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Chuadanga jail incident



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

I really don't know what to say about the Chuadanga jail incident. I think lack of sense of responsibility is killing our nation completely in every sector. Four top outlaws were kept in a cell which was not at all fortified. How silly! I have read that the quality of the substances (like cement, sands etc) with which the cell was built was very low. What's wrong with our engineers and contractors? They are constructing prisoner cells and making money here too! They should realise that they are not only putting our lives in

danger but also inviting trouble for themselves. The prison guards are certainly responsible for this incident.

The people responsible for this incident should be punished and the government should take some necessary steps so that such incidents are not repeated in future. We have to learn from our mistakes.

Mir Abidur Rahman
Department of English
South East University

Ashrafal's leadership

I would like to ask Mohammad Ashrafal why he is hanging on to the captaincy, even after performing so poorly in recent times. I know he might point his finger towards his lone century that he could manage to get out of 115+ ODIs. Even after maintaining an average of 20 odd runs per match, he might claim to be the BEST player of the country. But sound reasoning is missing in our assessment of not only the players, but also our performance in the international arena.

Shopnil Mahamud
Banani, Dhaka

Doctors indeed

I was praying for Lakshmi as she was undergoing operation in a Bangalore hospital. This beautiful girl was born with four hands and four legs. She was regarded as goddess in Bihar. But her poor father had no intention to use her as a source of money-making. He decided to give her a chance to live a normal life by undergoing an operation. I appreciate and thank very much all those doctors in Sparsh hospital in Bangalore for

their patience, sincerity and humanity that they showed during the 17-hour operation.

I would request our doctors in Bangladesh to follow the example set by those doctors in Bangalore.

Dr. Fariduddin Ahmed Majumder
Darmstadt, Germany

Call centre business

Nowadays we are talking about the call centre business prospects, but are we really ready to welcome and develop this business? In the past, we missed many good opportunities in this sector due to lack of government patronisation.

My request to the government & the entrepreneurs— please try to make the best use of our talents and resources.

Md. Mahfuzur Rahman
Core Network Engineer
Celtel-Malawi

Chief Adviser's address

My expectation has come true. There is nothing new except the possible time of election in December 2008, and he bailed out the confined "Ghoroa Rajmit" to local level with nine undemocratic

restrictions. There is no political statesmanship in the address. Nothing was said about the present economic hardship of the people. Freedom of expression, press freedom and free information flow are still restricted. The survival of democracy is put to more tests as the government is keeping the trump card in hand. The big political parties have been discouraged to join the dialogue with the government through imposition of well-articulated conditions in disguise. The political parties, except a few minor ones, are not satisfied.

You need not go to the "Harvard School of Government" to conclude that the net output of the CA's address to the nation is 0+0=0. There is no check and balance and accountability of the government. Therefore, one can see a hard and uncertain political and economic future for the people of Bangladesh. Instead of looking for a safety exit door, the government has laid down a plan for the politicians to agree or see the exit door. What a colossal waste of 18 months in the name of election and democracy!

The issue of lifting the state of emergency and release of the two

leaders from the jail remain unresolved till the political parties agree to sign the "National Charter". This will undoubtedly include a bunch of undemocratic provisions to deliver an undemocratic model of governance. Does Bangladesh deserve such a finishing in politics!

I think it is appropriate to remind the government to be student friendly while dealing with the rights and privileges of the student as protected by the constitution. The commission's report on student politics is highly debatable, and a source of controversy, conflict and disunity in the education sector. Do we want that to happen? Think twice before taking any decision on curbing student politics. "Lejur Britti" is applicable not only to the student community but also others like teachers, officials, civil society and so on!

Reader
One-mail

Political dialogue

Dialogue is the most popular buzzword of Dhaka today.

Thanks to the Chief Adviser for addressing the nation and straightening up some of the burning issues. Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed hit the bull's eye territory by declaring 3rd week of December 2008 as the time for the next general election.

However, my primary interest was to know about the CTG's primary task preparing the nation to hold a free and fair election. Today 6.5 crore voters' registration has been completed, the Election Commission is relatively clean and self governed, the country is under better rule of law compared to the last decade and the independent judiciary is in its infancy. To me, these 4 pillars are absolutely necessary to prepare the country for the election. Hence, we are moving in the right direction. We expected more transparency from the CTG to be a role model for the next elected government; I am sure they tried but the results are below expectation. Now it is time to pay more attention to transparent actions.

I appreciate the speech of Dr Fakhruddin where he sets some topics of the dialogue. Basically, he is asking for an exit strategy with the continuity of the good work that they did. He wants a commitment from the political institutions to ideology, values and vision.

We need a consensus on nurturing revenue-generating machines of the country in the era of globalisation. Our entrepreneurs could not stay competitive if they cannot predict and plan their deliverables. Our students could not perform well if the environment of education is absent. Our workers will fail to deliver if we fail to provide a good working environment. We want an even playing field with clear rules of engagement and the capability to execute and uphold those rules. We want our politicians to fulfil their commitments. We want our elected representatives to go to JS every day to justify the paycheck. We want to see what they are discussing and would like to track the progress every day. Bangladesh has never been better equipped for this than today. We have a number of newspapers and dozens of radio/TV etc.

We have been asking for reform in the political parties over a year now. But I fail to see any tangible progress in this sector. None of the political parties could come out with a "path of leadership" within the party itself. Hence all the major political parties today are divided.

I would urge the CTG and the political parties to host every dialogue session in a transparent venue. Let the people hear what the parties say. Let them experience how you solve a gridlock; let the people know about the utter

meanness of power-thirsty politicians. Let the people appreciate the political leaders for tangible results and vision. Above all, let the people participate and pick the candidates who can deliver.

Abu Abdullah
One-mail

Elimination of rickshaws

Only in Bangladesh perhaps does one come across such blatant disregard for one's fellow citizens. I don't believe that any child or its parents wake up one fine day and declare that his future lies in rickshaw-pulling. It appears that ever since the British colonial rulers imported this mode of transport from China, unskilled men and boys from poor families have had to drift to this awful and demeaning occupation.

So let us imagine Dhaka without rickshaws. Then what happens? How will the vast majority of commuters travel? Are they suddenly going to be presented with pristine pavements, safe pedestrian crossings and clean and reasonably priced public transport? When I first encountered the term 'VIP' roads I assumed it stood for something else there must be others like myself who find this term offensive which belittles the majority of the population.

What about environmental issues? How will we cope with the pollution that will be created by all those fuel driven monster machines? What will happen when fossil fuel dries up soon?

Rickshaw-pullers are caught between the frustrations of their passengers and the beleaguered traffic police who often vent their anger on them. Note how often traffic police will batter a rickshaw-puller for offences for which they dare not punish a car driver? Note how often people here will use a rickshaw for a very short distance instead of walking? Note how often passengers negotiate for meagre fares when it is apparent that they would not think twice about spending double or triple that amount for something else? Note how often passengers treat rickshaw pullers like beasts of burden? How many Bangladeshis can you fit into one rickshaw and how many ever feel any shame about being carried and pulled by one thin rickshaw puller?

Until and unless they are provided with alternative skills and options as citizens of this country and a more viable and intelligent road transport system is introduced, please let us acknowledge and celebrate the service they provide.

Shahid-ur-Rahman
Dhanmandi, Dhaka

Politicians' job

The CA in his address to the nation declared a tentative national election time frame. And to pave the road map, among others, he has declared his government's withdrawal of restrictions on indoor politics nationwide, unconditional dialogue with all political parties to frame a national charter to hold a free, fair and credible election. The address has cleared the clouds of doubts among the public about the present government's intentions. We profusely thank him. We are also happy to note that unlike other times, all the politicians have expressed cautious but positive reaction to his speech.

The ball is now in the court of the politicians. Instead of inciting unrest in the name of getting out your leaders from jail, you should cooperate with the government to hold the election smoothly. Many of your leaders are proven guilty of

Myanmar rulers

One fails to understand the illogical and irrational behaviour of Myanmar's military junta. In this hour of grave humanitarian crisis, they should have allowed unfettered inflow of foreign aid as the UN estimates that "rudimentary" aid so far has only managed to reach just 270,000 people. With the death toll, according to UN Assistant Secretary General Catherine Bragg, at 100,000 and with 2 million cyclone victims suffering from lack of access to food, shelter, clean drinking water, diseases (such as cholera, fever and other illnesses), the military regime must act in a much more responsive manner. They cannot afford to reject visas to disaster management experts and aid agency officials; they cannot rely on inefficient local aid distribution of their military workers and they cannot afford to store the aid in their airports for days and not distribute it.

The international community is ready to help the disaster-struck people of Myanmar. So, based on humanitarian grounds, the military junta cannot ignore the assistance as already tens of thousands of people are at risk of starvation and disease and many lives can still be saved if aid reaches them in time. But the way the junta is behaving (holding the farcical referendum amidst all this) and still remaining firmly



PHOTO: AFP

opposed to allow in aid, Thailand, India and China must try to persuade the generals to help the survivors of cyclone Nargis.

Wasif Wahed
Old DOHS, Dhaka

misuse of power and corruption. One-eleven has unveiled the burka and we have seen your faces. Even then, there is no alternative to you; you would be ruling us alternatively. Please forget your old days when your power base was few of your pet goons who stuffed your ballot boxes, brought you money through extortion etc.

There is no scope of going back to the days of pre-one-eleven while you distorted history, abandoned the on-going projects started by your predecessors, siphoned off state money to foreign countries, blocked trial of militants and killers, guarded your polling booths with your musclemen and so on. The foreign investors and business partners are looking at you.

Please remember the state is bigger than your party and much bigger than your leaders. To restore the rule of law, you should allow the law to take its own course. If your leaders are innocent, please fight legal battles to free them!

Shafiqul Islam
One-mail

Donors' view

The media carried a news item that the donors are satisfied with the address of the CA. They also expressed their full confidence that the election preparations were progressing well and the voter list would be ready in time for the election. Our respected guests from abroad are well informed about our ground realities. They are financing the voter list preparations. There is every reason to defend their funding which has accountability. But they have never explained to us what makes them so sure about all those episodes when Bangladeshis themselves are not yet sure, despite a timeline for general election being declared by the CA.

We have not yet seen any concrete picture of the progress of the voter list at upazila level. After 18 months an election commissioner has clarified in a talk show that there is no voter ID as such, the voter list would include the picture of the voter which would

be used for verification. The national ID card has no bearing on the verification of voter. The commissioner also mentioned very casually about the progress of voter list but not in any meaningful details for us to understand where we stand actually. The commissioner also expressed his confidence that nobody could raise any question in the court about the proposed electoral boundaries, but a writ has already been filed in the HC against the delimitation process!

The BBC Bangla also carried out an interview of the chairperson of the FEMA. She expressed the hope that the preparatory work would be complete in time, but was not very specific. FEMA is a stakeholder in the election preparatory work as mobiliser of voters, so they should be able to provide a more concrete picture of the progress of voter list, and not only "hope" that it would be complete in time.

There is photo gimmick in the voter list. We Bangladeshis might be excited to see, but our donor friends from abroad are familiar with such kind of technology and need not be overwhelmed and may give a clean certificate of progress without going into the details of what has been achieved so far. There is nothing wrong to be optimistic. But the question is: please give factual details which can be verified to corroborate your optimism.

I would be very happy if I could share the same optimism with our donor friends. But I cannot, because the people of Bangladesh are not in agreement with the opinion of the donor agencies. To me, the address to the nation by the CA is missing the political realities and lacks statesmanship. The political dialogue is heading for a negative result and would create a new political issue for the government to take the hard line and the politicians would be blamed as usual for that situation. Inter and intra party conflicts from the grassroots to the national level cannot be ruled out, if the government fails to maintain its political neutrality.

An observer
One-mail

DS online version

I am an expatriate who reads your newspaper everyday to keep up with what is happening there on a day to day basis. I have been away from Dhaka for over 25 years and living mostly in the US since I left Bangladesh.

But every time I read your news reports about an event, I get disappointed since your paper does not carry as many images as an online version should.

A new hotel opens its door! A sculpture is now on display! New highway..... news like this immediately generates interest about how they look. But I don't see pictures all the time.

Ishiaq Chowdhury
One-mail

Varied experience

I travelled from North America to the Middle East to South Asia. I went from very cold zones to very hot ones and finally to Bangladesh where the winter is very mild. I was surprised that in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand there is no winter. To me winter is a natural terrorist in northern countries like Canada or in North Europe. But for people of these countries this is normal. The cost of living is higher due to higher heating costs, but there are more financial opportunities to help deal with this particular problem.

I started my career in the city of Halifax, Canada. This city is an education centre where there are a variety of educational institutions. Even though it is part of North America, this city seems more European because people here are sober and very reserved. I don't have much experience with this culture or that of Europe, but compared to home, Bangladesh, people here are quieter, busier, and enjoy more individual freedom.

December through January is an exciting time of the year all over the world because of Christmas, New Year and so on.

Dr. Hasan M. Fida
Dalhousie University, Canada

Our football



Our national football coach's detailed clinical analysis was published in a local English daily (May 13). His description of our team's deplorable performance in Kyrgyz Stan was masterful! If our team could have played even at a quarter of the quality level of the coach's in-depth analysis, we would have cut a better figure in the tournament.

Here I would like to quote the coach. He said "When you have a one goal lead with only ten minutes to go; the usual practice is that all the players will fall back, and launch counterattacks from the box. I found that many of our players lack this sense." Why was this so late to find?

Did the coach not train the players in tactics? Was not this format of defending tried out in practice games? Or was it all taught and practised and still the players did not follow instructions?

Either way, the blame has to be shouldered by the coach. As an old but very appropriate saying goes: "If the students have not learned, then the teacher has not taught!" The lack in is

the skill in teaching (by coach) and not the learning by the students (the footballers)! I hope the coach realises that the failure is fundamentally his responsibility and none other's! He just can't "pass the buck on" by his statement and wash off his responsibility!

However, it is now all water under the bridge, but the issue raised here should be seriously considered by BFF and our sports authorities. We must ensure that such expensive outings, with nothing to show, can no longer be tolerated. Why not incorporate a comprehensive result based payment system which is both negative and positive! Apart from actual board and food as decided by the authorities and paid directly, all extra payments will be either positive or negative (deductions from their local based earnings) depending on the team's performance in terms of results in each game. Only then will the eyes and ears of our footballers and the coaches will open to realities, beyond a tourist trip taken for granted!

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

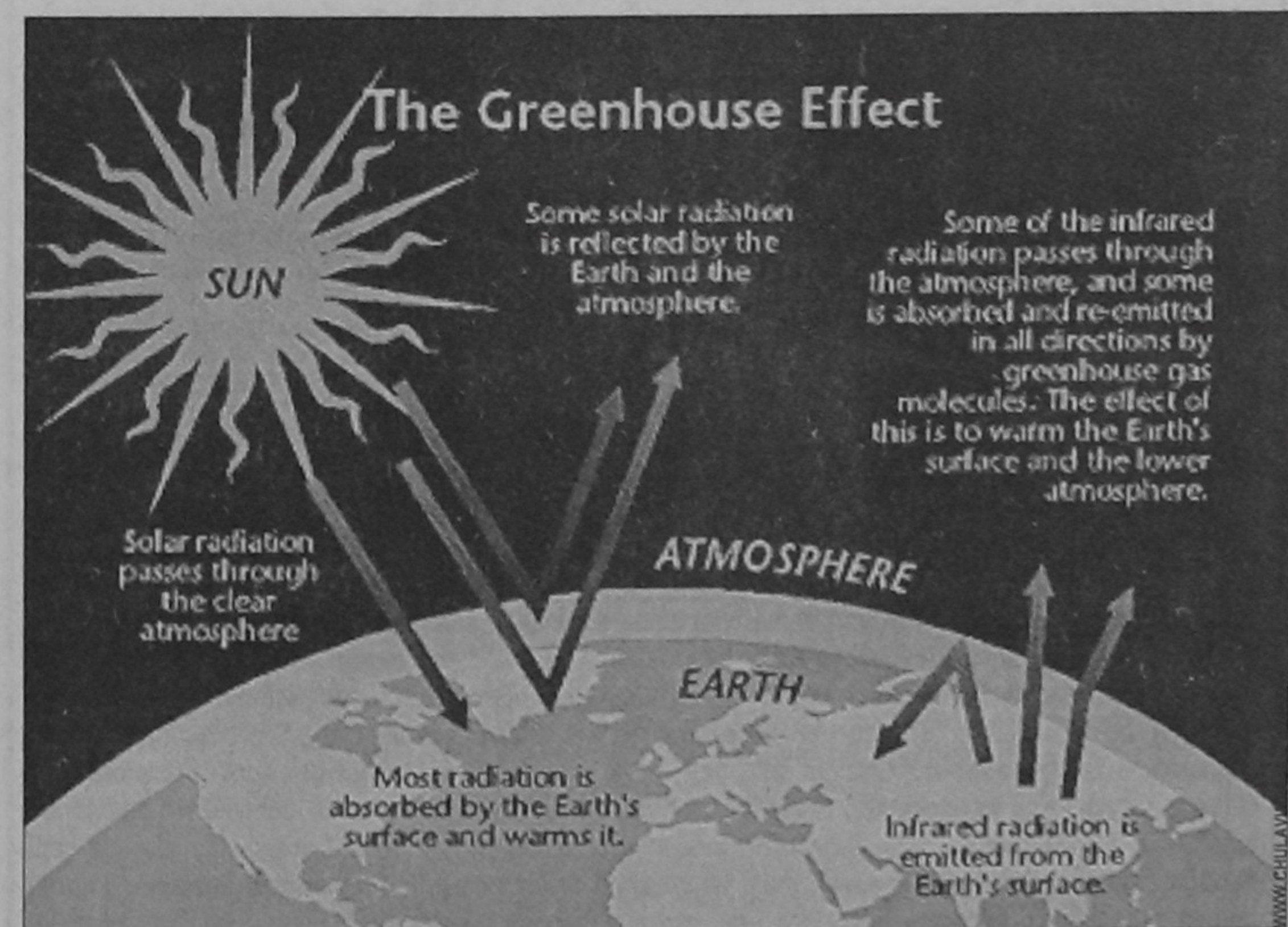
Greenhouse Effect

Greenhouse gases are the components of the atmosphere that contribute to the Greenhouse Effect. The major greenhouse gases are the carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour, ozone, nitrous oxide, chlorofluorocarbons etc. Generally, the earth is heated by the sunlight and some of the heat that is absorbed by the earth is radiated back into the space. The important feature of greenhouse gases is that they absorb certain infrared wavelengths. Thus, they trap heat in the troposphere and stop it from escaping to the space. The net result of the heating of the earth's surface by this type of phenomenon is the Greenhouse Effect.

Human activities generate several different greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. Globally, more than 80% of human carbon dioxide emission comes from transportation & industrial sources. The remaining 20% comes from biomass burning & deforestation; about half of the current methane emissions is derived from solid waste landfills and coal, oil & gas production; CFCs are generated from refrigerators, air-conditioners; motor vehicle emissions are the major source of ozone in the atmosphere.

Simply, greenhouse gases are the contributors to Greenhouse Effect and the ultimate result is 'global warming' and due to global warming several other effects on the environment have been identified such as sea level rise which is a major threat to the low-lying countries, severe floods, adverse affects on global food production, melting of polar ice caps etc.

The developed countries are the main contributors to Greenhouse Effect through their industrial activities from which huge quantities of these gases are released and we, people of the developing countries, suffer most. So, for the



betterment of the earth, we should take some steps to minimize the Greenhouse Effects like reduction in the use of fossil fuels, extensive forestation, conservation of forest, reduction in the use of automobiles, ban on CFCs & nuclear explosion, effective check on the growth of the

population, encouraging community forestry etc.

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