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Gulshan

It is appalling and shocking what Dhaka city residents are being subjected to lately. Apart from frequent load shedding, unbearable traffic jams, water shortage etc, to which everyone seems to have got used to, now, in a posh area like Gulshan, prostitutes are openly moving around in broad daylight! Beggars of every description, not to speak of the women carrying someone else's babies, knocking on car windows are now a part of the traffic scene in Gulshan 2. But is Gulshan also going to turn into Dhaka's red light area or are the authorities turning a blind eye to all this for their own amusement? Nilufer Ahmed Baridhara, Dhaka

Priorities

It is imperative that the incumbent grand alliance government lay emphasis on the priorities like ensuring clean water supply, more gas supply, increasing the generation of electricity & resolving the traffic jams across the country. We all should collectively put emphasis on starting work for the underground metro railways, ring roads & circular waterways, exploring new gas fields, building more power generating plants, collecting all the available water hyacinths & cow dung for compost manure etc. Golam Ashraf Gulshan, Dhaka

Drugmenace

Drug addiction is a serious threat to humanity, especially young generation all over the world. It engulfs all values and

Myanmar's negative attitude

Myanmar has totally failed to show due respect and good neighbourliness towards Bangladesh. Once Myanmar was a rich country in Asia, it was



Points to ponder

ABM Musa, the respected journalist, highlighted his point of view on a Channel-i programme on issues of BDR enquires and terrorism scare in the government. We are not aware whether the government has any system to listen to and act or react to such comments coming from a popular media programme. The issues Mr. Musa raised would be an eye opener for the government policy makers. The caretaker government came under severe criticism for taking a plate full of plan and activities without ensuring their capacity and time frame to implement those plans for reforms etc, etc. We only hope the elected government would not run into the same trouble in handling the issue of BDR carnage and terrorist threat. Be careful about making the whole nation panicky by over doings and wrong doings. In the BDR case people would be totally frustrated if the enquiry Coordinator fails to justify all his comments in the media from day one till today. He is already walking on a very tight rope taking attention to his remarks outside parliament (?). Please

destroys the social fabric.

We should fight the drug scourge collectively to save our nation from the impending disaster. Md Ahsanur Rahman Moghbazar, Dhaka

Crime and punishment

The nation is aghast, stunned into silence at the indescribable acts of violence at BDR Headquarters at Pikhana recently. It is only logical and fair to demand exemplary punishment to the conspirators, perpetrators and their cohorts. However I would like to raise an issue that seems to have escaped most of us. The disciplined BDR jawans who risked their own lives to protect the army officers and their families should be duly and suitably rewarded for their heroic deeds. My prayers for the salvation of the souls of those martyrs. Mahmudur Rahman Gulshan, Dhaka

Slum dwellers

It drew our attention that "Court permission will be required to evict slums, a private bill by Saber Hossain Chowdhury" published in The Daily Prothom Alo on 24 February. We express our deep gratitude to the member of parliament, Saber Hossain Chowdhury for tabling such a Bill. We express our full support to the initiative. According to the news report, in the Bill it is said that slum eviction is to be done through proper rehabilitation considering the transparency and human rights issues. In this case court permission will be required for slum eviction.

The Nagar Daridra Basteebashir Unnayan Sangatha sincerely wants to inform the policymakers that slum dwellers are an important driving force for the city and these people live in slums fighting against various constraints. We hope inhuman slum evictions will be stopped for ever. M A Rashid Khan Nagar Daridra Basteebashir Unnayan Sangatha (NDBUS)

The poet

Shamsur Rahman is a star in Bangla literature known for his creative works. He was a journalist, dramatist, novelist and a poet who had worked relentlessly all his life. It is a matter of regret that very little is being done to keep his memories alive. MD Mainuddin Narsingdi

Fertilisers

To increase production use of fertilisers is a common practice among the farmers. Though farmers can make much benefit by using fertilisers on the soil, it is having a negative impact on soil fertility. The use of insecticides helps destroy the harmful insects. But sometimes these insecticides mix up with the surface water which is a big health hazard. These are important issues that we must address in right earnest. Tamanna Ferrous Munni Dept of English International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC)

HSC exams

Unlike other years, this year the HSC examination is scheduled to start from the middle of April-- probably the hottest month of the year. In the previous years, the exams were held in June--the month when monsoon arrives. As we know, load shedding becomes a very common affair in the summer, making life difficult through the length and breadth of this land. Many of the students who sit for the said exams find it hard put to master a huge syllabus. As a result they try to get ready in the last few months preceding the exams. According to the new routine, the students will find it --namely preparation for the exams-- almost a Herculean task. The overall results may take a nosedive because of the new schedule. As far as the students of mufassil areas are concerned, many of them go out of the doors of college without learning anything. Again there is a dearth of teachers who can teach mathematics and English in many of these institutions. The new schedule may increase the rate of dropout that continues to cripple our education system. Zabeed Wali Pahartali, Chittagong

Corruption

Corruption is a multi-faceted term these days. Corruption may be committed in two ways --corruption above the table and corruption under the table. Mahathir Mohammad once said the former can be checked through the rules or laws but the latter cannot be rooted out through the mundane rules, it is related with the moral values and norms. Corruption is a practice which deviates from the accepted norms. It is prevalent in every society from primordial times. In the eighteenth century the level of corruption in America and the UK was less in comparison with the later centuries. Corruption is virtually the result of the ignorance or the failure of political institutionalisation. Md. Manzoorul Islam Nayeem Student of Political Science DU

Fate of a migrant worker

I want to start my story with a proverb; wherever the luckless goes, he would get the same result. Since my childhood, I heard the buzz proverb several times. Though I could not understand the actual meaning of that, but today, the alarming rate of our migrants coming back due to global economic recession makes it clear to me. It is really difficult to depict the sufferings of the migrant family. Now I am telling the story of one of them. His name is Dinesh. An illiterate person with an eight-member family and he is the sole bread earner. They were passing their days somehow. In spite of the shortage of basic needs; the time was not so hard compared to the present time. When he managed to go to Malaysia, his family felt that it would mean the end of their sufferings. That's why, his family members agreed with him to sell their land and even half their homestead to meet the costs of going Malaysia. Unfortunately, this was not enough so he had to borrow some money from a mohajon (a wealthy person who usually lends money) on condition of giving 15% interest per month. Finally, he went to Malaysia and almost one month later made a call to his family and informed that he could not manage any job. The news meant an extra pressure to them as it was hard to run the family, the mohajon also started to visit them. A few days back Dinesh came back from Malaysia almost empty handed. Just think for a while, what will happen to Dinesh and his family? Madhab Das Communication & Journalism Dept. University of Chittagong

Australian visa

The system of skill category migration has been in place in Australia for long. There are some methodologies/procedures/rules to get/obtain skill category migration. Initially, the applicant has to obtain 90-120 points to apply for skill category migration. This point is measured based on the applicant's age, proficiency in English and job offer in Australia. It should be learnt that the Australian government prepares a migration occupation list each year. An applicant who does not have any job offer, whatever qualification s/he has, will not qualify to apply for the skill category migration. It is noticed that some firms are publishing eye catching advertisements. As applicants are not knowledgeable on this issue, they have no way but to give huge amount of money to the consultants. Fortunately, true consulting firms do not claim any money for assessment. Each and every one, seeking skill category migration is advised to remain careful. Advocate Quazi Raquibul Islam Siddheswari Circular Road Shantinagar, Dhaka

Power supply

In light of the current huge shortage of electricity and future increase of demand and scarcity of gas for large-scale power generation, it can be said that the country's electricity supply situation will never be normal without at least one 1000mw N-power plant. Saif Tinku Baridhara, Dhaka

RU incident

A few days ago, we witnessed a shameful incident at Rajshahi University. Our past heritage provides us with ample evidence of students' glorious presence in and contribution to politics. Past studies show that in our language movement and the movement of our independence the students had contributed a lot. But at present student politics is not the same as it was in the past. RU authorities have clamped restriction on student politics on its campus. As a general student, I appreciate their decision. But it's a matter of regret that nowadays the students use arms. Because the leaders of our political parties use those students to fulfil their own ambitions. Above all, the student wings of our political parties remain busy in campus violence. Now, as a general student, I would like to request the new government to take the proper initiative to bring back peace to the campuses, so that the students can complete their programmes in time without any harassment and our higher education can take the right path. Md. Asfath Ullah (Siyam) BBA, Khulna University

Redefining secularism

"Redefining secularism, published in the DS, is an extraordinary article indeed. Mr. Anwarul Kabir in this prudent write-up has rightly defined secularism. While defining secularism at the state level, we must consider the people and their psychology. Secularism devoid of religion will not be acceptable to the people of present Bangladesh. Rather, we have to think about religions with liberal views. As long as religions remain flexible and show tolerance, establishing secularism of our style is possible. Restricting religions to the private sphere of the life, as western notion suggests, is not possible right now. Even western society is now in a dilemma and with the increase of Muslim population, some countries in Europe and America are considering installation of Sharia Board (e.g. Canada). France is also compromising in the context of wearing Hizab in public schools. We should stick to real secularism and not promote "non-functional" secularism like that of India. But my question is if the people are not that advanced to accept the "pure" secularism, then should we fight with them? In this context, I would also like to stress that nothing is pure or absolute. Everything is relative. Even there is no existence of absolute space and time. Then why should we search for "real" secularism? Rather if the state can ensure peaceful coexistence of different religious communities in society then we may call it secularism. After all, we want to see peace and social harmony. This should be the objective of any humanist. Dr. Ali Ashraf One-mail

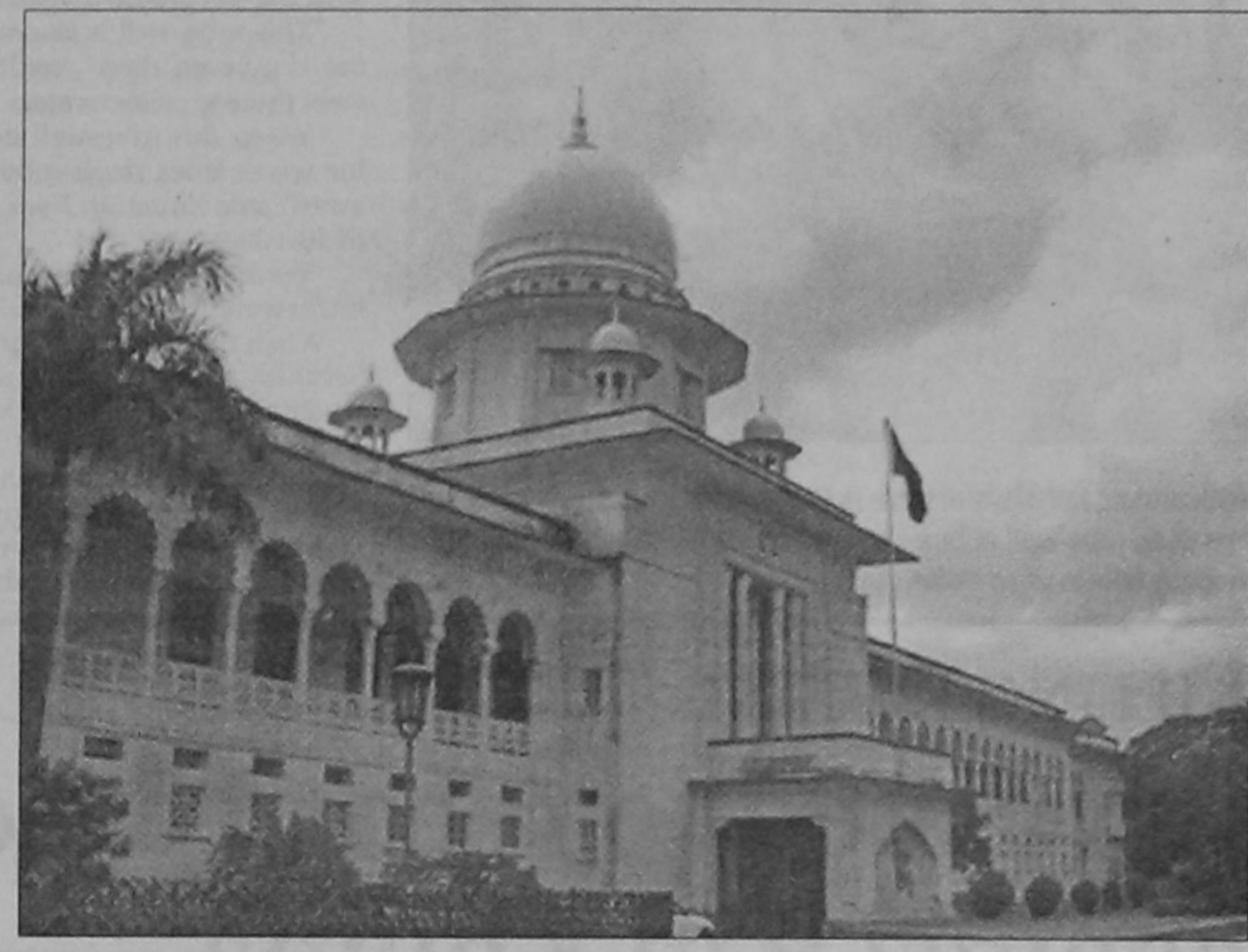
Poor decision

I was really shocked to see on BBC that Bangladesh had banned YouTube for broadcasting certain things. I do understand that there is classified information which should not be published. Whoever had uploaded those things did not act like a good citizen. But, unfortunately, my concern was more about the way the government had tried to resolve the matter by banning YouTube in Bangladesh. Such action was not expected from the party that has promised to build a digital Bangladesh. I believe the situation could have been dealt with more efficiently. Before banning, did anyone from the government request YouTube to restrict viewing the news from Internet concerning our internal security? I believe they would have got a good response. As the country is trying to go for the digital system, we definitely don't want our image in the outside world to be blurred. We need skilled personnel with modern equipment to overcome cyber crime, cyber terrorism and hacking. Finally, we need to fight infor-

Separation of judiciary

Parliament is supreme in the land for making law and it is the function of the courts and the Judiciary to interpret and apply such law. Judges can make some law (case law) in areas where there are no parliamentary statutes. A statute will supersede any case law and take its place and there can be no conflict. Claims of such conflict are mere exaggeration and like the proverbial storm in a teacup. Recently, many lawyers passed the opinion that giving 'cognisance' powers to executive magistrates will violate the principle of 'independence of the Judiciary' and will be against the previous SC ruling. It appears to be an unnecessary concern. No Judiciary can be fully independent, because it is financially dependent on the government (i.e. the Executive). So, obviously judicial independence has a restrictive meaning implying the independence of judicial recruitment, career structure etc of all

judges and Justices, and the independence of the judicial procedure where judgment of any court whether high, medium, lower are carried out by members of the Judicial organ of the state and not by members of any other branch, especially the executive magistrates who had in the past such powers to judge, fine or imprison at the lowest rung of the judiciary with some overlap of judicial and executive powers. Such powers of judgment will not be restored to the executive magistrates by the Bill now in parliament but the executive magistrates will only have the power of cognisance of an offence and send the perpetrator for trial under a judicial magistrate. Such powers are essential to maintain law and order, especially in a hostile mob or demonstration scenario. Engineer Shafi Ahmed London, UK



mation technology by using the same weapon, not through outlawing anything. Tannun E Mursalin Associate Professor Computer Science and Engineering Department University of Liberal Arts-Bangladesh

Administrative chaos

The sloth in the ministries-panic caused by random reshuffle in the administration: loyal civil servants get favourable transfer and posting and the disloyal ones end up as OSDs and go on forced retirement. The highest record is achieved in making OSDs--265. (10 secretaries, 34 additional secretaries, 56 joint secretaries, 50 deputy secretaries, 115 senior asst. secretaries) Opposition bashing--power shortage, scarcity of water and traffic congestion in Dhaka was created by the previous government and they didn't do any good thing for the people (but they did-banning polybags, cheating free public exams, banning two stroke engines.) Women are getting top positions in Bangladesh (Dep-

uty leader of parliament, home and foreign ministry) and 100 seats are reserved in parliament for them. Does that tell everything? A congenial atmosphere is absent in the seats of higher education in Bangladesh and a large number of educational institutions are already closed due to the activities of the BCLthe Rajshahi zone is the worst affected. Too much load shedding in rural areas- agriculture is badly affected. People are still hoping for the change that this government promised before the election. Samsunahar Fultala Khulna

Our students

Population boom is one of our main problems. About five lakh job seekers are not getting jobs, as the job market is small. Our students cannot study in good universities in developed countries due to lack of required standards and poor performance in English. There are many reasons behind these. One of them is student politics. Our students do not study as per requirement. After taking admission into the public universities, they start indulging in politics for getting undue facilities. This must come to an end. Meer Tossaddeque Hossain Monitoring officer UCEP-Bangladesh Chittagong Feeder Schools Division Chittagong

BDR carnage

The entire episode was eye-opening. Stark was the absence of a national crisis management mechanism designed to swing into action. The prime minister's meeting with mutineers to settle issues 'politically' was in itself a breach of security protocol. Equally absurd was professionally ill-equipped Home Minister Sahara Khatoun and State Minister Jahangir Nanak's role as negotiators. The argument that they displayed much maturity by

not striking at the mutineers, ostensibly to save the country from civil war, is ridiculous! As for the government, the handling of BDR incidents, explained whichever fashion, was a scar in its image. Consequently, it needs to read the larger picture of the increasing public disillusionment. Rehan Amin West Virginia, USA

Tea workers

There are about 160 tea gardens in Bangladesh. These tea gardens are located mostly in Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet and Chitagong Hill Tracts. Though these tea gardens increase natural beauty of Bangladesh and add to our foreign currency earning, the woes of tea garden workers have a dampening effect on their performance. Tea labourers have a signifi-

cant role in the tea industry. The progress of the tea industry depends on the hard work and motivation of tea labourers. But they never got their due in terms of salary and other benefits. The authorities concerned should look into the matter. Niranjana Malakar Dept. of Public Administration University of Dhaka

