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# Vibrant campus



After the prolonged closure of the universities the news of the opening of them has certainly brought a great sigh of relief to the students in general.

It is a right move made by the authorities concerned to let the university students pursue and complete their studies on time and thus enter the next challenging phase in life that we call "doing job".

It is only thus a student/ citizen can contribute to the nation as well as his/her family. Hence, a proper education accomplished on time is a must on the part of the students to achieve the goal that they have set so fondly. Unfortunately enough, our higher studies pursuing students have been falling victim, every now and then, to the inter-

ests of the vested quarters.

Now that the varsities are opening after a long closure, we all should try our best to ensure an uninterrupted education for the students. Let our students enjoy their basic right to pursue education in a congenial atmosphere.

Rafiqul Islam Rime  
Agrabad, Chittagong

that is why we are approaching you through this letter. Justice Must Prevail.

We are looking forward to seeing all the Bangladeshi newspapers playing an active role and prove it again that our newspapers always stand by the under-privileged people.

Abdullah Al Mahbub  
University of Canberra

## Post-partition trauma

The countries in the region are still suffering from the after-effects of the partition in 1947.

The birth of Bangladesh [1971] came only one generation after the creation of artificial division [1947] on the basis of religious exploitation. Not supported by history, as the Mughal Muslims from abroad ruled Hindu India for five centuries and developed the country to a sizable extent. Explain the easy spread of Buddhism.

There is a catch in the outward religious practices by people of various faiths; remembering that there is only one Supreme Creator. The message, the path, and the goals are one and the same: but there are varieties in the medium (the bus and the passenger). What is the difference between faith and religion? How a baby develops empathy with the mother (and vice versa)? No tutorial!

Define message and the medium in religious practices. This point (difference) is not being covered adequately in the sermons we hear today by pious, cosmetic religious leaders. In Buddhism, I noted rather late in life, that there was no mention of any Creator—only the eight paths were elaborated. Islam has been simplified to elaborate rituals for easy remembrance of the Lord, any time, anywhere. So, why fight over a single, universal goal? That is the game: there is variety in life; the difference amongst each of the six billion humans is only 0.1 per cent—99.9 per cent we all are same (DNA)!

The problem is with the tool used by a human being: the head (logic), or the heart (faith). The other is economic exploitation. The tool used for these modern distractions is political governance (a human invention).

Military might cannot solve the problems of humanity (Iraq, Afghanistan, Taliban, al-Qaeda; the greed for energy resources). The political instabilities in South Asia are being eyed by Western colonialists. SAARC (and OIC) are stillborn—no unity and huge communication gaps. Who are the culprits pulling the strings?

We have to get out of the trap and vicious circle.

A Mahasen, Dhaka

## Separation of Judiciary

I am quite astonished to not find any letter on above subject, today! My intolerable painful voice is unlikely to touch the general mind! But I am happy, the authorities have raised their voice in favour of separating the Judiciary from the Executive (source: 23rd September, The Daily Star). Though the matter has been stirring for quite a long time, I express my gratefulness and salute the authorities for passing the order! I fervently welcome the government's willingness and the firmness of the Supreme Court.

Today, there is news, "Separation of Judiciary won't affect Admin Officials"; a comment by Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA). For God's sake, don't withdraw the decision; let something better happen in our country.

Dr. Lailun Nahar  
Shamoly, Dhaka

## Blacklaw

Possibly in the history of Bangladesh, the most abused law is the Special Powers Act, 1974. We saw that government officers were making the party-in-power happy by putting opposition members in jail.

If the reports in the newspapers are correct, then the deputy commissioners will continue this practice, even after the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive. After all, their job is to keep the government happy!

Now can anybody tell how the common people of Bangladesh will be benefited by this separation of the Judiciary?

Md Halmusshan  
Sydney, Australia

## Good supplement

On the eve of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations, DS presented us an Eid special supplement which had 14 good and interesting short stories.

I have gone through each story line by line. I have enjoyed those stories very much. All the stories are heart-breaking. Among those, the most attractive tale written by Rashida Sultana titled "The story of Sharfuddin and his powerful relatives" is translated by Mamun Gaurob. Special thanks to Rashida Sultana. I also convey my warm greetings to Mr. Khademul Islam, Star Literature Editor, for his com-

mendable work. I expect more such special supplements from him on every occasion in future.

Md. Golam Mostafa  
Executive Officer  
Prime Bank Ltd  
Uttara Branch  
Dhaka

## Young writers

I think your supplement, Rising Stars, is a wonderful platform for Bangladeshi youth to write and have their voices heard. It is also a good opportunity for our youth to have a first-hand experience in publishing their write-ups.

Most of the writers in Rising Stars are adolescents, and it is clear that many of these young writers are still trying to understand the world around them. They all have young, impressionable minds. They are susceptible to many ideas which may be misguided or politically incorrect.

I am appalled by the sentiments conveyed in the most recent issue of Rising Stars. I have noticed this sort of sentiment conveyed among one or two other Rising Stars writers in the past. While the reason for their homophobia is not quite clear to me, I feel that as a reputable daily newspaper it is The Daily Star's responsibility to not publish these potentially harmful views. Due to the lack of sexual health education in Bangladeshi schools, many adolescents do not have the opportunity to have many of their questions answered, be they related to sexual orientation or other more general questions.

Bangladeshi youth have a particular view of what is "normal" in the realm of love and sex, and anything outside it is strange, unacceptable or something to be ridiculed. In striving to create a more enlightened and tolerant society, I wish you would not have these ideas explored in print (at risk of further marginalising an already

marginalised group) but instead provide your writers with the opportunity to have their questions and concerns answered in other ways.

S.H. Seraj  
Dhaka

## Jamaat claims

Please publish the truth about what the Jamaat did during the war of independence. It is truly insulting for the people who sacrificed so much and for their family to still suffer three decades later.

Please encourage all the media organisations to oppose them, so we can officially identify the culprits. We need more of this information to be provided so that Bangladesh does not become another Afghanistan.

I fear this is what Bangladesh will become, if people do not wake up to the reality of the present situation.

Karim  
One-mail

## Nirjhor's "Aha"

I read the article written by Mr. Mamun Rashid published in your daily on 26 October 2007.

Like Mr. Mamun Rashid, we went to watch the movie with high hopes of enjoying a decent Bangla movie. Our hopes were completely dashed.

The holiday mood with extended family members and a packed auditorium provided us the right ambience to wait for a little longer than schedule in front of the silver screen. The much publicised information about the film, the eminent producer, director and the caste created a sense of belief amongst us that the time has turned around to go back to the movie houses for good films. Unfortunately, we were frustrated.

In my opinion, the conscientious makers of the film should have included a warning that it

contained abusive language and adult materials that may be offensive to the young audience. I accept that old Dhakaites make a profuse use of slangs in their arguments and the street kids often resort to violence but one would say that the degree used in the film has been excessive. I also don't accept the fact that the friend of a couple offers a condom on their first date. Neither do I accept that a person of good moral character makes advances towards his cousin when they go out on 'sight seeing'. Perversion has been rampantly used throughout the film. A serious subject like real estate development on an ancestral property has been portrayed through clownish dialogues from beginning to the end. It is also not clear to me what happened at the end; it was abrupt and unrealistic that a caring and good father forces away her daughter on grounds of her unproven commitment for an elderly neighbour.

The most pathetic mistreatment done in the film is Fahmida Nabi's title song flowing over as a number for the interval. I felt helplessly disgusted. I wish the illustrious makers of the film consider these points and do the necessary amendments to reconfirm our belief that a wind of change has set in our movie industry.

Majedur Rahman  
Charukanta  
Gulshan, Dhaka

## AL and BNP

Both the party chiefs are detained on corruption charges. Both the parties were going to reform. Now both the parties and their *chanchas* are telling the people that reformers are conspirators! They (reformers) are conspiring against our leaders.

Ridiculous!  
Sumon Dutta  
One-mail

# Addiction redefined

Smoking cigarettes and taking drugs are two kinds of addiction but there are many more. Despite this fact, most of the people associate only drugs and tobacco with addiction which is not completely true.

Now if you recall, addiction means devoting more time to something amusing. I personally feel that there is an optimum time allocated for any work. If the work exceeds the time, then it can be termed as addiction to that work. But there is an exception. Many workers in this country are working their designated hours and also overtime not for their addiction to their work but to earn additional money as the total burden fall on them to look after their families.

Another important point is that it is incorrect to use only the word 'addicted'. The right English usage is 'addicted to something'. One more valuable fact that we all know is 'time is money'. So, addiction is not only limited to time but also money. Thus, if anyone spends on a particular item more than is required then he is also addicted to that. Similarly, if less money is spent on cigarettes, then it has nothing to do with addiction.

Nowadays, young generations are attracted to video games. Game developers are trying to design upgraded things in their games in order to entice the teenagers and young people and make millions out of their addiction to games. There are many drawbacks involved in playing games like blurred vision, back pain and muscular exhaustion in hand caused by pressing controller's button overmuch. Although, some game developers have given health warnings at the back of the game cover, but most gamers tend to ignore it. Likewise, watching serials and shows hour after hour have the same effects. Moreover, children sacrifice their study time to play games which will have a dreadful consequence in the future. Aren't these things quite close to consuming cigarettes and drugs?

As a matter of fact, any work done disproportionately is not good and has long term impacts.

Md. Sakib Niaz  
Malibagh, Dhaka



## A tragic death

People of Chunarji should not forget that Bangladesh hasn't changed overnight (A fitting tribute to Architect Jewel who was attacked by hijackers in Chittagong and eventually lost his life).

Jewel bhai completed his B. Architecture from BUET last year and was a student of Chittagong Government High School and Foudzerhat Cadet College. He hailed from Chunarji, a prominent village in Lohagara, Chittagong.

Chunarji people should not forget the bigger picture. How will we go about channeling this grief into something substantial from the trauma that Jewel bhai's tragic and premature death caused?

We can just hope and pray that it won't happen to someone else tomorrow, but the reality is these culprits will be doing this routinely. It's the only avenue they know.

What should we do?  
Ghalib Intiyaz  
Software Engineer  
NSW Government Sydney

## Truth Commission

I refer to PCP article (21.07) by the former president HM Ershad on this as well as some other articles and opinions. It's quite obvious that the term 'Truth Commission' was an unfortunate misnomer and thus drawing huge criticism.

We all want these matters to be dealt within the law of the land, perhaps a better term would have been a 'Plea Bargaining Tribunal' rather than a 'Truth Commission'.

Pleading guilty and confessing to one's crimes is admissible in law of every country as is the practice of encouraging such confessions by 'plea bargaining' and thus saving much time and expense for the judicial system.

Perhaps the Adviser concerned may clarify the term in this accepted legal context to subdue the uproar.

Engineer Shafi Ahmed  
London, UK

## Assistant commissioner not magistrate

Syed Badrul Ahsan mentioned Rokonuddoulah's designation as magistrate in "The state, the law and the absurd" (Wednesday, October 24, 2007). There is no such designation as magistrate, Mr. Rokonuddoulah is an assistant commissioner. An assistant commissioner was allowed to exercise magistracy powers. Similarly, the so called 'Jela Proshasok' is actually deputy commissioner.

Saif  
Dhaka

## Sufferings of retired govt servants

Most of the retired govt servants nowadays sell out their pension to the govt and invest the sale proceeds in National Savings Bureau under the NBR. They somehow manage their retired life by the profit earned from this savings scheme. About three months back,

the govt suddenly decided to deduct 10% from the profit earned by each individual saver-retired government servants. Simply on the strength of a G.O. the basic offices started deducting 10% from each and every withdrawal of profit. Objections were raised, but there was no result. The retired government servants had to receive the amount.

Again, at the highest level it was decided that only the cases where the total amount of profit exceeded taka 1.5 lakh would be subject to the deduction. If a person's total amount of profit is 2 lakh, he would have to pay 10% from fifty thousand only. Till today (24.10.07) no ordinance has been promulgated in this respect. As a result, no rules, regulations have been framed and for that matter no year, month or date of commencement has been fixed. But the basic savings offices have been deducting the amount for the last three months. I talked to the Director, Savings Directorate, twice but he could not give any solution.

Strange it is that without any law the retired government servants are being subjected to this sort of deprivation. I'm bringing it to the notice of the competent authorities.

S.M. Matir Rahman  
Joint Secretary (Retd) GoB

## Shocking

The behaviour of a civil servant Mr. Rokonuddoulah--no doubt violated the code of conduct of administrative officials. To watch him using vituperative language at a seminar was most shocking. It is perhaps the result of all the media hype after his successful anti-adulteration drive. Was he not just doing his duty with integrity and honesty as all public servants are supposed to?

My request to the electronic media is not to make a celebrity of public servants. Allow them to do their job without much fanfare. And public servants should also remain away from limelight as much as possible.

Farida Huq  
DOHS (Old), Dhaka

## The Rahela case

This letter is for drawing your attention to the 'heinous rape and murder' that took place in mid August 2004. The victim was an innocent lady--Rahela. Needless to say, it was one of the most barbaric acts--they committed multiple heinous crimes (rape, torture, acid-throwing, murder).

A case was filed against the four criminals, and the first hearing was due on October 29, 2007.

Rahela belonged to the under-privileged economic class of Bangladesh. Apparently, it seems that her family did not get enough inspiration from around to keep fighting for the case. Ain O Shalish Kendro is dealing the case, but we are afraid that without the help of mass-consciousness, this case may turn into another failure like many other cases. For creating mass-consciousness, we think the best way is to use our news media, and

# From chocolate to Yaba!

Two subjects--chocolates and Yaba, and addiction to it, were discussed in a local English daily's editorial (Oct. 26). Yaba is a dangerous addictive drug and downright destructive; while the other sublimely sweet, soothing and satisfying. It is like comparison possibly between hell and heaven, as far as I am concerned.

Drug addiction is a major curse of our society. Two extreme groups are by and large affected by it: the filthy rich, and the poorest of the poor. In both cases, the younger ones are more susceptible and fall into the trap easily. The rich kids move in search of forbidden misadventures, with nothing else to do; while the abject poor in search of dreams to forget hunger, and nothing to lose! Cost-wise, for the rich it is possibly nothing, but for the poor, they beg, borrow or steal to buy drugs. The worst criminals are the makers and perpetrators of this drug. Invariably,

During our younger days, in the early nine-

teen fifties; pan chewing and cigarette smoking was the upper limit of our bad habits of this type. It was looked down and strongly discouraged by our elders. Personally, my addiction was related to sweet-tooth faults; not "roshgollas" or "shondesh" but "chocolates" "pastries & cakes" and of course "ice-cream".

I attained the zenith of this addiction in the mid nineteen sixties during a weekend holiday in Amsterdam. All my meals and snacks in that period was nothing but various types and varieties of chocolates, cakes, pastries and ice-creams! Even today, I remember this gastronomic indulgence with fond nostalgia. Despite diabetic encroachment on health; I still relish small portions of all the three types of sweets; but only rarely. Of the other type, except for a few cigarettes during student days; it revolted me, and today I cannot bear cigarette smoke even!

S.A. Mansoor  
Gulshan, Dhaka



## Expansion of CTG

This refers to a letter published in your daily. Although the issue of expansion of the CTG is not clear yet, but comments have started coming from various quarters. The CTG has already passed nine months with the limited numbers of advisers plus the full support of the permanent secretaries, and above all the support of the armed forces in specific fields where needed. I have considerable doubts about the effectiveness of having consultants to support and help the government. The reasons are:

1. As we all know, the consultants will have no constitutional status and authority in real sense.

2. The consultants will have no accountability as required for the position they expected to represent. It would be very difficult to integrate them with the system of government that exist now.

3. The consultants might give rise to conflict of personalities with the permanent structure and the advisory council and result in uncertain administrative behaviour.

4. There is a well known joke about the consultants--they never look at their own watch, look at someone else's watch for time.

These are only a few negative sides mentioned here. A lot of others can be cited if one looks at the records of services provided by the consultants so far in our normal system of government.

There is scope to look at the problem of over burden from a different perspective. The government might consider reviewing their total policy and the strategies followed during the last 9 months. We think they have over burdened themselves with the task of political reforms, not to speak of the complicated task of removing age old corruption in one go. The experience now shows that a phased plan of action would have been more manageable and productive. They have missed the chance of reaping the full benefit of public support. Nevertheless, their success story in the field of corruption is worth mentioning. But the cost of living of lower and middle class people have gone higher and higher compared to last regimes. This is the biggest concern for the

people and the CTG as well.

To conclude my idea, I might urge the government to kindly look again at the prime objective of the CTG and fix the plan of action with full focus on the general election. The role of the government machineries to ensure that the honest people get access through election to run the government is considered a difficult one. This will depend entirely on the voters to choose his or her representative. Therefore, leave it to them.

The idea of adding consultants to the team of the CTG will only complicate the management. I express my wholehearted appreciation and support for the Chief Adviser of the CTG for his untiring services. He may kindly evaluate the performance of his team and initiate necessary adjustment to make it more dynamic and to help remove the thorny issues. The role and effectiveness of the permanent government structures in supporting the efforts of the CTG may be quickly reviewed and adjusted in phases.

Areader  
One-mail