

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.

Buy Bangladeshi products



I am appealing to all from thousands of miles away to buy Bangladeshi products when you go shopping. This will save our hard earned foreign currency and create jobs in local industries. You may not see the benefits right

away but it has long term implications which a country like India is enjoying now—within a short time we may see them in the position of a superpower but this fortune has not come to them very easily - only with their deter-

mination and belief in themselves.

So let us also embark on a self-improvement path and feel proud of ourselves as well.

K. Naser

Somerset, New Jersey, USA

NGOs and corruption

We have recently been regaled with the spectacle of one NGO calling the rest 'corrupt' and exempting itself from the accusation!

This would all have been benign entertainment had it not been for the research done by Dr. Abdul Barakat that revealed that only 25% of donor money reaches the poor! Iftekhar Sayeed

Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Power ministry's power

Shahar Khan's report (Oct.3) gives the pen picture of how the bureaucrats milk the various power companies. May be that is the main reason for their interest in having different companies as a spoke screen; basically for satisfying their greed for more management clout and a wide range of perquisites. They simply love their multiple roles.

They love their multiple roles to get benefits like public paid transports for their extended families among others; all at the cost of different power companies!

I wonder if the proposed decentralisation proposal will ever see the light of day; given their mastery in 'Yes Minister' type of official run-around that can carry on for months if not years, till the proposal is edited, modified and trimmed to suite their needs! The

trip to the legal ministry is the first step in the stonewalling tactics that has just started! After all, give the devil his due; our bureaucrats are the successors of the cunning (erstwhile) Charidikay Shamlatay Pari (CSP); file and table knights famed for their art of procrastination! The government is a nebulous body full up to the brim with bureaucratic maggots; where ministers and advisers are but fleeting transit passengers; in today, gone tomorrow!

If, as Khan suggests, we have an outside Board of Directors, having Chairman and Managing Director, with total authority and responsibility.

They should not come from the current crop of serving bureaucrats. If they all are people of proven integrity and honesty; then may be things can improve. Who knows the bureaucrats will then create all bottlenecks and block any and all progress by whispering to the Ministers or Advisers. They have through their long hands-on (or lip-to-ear) experience; mastered this art of whispering!

A retired engineer, Dhaka

Truth commission

No doubt truth is stranger than fiction. We are a nation where most of our people who can influence others are corrupt. Common people are the ultimate victims. We can find corrupt people in every sphere

of our populace. But can a truth commission cure this infectious disease? Perhaps not, unless we install a functional system in the society to combat corruption relentlessly. Does it mean that we don't need such a commission? Definitely we need a truth commission for our politicians, where they will make confession and rectify themselves. They will have to make commitments like:

- a) They will join politics as a sense of responsibility to the nation, not as a profiteering venture.
- b) They will not try to cling to power in an immoral manner.
- c) They will not compromise their declared policies only to grab power.
- d) Money and muscle will not be the determining factor in politics.
- e) They will remain united when national interest is in jeopardy and so on.

Businessmen are professional people. Corruption among them like any other professionals should be dealt with legally. ACC and NBR are sufficient to deal with them. Truth commission is much a bigger concept and should only be used for national reconciliation.

M. Sanaul Huq
Uttara, Dhaka

Mobile users

At present mobile is an important device (except some bad aspects) to communicate with each other. It has made our life easy. For this reason, the number of users is increasing rapidly. So any deal between mobile operators and users is to be fair and square. But in some cases users have to pay more than what is due. For example, we have to pay at least one extra taka in case of recharging. It is also applicable for purchasing card of that amount. My question is why shall we spend our hard earned money without getting due value?

Can you imagine the total amount spent for nothing? It occurs every day, twenty four hours!

Nayanabhiram Das

Nimtoli, Chankharpul,

Dhaka-1000

The blame game

Mr. Badrul Ahsan, the eminent columnist and one of the finest political analysts, in his column on August 21 referred to Law Advisor Mr. Mainul Hossain's reported complaint that the economists of the country did not give them appropriate and necessary suggestions for economic management. Why the Law Advisor makes such complaints since the Chief Adviser himself as well as the Finance Adviser are all economists. It reminds me of the line by the private secretary to the Prime Minister, Bernard, in the famous popular British series, Yes, Prime Minister. (The book itself is equally absorbing to read). In the episode, the PM was mentioning to Bernard about economic ills and failure of Sir Humphrey, the Cabinet Secretary, to come up with any recommendation to solve the problems of economic ills, while Bernard quipped, 'It is all the more difficult for Sir Humphrey since he is also an economist'. We need not say anymore.

A reader
Banani, Dhaka

Setting the record right

I saw a news item in your daily

paper of Aug 16 entitled "Remembering Palmer" on the sports page. Mr. Hubert Arun Rozario in this article gave the news of Mr. Francis Donald Palmer passing away on Aug 8, 2007 in California. Mr. Rozario then went on to reminisce about him and ascribed some of his sporting achievements which in some ways were very incorrect. Mr. Rozario, of course out of his friend or colleague's admiration and his good will wrote, "Francis Palmer captained the first East Pakistan Provincial basketball team" He also wrote, "In 1960, Brother Thomas popularised basketball in East Pakistan."

For the sake of informing your readers, I have to correct some of these wrong information given by Mr. Rozario. The first captain of the then East Pakistan basketball team, which participated in the Pakistan National Olympic Games held at Peshawar in the year 1958, was a young man named Rashiduddin Ahmed, now most famous and internationally reputed neurosurgeon Professor Rashiduddin Ahmed. He was at that time a student of 3rd year at Dhaka Medical College. This is known to sports organisers of that time and can be found in the file records of the East Pakistan Sports Federation, Pakistan Olympic Committee's records and in the records of world Olympic Committee. The Vice Captain of that team was my good friend Shamsul Alam now settled in the USA. Francis Palmer was not even a player of that team. Amongst the team members were late Mr. Anwar who later became a painter and teacher at the National Art Institute, and myself among others.

In addition, I would like to add that as a result of his performance in that Olympic, Prof. Rashiduddin Ahmad was selected for the Pakistan National Team and was called for training in Quetta in 1960 for preparation for the Asian Olympic games held in Tokyo in 1960. But Prof. Rashid's father didn't allow him to go because he was taking the Final MBBS examination in the same year of 1960. We all know all these very well because we were all (including Francis Palmer) students of St Gregory's High School, and it is true we all played together with Brother Thomas and he was our mentor and coach for Basketball. But the dates were not right. It was not the 1960's but early 50's.

I would like to add a bit more by pointing out that the first Basketball League of Dhaka was started by us, organised by the same persons mentioned above and Mr. Masudur Rahman who was initially a football organiser, was the senior person who patronised and helped us in the organisational matters.

I would like to end by saying that Prof. Rashiduddin Ahmad was President of Basketball Federation in the 1990's onwards for more than ten years, and also had captained the Bangladesh Davis Cup Team (Tennis) in the past, as Acting President and Senior Vice President for a while.

Rashiduddin Ahmad

An Ex-Senior Vice President of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board,

and General Secretary of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board

Simplify banking procedures

Recently, I went to a local NCB for a pay order. While I was waiting, a woman came to the same officer to open a new account with duly completed application form (filled by someone else, signed by her) with introduction from another account holder. After checking the application form thoroughly the officer gave her 2 more forms (1) transaction profile (2) know your customer (KYC)-for filling. The woman, not educated enough, was baffled and requested the officer for help who bluntly refused. The woman then protested saying he could give these forms with the application form so that she could arrange to fill them up by her relative. Then, I offered to help her and while filling these forms, I understood that her brother had recently gone to Dubai and would send Tk 25000-30000 pm for family expense. I wonder, why could not this system be simplified for a small account opener by single statement that "transaction will not exceed (say) Tk. 7 lakh pm." in the application form instead of filling 2 additional forms. In this context, I am not so sure, how far these 2 forms are effective to stop or detect the funding of extremists or terrorists as evident from newspaper reports of confessions of Bangla Bhai and Abdur Rahman, or corrupt transactions by ex-ministers and politicians.

Kamal Ahmed
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Road 15, Gulshan 1, Dhaka-1212.

Crimes

There has definitely been an improvement in the crime situation. But still the law enforcers have

to go a long way to ensure the safety of citizens.

The CTG should not lose sight of its goal.

A reader
Dhaka

Motorbikes on footpath

Everywhere a footpath is only meant for the use and convenience of pedestrians, and not for any type of wheeled transport. However, sadly it is observed that motorbike riders come to the front of cars and buses waiting for traffic light at busy intersections, drive onto the footpaths to take an illegal shortcut and come in front of the traffic lights. Sometimes a few cyclists also do it, but rarely. Mostly they push the cycles while walking alongside, which is not so objectionable. But the motorbike riders do it in a reckless and frightening manner.

It is shocking to elderly people walking sedately on footpaths to have

rash motorcyclists coming from behind and zooming past with a loud roar of poorly silenced engines. Sometimes you are so shocked that for a few

seconds forgetting literally stops, while the motorbike rider is gone!

This unhealthy activity is potentially dangerous-- a serious accident or heart attack of the pedestrian can happen anytime. Traffic rules do not allow any wheeled vehicle to drive on footpaths, and it is a punishable offence. In Bangladesh, however, no one bothers and we have no respect for public norms and behaviour. Such loutish behaviour is possibly taken for granted. In any civilised country, such an act will lead the person to arrest and jail. Our traffic police should put a stop to this dangerous and uncivil habit of illegally riding on footpaths. Offenders should be given the maximum punishment; their driving license must be cancelled and the motorbikes impounded and its registration papers confiscated and forwarded to the court for appropriate legal action.

Such actions, if taken in prominent and crowded road crossings with footpaths at Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani and other locations, will put a stop to this illegal violation of traffic rules. Further, it will discourage potential highjackers. Normally, people will move out of their way of a roaring motorbike even if it is escaping from a scene of crime! Can the traffic police authorities take the strict measures for some days after regular random intervals?

Personally, one would not mind street hawkers or fruit sellers selling their commodities on footpath. That is nothing compared to a roaring motorbike coming from behind and driving past you on the footpath; when you least expect it. Only Allah knows how many heart attacks it may have precipitated to the elderly: officially they died of heart failure without the underlying cause ever being identified!

This uncivil activity is carried out by the so-called better off people, at least those who can afford a motorbike!

S.A. Mansoor

Dhaka

Pacu and Piranha

These days a debate is taking place in the electronic media and print media regarding Pacu fish or Thai Rupchanda, which has wrongly been identified as Piranha.

Very naturally, we don't have knowledge about the new fish Pacu. Pacu and Piranha are different types of fish and bear different characteristics. Like Ruhee and Gojal (Carp fish).

Red-bellied Pacu's scientific name is Colossoma brachypomum and Piranha's scientific name is Oostariophis.

Pacu is mainly herbivorous and Piranha is a carnivore.

Pacu is very soft and harmless, whereas Piranha is very aggressive and harmful.

Pacu is a very delicious fish and profitable to cultivate.

The objective of raising this issue is that the present government is trying to assuage the fear among the businessmen, but some unscrupulous elements are trying to spread it.

My question to the authorities is: who are these people? What are their motives? Who are working from behind the scene? Why are they trying to malign Pacu?

Francis Halder

East Rajabazar

Dhaka

Job opportunity in Canada

Canada is the largest country in the world. It is one of the prime western nations for immigrants. The Canadian province of Alberta is currently looking for skilled and unskilled workers to meet the labour shortage largely driven by

Gordon Brown's 100 days

As Hollywood or Bollywood people do, if one evaluates the 100 days of British Premier Gordon Brown, the scenario is not quite impressive for him, though his Labour Party seems to be better placed than the Conservatives compared to the final days of Tony Blair.

Brown might have been surprised by the succession of crises that greeted his first days in 10 Downing Street. Failed terrorist attacks in Glasgow and London were followed by flooding across much of England. The so-called "terror attack" has certainly, as expected, enhanced the chances of Labour to outsmart the Conservatives when the polls take place.

Voters also seemed quite content, with a "Brown bounce" in the opinion polls still evident after 100 days. The Independent noted: "To have dissociated himself in 100 days from 10 years of government and to present himself as the candidate for change is an astonishing achievement." The Labour-supporting Daily Mirror gave the prime minister a school-type report. In the Evening Standard, Tom Bower, author of a less than flattering biography of Brown, said of the new PM: "Confounding his critics and defying his own character, Gordon Brown has, in fewer than 100 days, proved to be a vote-winner. Criticism of aspects of Brown's performance as prime minister was not hard to find."

Before he became prime minister, the media wondered how the less charismatic - some said "dour" - Brown could follow Blair, a consummate political showman. In office, the new PM made efforts to distinguish himself from his predecessor with a number of announcements, such as reviews of cannabis laws and the government's "super-casino" plan. Brown also invited Tory and Lib Dem politicians to advise him and even some non-Labour figures into ministerial jobs, repeatedly calling for a government "of all the tal-



ents". But positive opinion polls - showing a so-called "Brown bounce" - led to fevered speculation about a snap general election, which the prime minister did little to quell. In opinion polls he was awarded an A+ in crisis management, but only a C grade for his handling of environmental issues. Speculation is continuing to mount that Gordon Brown would like to reap the harvest right now as his image has improved slightly and therefore will call a November general election next week.

Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal

Freelance Writer, Delhi

the oil and gas reserves. Every year over 90,000 foreign workers enter Canada working temporarily to help Canadian employers. Alberta is on the top of the list of locations with economic boom. For additional information visit: http://www.alberta-canada.com/immigration/alberta-immigration/promotion/files/pdf/hiring_fw_alberta.pdf.

Several foreign recruiters, are involved in recruiting foreign nationals. The following Website is an example of such a recruiter: <http://www.unisonhr.com/contact-us.htm> Considering the current unemployment rate in the country I am writing this note to encourage the people of Bangladesh to consider this as an opportunity to enhance their skill through foreign employment. Personally, I am not advocating for any specific company or sector. This is just to notify

the educated or otherwise skilled young generation about the opportunity available in Canada. I was born and brought up in Bangladesh and is currently residing in the United States.

Chances of coming to the United States under the skilled labour category are very slim. Since Alberta is facing labour shortage in various sectors, people of Bangladesh may consider this as an opportunity to move forward with their skill. I know the economic frustration of the young generation in Bangladesh. If you want to learn more, simply go to <http://google.com> and use "Alberta employment" or "Alberta Immigration" or "Alberta recruiters" as key words. I hope this information will help our young generation.

Shameema Rahman
One-mail

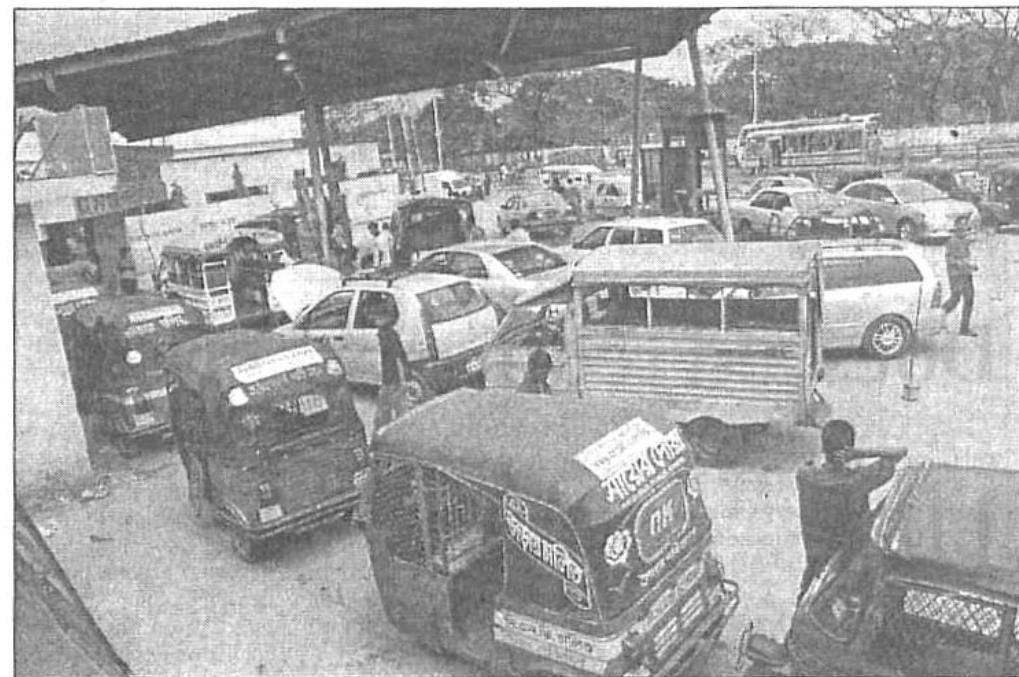
Bangladesh cricket team

We have been playing cricket for the last forty years or so. Test cricket for around ten years. It is quite natural that once in a while we would win a match. Whenever we win a match, the media blows it out of proportion and start using words like Greatest Hero, Mahanayak etc. I think this kind of euphoria spoils the boys. And again when we lose (which is the normal regular thing we do), we say we are learning, I think we should put a stop to this kind of exuberance and excuses. Encourage the boys, but don't spoil them. They lose their head and think themselves as 'Ami ki Honour'.

And for God's sake, do not humiliate the noble animal by calling them Tigers. Just refer to them as Bangladesh cricket team.

Faria Hossain

Banani, Dhaka



Taxi, scooter drivers

Taxi cab/CNG scooter drivers continue to undermine and defy government orders and instructions.

Whenever approached by the commuters for going on hire to any destination short, middle or long distance some unscrupulous taxi/scooter drivers come out with peculiar, amazing and objectionable statements, pretense, pretext, arguments and lies and they become aggressive and flatly refuse to go on hire and on meter fare.

This results in wastage of time, energy and money and the sufferings of the members of the public know no bounds.

Bad habits die hard. How can we take care of, handle, rectify and tame the crude and unscrupulous taxi/scooter drivers?

We suggest the following measures:-

1. We need a close and friendly relation, coordination, help and cooperation among the members of the public and traffic police and police constables patrolling the roads and streets.
2. Before approaching any taxi/scooter driver for hire of the vehicle the commuters may note down the vehicle number first. If the taxi/scooter driver behaves well it is good. If

not, the passenger may make a verbal complaint to his/her nearest available traffic police sergeant or police constable.

3. The traffic police sergeant or the police constable may give on the spot order to the taxi scooter driver to go with the passenger, if not the traffic police may seize the driving license of the taxi/scooter driver.

4. If necessary the traffic policemen may write down the name and address of the driver or the vehicle number and refer the complaint/matter to the DMP Headquarters for disciplinary action. A small chit/receipt of the complaint/matter may be handed over to the concerned passenger.

5. For security, safety and various other reasons the taxi/scooter drivers should always display the vehicle number and the name and address of the owner of the vehicle in a metal plate inside the vehicle permanently fixed in front of the seat of the passengers.

Would the IGP, DMP, traffic sergeants kindly consider and implement the above suggestions in the interest of public service?

OH Kabir

6, Hare Street, Dhaka

