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Music

I admit because of the advancement of newer technologies, our young generation's taste of music has changed dramatically over the years. Moreover, we have now quite a few good number of musicians in our country who are capable of composing songs using all the latest software and instruments. The albums by these composers are selling like hotcakes as our young generations find them very interesting. Since they have huge fan following, these composers do not dare to come in front of the microphone and give voices as well since they do not have the melodious voice which is required for a singer. They use auto tuner and all the other technologies to overcome their limitations and all the other shortcomings. But I feel in this process, we the listeners are the losers and these composers are becoming the so-called famous singers. I think these composers are cheating us. Although they have better knowledge in music than we the general listeners have, that does not necessarily mean that they have the right to cheat us in this way. They are receiving appreciation and earning money which they do not deserve. When these composers sing on any live event, they get exposed. Since they do not have basic training in singing, how could we expect them to perform on live shows? I think it's high time for us to realise this. We have many talented singers in our country who have melodious voice but we treat them badly. We should treat singers by their voice.

Nazmus Saquib
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Traffic problem

I'm talking about the traffic system of Bangladesh and now in the modern world where every day researchers wake up with new innovations to save the valuable time of people. But Bangladesh has no headache about the traffic system. The roads are deplorable and the signal light are just for show as many of them don't work and in most of the places the traffic sergeant controls the system manually. Of course, the entire fault is not of the government, bus drivers and others often aggravate the situation. Even the car owners park their cars in the road. Restaurants, shopping malls, hospitals etc have no parking places.

Therefore, the ministry of transport should think about trains. It must also ensure that the laws are enforced strictly.

Md Mahbubur Rahman
Student
European Standard School
A levels

Significance of "Miraj"

Miraj is the direct proof of 'Tawhid' as well as the expression of 'Shan-e Resalat'. Distrust in Miraj means distrust not only in 'Resalat' but also in 'Tawhid'.

Miraj is, for humankind as a whole, the direction to the truth as well as the light of life.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
Jamea Rahmania Fadal
Madrasa
Chaitenyarhat, Chittagong

PM's call to leader of the opposition!

As mentioned in the DS editorial of 9 March under the above heading, the media also printed the similar wordings of Begum Zia on the BDR carnage. The prime minister may have misquoted her for her political rivalry, but the media men not her rival politicians who have heard her saying, "the killers of BDR officers were foreign spies and were hired from outside." Did the media then lie to the readers?

At this moment of national crisis all should unite and work shoulder to shoulder and find out our enemies. The so-called Islamists have already destroyed Afghanistan, Pakistan is on the verge of collapse. We must act now and apprehend those who want our destruction.

Shafiqul Islam, NY

Global crisis

There is no denying that the global economic crisis has hit the whole world hard. The USA, being a leading country controlling world economy, has been affected severely by the crisis, which has given birth to global joblessness. Every day we find the news of many organisations limiting their activities, leading to job loss.

Like many developed countries African countries are glaring examples of this crisis. Since September 2008, the global demand for natural resources dropped and prices of commodities like copper and cobalt plummeted to all-time lows. While copper lost over 50 percent of its value, cobalt -- a mineral that is predominantly used to make rechargeable batteries and alloys -- fell from a peak price of \$52 dollars a pound in March 2008 to approximately 18 dollars nine months later.

As a result, over half the 75 copper and cobalt mining companies operating in the Katanga province were forced to either fully suspend or slow down their production activities.

Subsequently, 300,000 people lost their jobs and 60,000 more mine workers face retrenchment in the months to come. In Australia as many as 1,056 permanent and contract workers at the mine companies have been retrenched. This is only the scenario of some particular organisations. Though global financial crisis has not hit Bangladesh hard, its effect on our workforce working abroad has been alarming. Many countries have sent back a good number of workers, making them temporarily or permanently jobless. On top of that, manpower importing countries, namely Malaysia and Middle Eastern countries, have stopped issuing work permit to the job seekers due to the economic recession.

This has a tremendous impact on people's lives, as many people do not earn more than 100 dollars a month. Food prices, including cooking oil and other essential commodities, have increased. Surprisingly, more and more beggars and children, even in developed countries, are seen on the streets, compared to a few months ago. In the USA more and more employees

Students these days



We are much worried to see the recent instability in the educational institutions all over Bangladesh. Clashes are not only between the student bodies of political parties but also within the same factions of political wings. These pictures are not new. With the change of regime student bodies of the ruling party start creating anarchy in the educational institutions.

While we are exhausted by the hard work to get a degree in the UK, it upsets me to see in Bangladesh my fellow students vandalizing their educational institutions for absurd reasons. Can any sensible citizen explain to me what is the necessity of student politics in a sovereign country? To the best of my knowledge, such politics does not exist anywhere in the world. As an alternative student bodies can work as student union in the universities.

The purpose of a student union will be building future leaders in every professional area.

To build the future leaders, universities can initiate the skill development trainings for graduate students similar to the skill development programmes of overseas universities.

We believe all sensible and patriotic citizens will admire the Honourable PM as well as the present government if they take a bold step to ban student as well as teacher politics making educational institutions congenial for research and studies. We believe it will be a very good and timely initiative.

Mohammad Lutfur Rahman
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United Kingdom

Failures

The only information on the action or lack thereof regarding the Feb 25 incident has come from the press alone. To date, the government does not deem it necessary to provide regular briefings outside of self-serving prepared press releases. The recent news of "BDR HQ hardly cordoned off" stands as glaring testament to a shameful and careless reflection of compounded failure of the chain of command by the so-called "authority". It permeates its inescapable lack of comprehension of the seriousness of the events on the ground. The best explanations they can muster up is that their respective departments "were working under the directives". Might we ask what these directives were?

It exemplifies a truth that the "authority" was totally incapacitated, clueless and ineffective then and unfortunately, remains so. How is it that alarms did not squeal when rogue elements kept firing and flaunting weapons at the BDR gates? What was the "authority" thinking? How is it that 100 officers could not escape when thousands of Jawans fled unabated? How does this reflect on the preparedness of the authorities to handle this or any calamity for that matter?

Questions remain yet answers elude us. Hurried request for a handful FBI and Scotland Yard officials further exemplifies the helplessness and incomprehension of proper response and procedures. The ultimate failure to "meet action with action" resulted not only in the precious loss of lives but a weakened defence of the country that no forensic expert can bring back.

Questions will be asked as they must, to allow for a national healing. One can only hope that admission of failure in the hushed corridors of bureaucracy will turn into a path to salvation and preparedness.

Bakhtiar Shahjahan
One-mail

The army, our pride

Recently, we lost so many talented military officials. These officers were most valuable assets of our country. They had done their best at every crucial moment. But we could do nothing when scores of army officers were killed in the most inhuman way.

We have no word of comfort for the families who lost their beloved ones. Now it is important to find the real culprits. We must support the army and the government to handle the crisis in an efficient way.

Md. Arifur Rahman
Sr. Officer
Alltex Industries Ltd.
Motijheel C/A, Dhaka

Hope

Heather McNamara of USA is not a celebrity. Still she made a history!

Heather is just a 7-year old lively little girl. In February this year she had to pass through a very complicated surgery at the New York-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's hospital to get a baseball sized tumour removed from her abdomen. To do the surgery, the surgeons had to take out Heather's six vital organs: small and large intestines, liver, pancreas, spleen, and stomach. The surgery is reportedly first of its kind on children and second in general.

Meanwhile, after the successful removal of the tumour from Heather's abdomen, the surgeons re-implanted her liver, small and large intestines but could not re-implant her stomach, pancreas, and spleen as these were so damaged. They had however given Heather a intestinal pouch to hold food and prescribed daily insulin injections and digestive enzymes to compensate the function of the pancreas. Thanks Heaven! Heather is alive and well too! On the day of her release from the New York hospital recently, little Heather in a press conference together with her parents delivered a very optimistic message to anyone who is sick or has a child who is sick:

"There is hope!"
Let us bear little Heather's message in our mind to gain courage for encountering sickness!

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

British Council facilities

British Council is a centre of excellence for learning English. It offers for its members basically three facilities-- Internet browsing at cyber zone, English listening at resource centre & book reading & borrowing for three weeks in library. Hence, three kinds of membership-- general membership, open learning membership & family membership. Three months ago it had 28 computers in its cyber zone. At present only 20 computers are available. Members can use 18. So sometimes we see a queue for browsing Internet, we have to wait for 5 to 15 minutes. The situation was not like this three weeks ago. Because then computers were available.

So our request to the British Council authorities: please look into the matter.

Mahfuzur Rahman Manik
IER
University of Dhaka

Feeling honoured

A few years back I visited Chennai for some medical treatment. One afternoon when we had no work with the hospital, we visited a shopping mall. We had enough time that afternoon and were looking leisurely at different shops. At one stage we were about to enter a big mall and noticed an elderly security officer with plenty of medals on his uniform. I had a closer look on those, which the security officer noticed. He very politely asked me what I was looking for. I enquired about those medals. He then very proudly told me that he acquired those for his outstanding bravery in the liberation war of Bangladesh. I was very curious and asked him where he was posted during the war of liberation in Bangladesh in 1971. He vividly narrated that his troops had a fierce fight in Brahmanbaria, Kasba & Ashuganj. I was extremely moved by his words. I told him that I was from Bangladesh. I belong to Brahmanbaria. To my surprise, the security officer instantly saluted me.

I was so moved at this event that tears rolled down my cheeks. I felt so honoured.

Faruque Ahmed
Mohanagar Housing Project
West Rampura
Dhaka

Talk show guests

Though it is not recommended to begin anything with a negative statement, but to call spade a spade, we are worried about our nation's immediate future. Yes, it is true that we had always been worried about many aspects of our national affairs since its independence: politics, governance, unemployment, price hike, education system, health facility, traffic jam, corruption and, lately terrorism. But, now we are witnessing an entirely different type of challenge.

While we were preparing to combat internationally acknowledged terrorism linked to religious fundamentalism, who could foresee something terrifying was going to happen just round the corner in the quiet of Dhaka that would bewilder the nation, and distress numerous families across the country. We need to examine the BDR incident from various perspectives, because we have been careless about small yet, important issues in many ways, for too long.

The BDR tragedy showed us that national crisis can have new dimensions. Such crisis calls for new thinking. Many factors need to be taken into consideration. Outside involvement, instigation by vested interested groups, ineffective management, etc. The list may be even longer. The nation has the resolve to

find the cause and bring the culprits to justice. That's the least we can do to pay back for the service the brutally killed brilliant army officers had rendered. While dealing with this grievous incident, investigation must be completed promptly, and justice delivered without a second thought. Justice should be allowed to take its own course and it has to be seen to have been done.

The idea of involving the UN, Scotland Yard and FBI is not credible. It has become a common move by the government in power to call these agencies in such situations. We have seen it in the past. The public does not know the outcome of their involvement, so it can be perceived to have no value. The activities and resolve by the government and other law enforcing agencies to go to the bottom of the cause of the massacre are reassuring to the people. We now have a vibrant media-- print and electronic-- capable of moulding people's mindset. It's a power, a tool that can be perilous like any other weapon. People possessing such a tool also have responsibility. Just flushing out information for the sake of providing news without examining the short and long term consequences and lasting affect on the nation or on part of the population is irresponsible.

If we carefully examine the media hype just before and during the last two years of the caretaker government leading to the last parliamentary elections, a disturbing pattern will emerge. Day in and day out viewers and readers were served with audio-visual reports of civil disorder. We were showed the killing of an activist by his opponents in the street. Yes, it was newsworthy and people had the right to know about it. Nevertheless, was not there a better way to convey this incident to the viewers without showing the naked brutality in motion picture style? Would such showing be allowed in any democratic western country? Maybenot.

To reverse this trend we have to make a concerted effort to build confidence of the people on their leadership and future. One way of doing that is to talk positively about the future of the country with programmes that benefit common people. Problems must be seen as challenge, rather than the end of the road. The country desperately needs genuine leaders to hold it together.

Leaderless countries quickly become failed states. We only have to look at the world map to agree on this phenomenon.

Nurur Rahman
Elephant Road
Dhaka

Diversities



RAJ ANIKAT / DRINKNEWS

Bangladesh is a land of ethnic, cultural and religious diversities. People of different backgrounds have been living here for centuries.

However, in recent times, there has been a growing threat to this pluralism in various ways including that of the manifestation of the religious extremism and militancy.

Phenomenon of non-tolerance towards diversities, especially to religious and cultural ones, is apparently visible which has created fear among the ethnic and religious minorities in the country.

This non-tolerance is being promoted and orchestrated by a group of people having link to certain political parties. They have reportedly links at various levels.

Article 27 of the Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees equality of all citizens before law. Article 28 prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, religion, and place of birth, among others.

Also, the Constitution does not recognize existence of the ethnic diversities of its citizens for which the indigenous peoples are fighting.

To change this situation, restoration of secularism at the top of the state policy is crucial.

To have a future generation having full understanding and respect for diversities, relevant topics should be introduced in the school curriculum. Also, the scope should be explored and expanded to study and research on ethnic, religious and cultural diversities at higher levels.

The good thing is that there is a vibrant civil society and media which are very supportive of the secular character of the State and religious and cultural pluralities. Their proactive role should change the situation.

Uttam Kumar Das, PhD
Lawyer and Researcher
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Rickshaw menace



AMJADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

If anybody says rickshaw is the most powerful and fastest vehicle in Dhaka, nobody will disagree. It is so powerful that it can stop any motorized vehicle inside the road by its changing of direction as per its will. It pays little attention while changing courses disregarding other vehicles. As it does not need any fuel it runs by manual power which seems to be very judiciously applied by its puller. Once the rickshaw attains a high speed its puller

is reluctant to lower down the speed by its hand brake, lest the rickshaw would require further manual pressure by the puller totally disregarding other motorized vehicles speeding fast. This type of mad race by rickshaws with motorized vehicles sometimes poses a great threat to pullers themselves. Their wanton violation of traffic rules puts extra pressure on law enforcers maintaining traffic, especially at the road intersections,

pedestrians, and also on the users of other vehicles. Their free style driving of rickshaws demonstrates their intention of realizing good penalty from the users of motorized vehicles for any damage or injury due to collision with motorized vehicles. So the users of motorized vehicles are always scared of the rickshaws.

The government may ban rickshaw on the following busy roads:

- Uttara Jashimuddin Avenue.
- Uttara Rabindra Sarani from Azampur.
- Uttara Sonargaon Janapath from Mascot Plaza.
- From Abdullahpur towards Tongi highway.
- Biswa Road -- Kuril, Rampura.
- Maghbazar/Mouchak intersection.

Rickshaws should ply only the lanes and by lanes of the city. If this type of competition is allowed on the streets between rickshaws and motorized vehicles, then rickshaws will dominate the streets cornering the motorized vehicles.

Md. Lutfar Rahman
Uttara, Dhaka