any political group but will definitely vouch that the government of Begum Khaleda Zia is much more committed and more result-oriented than any other government in the past. There are of course a few failures but given our socio-political environment, I suppose the present government's performance is not bad. Small wonder, the finance minister is very vocal about the media reporting!

NZ Khan, Dhanmondi

Footbridge photo

The lead photo of The Daily Star's October 21 issue on the hole in Jatrabari metallic footbridge was a very catchy one. Sincerely speaking, from the first bird's eye view to the picture I apprehended that it was some toy-car near the feet of some minors, then I quickly discovered that it's a death hole for any bridge user.

The area and shape of the hole indicate that it didn't come into being in a few days. Now, will the Dhaka City Corporation discover something from the snap? The hole does not only need to be plugged properly, but also it has to be investigated why and how the hole was created in the thick sheet of metal.

I thank the DS for bringing the matter into public glare.

Saifuddin Ahmad
North Badda, Dhaka

Submarine Cable

I'm from Canada. Now I'm studying at the University of Toronto. I'm a regular reader of The Daily Star. But I've not seen any report on the progress of Submarine Cable for months.

I want to know about the progress of this project. So please publish a report on Submarine Cable project and let us know the progress of Bangladesh's gateway to the information highway.

Adnan Imtiaz Ahmed
One-mail

Reporting on ministries

I live in Chittagong and was very ill before I flew to Bangkok for a medical checkup on 17th September, 2005. Within hours of my arrival in Bangkok, I had to undergo a major surgery despite my Heart bypass surgery in London in 1989. Surgeons convinced me that there was no way out but to do the surgery to save my life. By the grace of the Almighty, the surgery was a success. I must say, the surgeons did an excellent job. After almost a month of my treatment and convalescing period, I returned home on 16th October.

I must also say that medical treatment and care at the hospital was very good. No wonder I find patients from all over the world at this hospital. As for me, after a two-hour flight from Dhaka or Chittagong, I find a totally different world of kindness and care and at a very moderate charge as compared to Bangladesh and the outside world.

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WHY OIL PRICE HIKE?

We are told and consoled by our authorities concerned that the prices of fuel petrol, diesel, kerosene and octane have been raised proportionately to the international prices of oil.

Indeed we do not produce petrol, octane, diesel and kerosene and so we import oil from abroad, especially from Middle Eastern Arab countries at an exorbitant price to meet our requirements.

Is it not true that our government has raised the prices of imported oil due to pressure and instruction of the World Bank and the IMF?

Undoubtedly, we import goods, commodities and oil at a higher cost due to various reasons. But what about the prices of our own home made/produced/available goods, commodities and natural resources which we need not import?

Do we require any instruction or dictation from the World Bank or the IMF to fix, increase or decrease the prices of our own goods /commodities / natural resources/ground water and natural gas?

If our government can



sands of clinics and hospitals in the country, patients still come out of Bangladesh to India, Bangkok, and Singapore for medical attention. What are these Doctors/Specialists/

Surgeons doing at the top well known medical centres, clinics and hospitals in the country? Isn't it a shame and a disgrace? It is time the government looked into the matter

Sachin Dev Burman

October 01 marked the 100th birth anniversary of one of the greatest musicians of modern times, Sachin Dev Burman. Scion of the princely family of Tripura, Sachin Dev Burman popularly known as Sachin Karta amongst the Bengalees and SD Burman in the Bombay film circuit, he developed the art of singing and composing songs which until today remains inimitable. His music breathes of fresh born flowers, his songs nestling places of whistling birds, tinkling bells and sobbing flutes. His orchestral creations contain both lyric and epic sweeps of design blended in such rare harmony which only a composite genius like him was capable of doing. Whether it is Lalmonirhat in Bangladesh or Lahore in Pakistan, his music continues to capture the hearts of old and new, despite the fact he left for heavenly abode thirty years ago.

This great man was born in Comilla and lived there until he left for Calcutta for university studies. Here, at Comilla, he and Narzul Islam shared moments of exclusivity to search for resources to create some of the finest Bangla songs. The building where Sachin Karta lived with his father Nawadip Chandra Burman still stands at Chartha Comilla, but alas breaking down, dilapidated, uncared for. And to make things worse, there is a government hatchery functioning in that compound.

Could we request the government to take over the building and declare it as a national heritage and name the Chartha street as Sachin Dev Burman Road. How can we ever forget the man behind "Rangila Rangila Rangila Re", "Nishithey Jaiyo Phulobone", "Baje Tak Dum Tak Dum", "Mono Dilo Na Bodhu" or for that matter the Hindi songs "Thandi Hawaye", "Khoya Khoya Chand", "Dil Dhal Jayen", "Roop Tera Mastana" and so many others in Bangla and Hindi. Is it too much for that much?

Saiq'a Shabnam
Dootabash Road, Baridhara, Dhaka-1212



SACHIN DEV BURMAN

for the government agencies. It's disheartening to see that a democratically elected government delays a proceeding as important as this.

Maksood Mohiuddin
MBA, University of Georgia
GA, USA

Violence in DU campus

Violence on campus creates panic among the students of Dhaka University. The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and The Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) were involved in a serious fight recently. The situation must change for the benefit of general students.

Taslim Hasan
BBA in Finance
University of Dhaka

Corruption in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has ranked first for the fifth consecutive time in the global corruption rankings published by the Berlin based Transparency International. Even though I have serious doubt about the merit of this kind of rankings, there might be some substance in this ranking to indicate the widespread prevalence of corruption in Bangladesh. It's a known fact among citizens of Bangladesh that most of the government agencies in the country are corrupt, and the Transparency International report strengthens that conviction.

Is there no justice in this country? Is it a crime to be born poor and not to be born into an influential family? How many more innocent children like Amina will be snatched away ruthlessly from their dear ones, and how many more criminals will still stay at large to commit more such heinous crimes?

Oeshwik Ahmed
Lalmatia, Dhaka

Gulshan Park

The residents of Gulshan-1 were deprived of an open space or a park where the locals could stroll with their families and children. The unauthorised occupants of the DCC, including the sweepers kept the only park of Gulshan-1 (previously known as Children's Park) under their occupancy till very recently. Thanks to the members of the Gulshan Society under the proficient and capable leadership of its president and the relentless support and co-operation of local residents, the park is being finally restored and rebuilt with the helping hand of Rajuk. During the seventies and early eighties this park had its lovely lush greenery, a playground for children and some slides and swings where children could be entertained for hours in the afternoon or evening. There was a nice road that led to the other side of the park. For those of us who preferred to walk, there was a track which led to its surrounding garden. A little closer one could see rows of benches. Both at day and night these were occupied by people and couples. The park was a beautiful place with some large trees with a background that overlooked the Gulshan Lake. It gave an atmosphere of tranquility and serenity. But this park was ruthlessly turned into a haven of criminals and drug addicts. The trees were mercilessly cut down by some unauthorised people who turned it into a polluted and incapacitated, cramped, filthy slum.

Kudos to the Mayor who extended all possible help to refurbish it for those who deserve it most. It is taking the shape of a tranquil place once again to be filled with peace that once prevailed here.

No physical force was applied to evict the unauthorised occupants which is unprecedented in Dhaka and it was an endeavour of many.

Tajul Islam, Gulshan-1

Biman's mismanagement



It is embarrassing to read in The Daily Star of October 22, 2005 that Biman could not operate their domestic flights as Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has refused to supply them the jet fuel as Biman owes hundreds of crores of taka in arrears to BPC. In the recent past, lot of anomalies have been reported in different newspapers highlighting Biman's mismanagement, unionism, corruption, tender manipulation and many more such things. Despite all these serious allegations and the mobile being a symbol of it and, also, T&T's inefficiency and inability to provide land phones to all applicants. Despite its widest expansion our government how-

these ills. In the absence of proper expertise and strict guidelines, Biman is now in a mess and a burden for the nation. Let us compare Biman with Emirates. One will be surprised to know that Emirates started its journey only in 1985, and today the airline has a fleet of 50 aircrafts. Moreover, in the recently concluded Paris Air Show, Emirates has placed an order worth 19 billions of dollars for purchasing different types of new aircrafts. As for Biman, no comments!

Humayun Hyder
Zigatola
Dhaka