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Role of ACC

The last caretaker govt declared a crusade against corruption. This crusade was directed by the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC). Many heavy weight ministers, MPs & other corrupt people were arrested. Even two former prime ministers were arrested. At that time the ACC was in an active mode but now it is silent.

After the election of 29 December, a political party came to power again. Now we watch the ACC's helplessness. At last on 4 February the prime minister said that they would reform the ACC. She complained that the ACC controlled politics instead of corruption. It

harassed many innocent people. It also created minus two & minus one.

So, to ensure its independence, accuracy & accountability, it needs reform. After this speech of the prime minister Dr. Mozaffar Ahmed told the BBC that with this speech the ACC would lose its independence.

As an independent & constitutional entity we think the ACC will not work for any particular party.

Hope the government will act soon. It is our demand. Corruption must be controlled. We want a change...

Mahfuzur Rahman Manik
IER, University of Dhaka



Community Radio installation, broadcast, and managing Policy 2008".

We sincerely hope that Bangladesh will very soon enter the modern ICT arena through initiation of community radio network in the rural areas. Let Community Radio emerge as an effective media for information dissemination plus non-formal education for community as well as national development in Bangladesh.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Chairman
Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System, SAU, Dhaka

Roads in bad shape

We are facing a lot of problems in our locality. In the rainy season the roads get damaged with mud and sometimes they are flooded with water. And some roads need to be repaired.

But the government is not taking any action in this respect. This is not only a problem of my own area, this is a common problem of Dhaka city.

We, the students of Mastermind, urge the newly elected government to take urgent steps to set things right.

Syed Ishtiaque Hossain
Student of Mastermind
Uttara, Dhaka

Full moon

Did you see the full moon overruling the blanket of mist in this wintry sky accompanied by fleecy clouds? Unlike the sun, the moon is not heavy with masculinity, much less temerity?

The moon of today has passion and affection like a languor queen of a monarch who very rarely tends to come out of her bower in revealing clothes to hand out her diktat. The moon has ruled this night, as it is, not by force but a mutual understanding. The submissiveness of the vast paddy field, consent of the resting woods, stillness of water body, the limitless horizon; flock of nocturnal birds, all of them agree to this goddess of night who seems to have kissed a chunk of land more brightly as she gets brighter and brighter.

I come to be lost in the labyrinth of a land of strangers! At that point comes call of my friend. I can't help but write. The manner she speaks her ebullient words, it resonates like the songs of birds.

Roney
One-mail

Transit issue

Before deciding on giving transit to India we should analyse the issue very carefully.

We should realise why India needs transit, our advantages as well as disadvantages.

Why India needs transit: Firstly, India is isolated from the North-East India because of the location of Bangladesh. Bangladesh stands right in the middle of these two parts. To reach these North Eastern states, Indian vehicles have to travel between 1400 and 1650 km. from West Bengal and if Bangladesh allowed them transit the distance would come down to just over 700 km.

Secondly, to fulfil the growing capitalist demand and to develop the trade market, India needs to use the

resources of the north-eastern states which are rich in natural resources.

Thirdly, India needs this transit for their strategic security.

Finally, besides the economic and military reasons one of the most important reasons of this transit is the national security and stability of India.

Advantages:
i) If the Indo-Bangladesh transit is established then Bangladesh will get 300/400 crore taka per year from tariff.
ii) By properly utilising Chittagong port Bangladesh may be benefited.

Disadvantages:
i) Easy access to these states (seven sisters) through Bangladesh means too much pressure on our weak infrastructure (particularly on roads and culverts).

ii) Transit can cause strategic danger to Bangladesh. If India supplies arms and ammunition to halt the problems of 'Seven Sisters' then the people of those areas may become hostile towards Bangladesh.

iii) There might be a health concern as truck drivers of India will pass through the transit route.

iv) Many environment problems can occur for giving transit to India. The vehicles will cause sound and air-pollution.

v) Illegal arms, drugs and human trafficking may increase.

Lastly, Bangladesh will lose a strong market in the Seven Sisters.

Our Commerce Minister Faruk Khan has said that transit is primarily an economic issue, rather than a political issue but Farhad Mazar dismisses the idea that transit is merely an economic issue.

According to, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed, instead of being reactive, as in responding only when they start taking, we should be proactive. We should call India for a meeting and ask it for transit to Nepal and Bhutan and even Pakistan. We should ask India to reduce cross-border smuggling.

Md. Shariful Islam
Dept. of International Relations
University of Dhaka

Gaza situation

As the Gaza issue slowly begins to sidestep from the headlines, one can't stop contemplating over the tragedy that has struck the Ummah. There are some fundamental lessons to be learned from the massacre in Gaza.

Seeing on our TV sets, the catastrophe unleashed by Israel on Palestinians, most of us have undoubtedly had similar feelings. We all felt angered by the atrocities being committed and felt the urge to take immediate action to help those suffering.

However, if we are to look back, this is not the first time Muslims have shared these sentiments. Our sentiments were alike, when Afghanistan was being bombed, when Iraq was being invaded, and when Lebanon was being torched. In fact it is not the first time that the sufferings in Palestine have sent shivers across the Muslim world.

Whenever such incidents occur, we find that Muslims realize their personal obligation towards helping their

Hasina and Obama

US President Barack Hussein Obama has emerged as a world leader at a time when the world is desperately looking for a worthy leadership less to talk about the Americans.

Obama has assumed office and started his arduous journey; Americans as well as the people across the globe are looking forward to a change that Obama pledged in the pre-election campaign. Pressures of expectations are sky-high.

At home, our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been elected by the people in a landslide victory, with almost same kind of hopes and aspirations on the part of the people, as the previous BNP-led four party coalition regime left the country in a state of debris in terms of corruption in almost all the departments of the government



SHAFIQUl ISLAM KAJOL / DRINKNEWS

and very poor governance almost a failed one. Sheikh Hasina's government also knows and feels the pressures of expectations.

Obama has started taking difficult decisions to salvage their sinking economy, creating job sources by stopping the unprecedented decline in jobs and the critical foreign policies in a way that reveals the core fact that his administration devised things/plans beforehand. And by con-

trast, Sheikh Hasina's government, though has shown some dynamism in forming the cabinet, appears to be stumbling onto some vital issues --- they, as it seems, didn't devise their course of action beforehand.

Now, for Sheikh Hasina's administration it has become imperative that they re-compose and reshuffle their course of action and implement their plans accordingly.

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

Oppressed RMG workers

A caption with photo published in the back page of The Daily Star of February 8 has appalled me. I came to know from the story of the report that the female garments workers of a factory at Banani in Dhaka are not allowed to use sandals during their lunch break so that they cannot go far away. It is very tough and tormenting to walk barefoot on the rough pavements. The factory authorities argue that if the workers are not allowed sandals, they will return to their work in time! Such type of treatment is very barbaric and inhuman. We all condemn this strongly. This behaviour reminds us of the infernal days of slavery. We know that the garments workers contribute a lot to national economy. They toil to keep the economy stable. But unfortunately they are treated very badly. They do not get their dues. Their salary is very poor and even they do not get their salary in time. Sometimes they need to take to the streets to realize their wages. The working conditions are not conducive at all. Actually, they work in sweat shops. The owners as well as the government do not address their problems sincerely. They are always neglected. Actually, the owners need to ensure their rights to enhance their productivity that will be a win-win situation for the workers and the owners of the factories. The NGOs and human rights groups should come forward in this regard.

Before concluding, I would request the authorities to probe the above mentioned incident and bring the culprits to book to deter such type of human rights violation.

Molla Mohammad Shaheen
Lecturer in English
Leading University, Sylhet

Stinky water

Last week I had to go to Dhaka. As a newcomer to the city, I was able to notice the strange smell of the drinking water. Though I had access to the water supplied by the WASA, I had to drink it with my nose closed. It was boiled water, but it stank! I don't know how the rest of the millions of city-dwellers manage to put up with this unbearable stuff.

It has been reported in the media that underground pipes have developed cracks and filthy water of sewer lines is mingling with the drinking water of pipelines. Consequently, the citizens of the capital are made to use smelly water--a smell that will remind you of stinky insects like cockroach!

Thanks to our apathy to the environment we have done great damage to the environment. The elements--air, water and soil--are polluted to such a point that is beyond imagination.

We hope the present government will do the needful to solve the problem.

Zabed Wali
Pahartali, Chittagong

World order

Margaret Thatcher once asked British Parliament to support the Gulf War and any other US steps unconditionally, and because the US was behind them during the Falkland war. Yes, that was the baseline philosophy of western "democratic" thinking. Indirectly she was asking to unite the axis of devils and nullify the UN. Now Sarkozy is joining them, coming from the country of Voltaire, Rousseau and Satre.

Why are we upset? Well, you are fighting with your shadows created by you. Both Saddam and Bin Laden were best friends as long they were fighting Islamic Iran and Russia, who are reluctant to give their oil and other commodity to you.

The Kurdistan, Kashmir and Palestine problems have been created by the West. Now they are sermonising them.

Both the WTO and the WB have been created by the West and Asian countries are now on the brink of famine and hunger with per capita protein consumption below 30gm daily. Weak countries like Bangladesh are being pressurised to buy their hybrid seeds, non elected governments are pressurised to withdraw subsidies in fertilisers without any backup plan of helping farmers.

Stop exporting your democracy to poor countries! The US foreign and economic policies need to be turned 180 degree.

Dr Karim
GP, Australia

Toll collectors at DU!

Rakib's Ahmed's front-page report on 10 February is indeed a shame for this premier education institution. It represents the low level that we have reached; when criminal activities become part of university life! The Hon. Prime Minister being an ex-student herself should see that such things at the university are stopped once and for all.

As an ex-student (1950-54); words fail me to describe the anguish I feel.

We have really reached the rock bottom when criminals and fake students are enrolled in the university! The government must investigate this matter; and have to remove all such undesirable elements from the campus. One wonders if such things are not being engineered from outside by people out to tarnish the government's image by encouraging such criminal activities and damage the law and order situation.

The matter must be taken in all seriousness at the soonest and the progress of the investigation reported in newspapers.

A very worried citizen
Dhaka

Community radio

I would like to extend my heartiest felicitations to Bangladesh NGOs' Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) for bringing out the "Handbook: Community Radio for Good Governance and Development" (in Bangla "Shushashon O Unnayan Community Radio" which is indeed an important step towards initiating and popularising community radio in Bangladesh. It may be mentioned here that BNNRC has been playing a pioneering role for introducing community radio in our country.

Community Radio is a modern-day information dissemination, awareness creation, and motivational tool for promoting community education, agricultural extension, and political awareness-building. The community radio can accomplish the following goals as postulated in the Handbook:-

- Alleviation of extreme poverty and hunger.
- Universal primary education.
- Gender equity and women empowerment.
- Lowering infant mortality rate.
- Controlling AIDS, Malaria and other diseases.
- Ensuring environmental sustainability.
- Global development partnership.

The Chief Executive Officer of BNNRC in his forwarding note of the Handbook has expressed his firm hope that the Community Radio will soon start its transmission in Bangladesh as the voices of the rural people. It may be mentioned here that the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has already announced the "Com-

Dead sea turtles



This happens every year although the frequency of the sea turtle deaths has increased in last couple of years. These turtles visit our coastal areas, beaches to accomplish their biological needs - to lay eggs and ensure their future progeny. But ALAS! What we humans are doing is wiping out these harmless creatures.

In one of my articles (DS-130908-Conservation Engineering- Saving Marine Turtles) I wrote about the available technology that can be modified to suit local conditions and approaches to help reduce the unwanted mortalities of these magnificent migrants.

Bangladesh is a signatory to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation

and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA). It is our obligation to the international community to provide safety to these sea turtles. I would urge that the relevant government agencies - the Forest Department, Department of Environment under the MOEF and the Department of Fisheries under the MOFL should liaise with the Coast Guard (under the Ministry of Defence) to take effective measures to curb this illegal killing of sea turtles, particularly during the winter months (November -February).

SMA Rashid, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
CARINAM
Adabor, Mohammadpur
Dhaka