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Trial of war criminals

It was very disturbing to listen to two distinguished lawyers on Channel-i on trial of war criminals. The process adopted so far is failing due to reasons one can easily understand listening to these two lawyers and also international reaction to the approach taken by the government as mentioned by the law minister. He needs to be more firm and proactive. The ministry should give a comprehensive legal framework to proceed with the trial. If necessary, they should take legal opinion from experts.

We can easily see the severe constraint of the government to give full attention to the issue because of the BDR carnage and uncertain law and order situation including the threat of terrorist attack. The best course under the circumstance is to engage a group of experts in the matter to assist the government on a regular basis and see that the process of trial can yield positive results. The cabinet must take up the issue seriously and take decision for action and not media PR. Unless the government is taking action transparently, they would never find out the real obstacle to go into the trial. Unless the real obstacle is identified, you can not remove it. It is also necessary to keep the nation informed and involved at each and every step. The government should keep the nation informed about any negative pressure from inside and outside the country.

I can see one serious backlash the nation might face: our country can easily be turned into a fundamentalist state or failed state if we fail to go ahead with the trial, despite apprehension from many known quarters. If we delay, we will see more negative reaction from our international friends. They make judgment on the issue from their political perspective, rather than our national feeling and commitment; because we suffered, they did not. Just follow the international norms and initiate a well-planned legal action.

I still cannot understand why the special envoy of Pakistan was not asked to give their message of felicitation through their embassy to the foreign minister. I think we are very busy in fixing our own house, and there is no need to entertain so many visitors now. The remark of the special envoy was outrageous and interference in our internal affair.

This brings us into the basic question of protocol. How long we will continue this knee-down protocol at the cost of our national prestige.

The ministry of law seems to be acting loosely without being firm and proactive on those two major issues-BDR trial and the trial of war criminals. Please do not let the nation down for your weakness and inaction.

Reader
One-mail

Working beyond office time

We have started to adopt a new culture in the corporate world in most organisations and institutions. A common practice is often seen that we have a tendency to stay late in the office, only to display sincerity, loyalty and commitment "that spells out work within 9 to 5 is not adequate, I need more time for my workload." I once had an occasion to work with a British consultant who mentioned that office timings have been fixed within adequate space and time to complete a day's work, if you are unable to complete your work, it proves you are inefficient. If I want to apply this principle commonly, that would incriminate that most of our mid level and senior executives are inefficient.

Whether this is a habit or an exhibit needs to be looked into. The impact of this simple action could be manifold; a person depriving his presence in the family which seems selfish and utilizing office resources after office hours is an additional expense. Once a while such practice is affordable but if this becomes a continuous process, then the issue becomes doubtful. As a matter of fact, there is a growing tendency mostly with corporate institutions that male folk spend their early hours of the day doing their personal sundries and start their day's work after lunch, then to catch up, stay after 5:00pm. This high drama is a good exhibit to influence the boss. A sharp comparison emerges between a male and female worker. If a woman staff after a whole day's uninterrupted work gets ready to go home at 5:00pm, the boss will inevitably form a judgment, "There she goes just at 5:00." It does seem unfair to the women workers who have to do their office work, household chores, attend children and also work late in the office.

Though womenfolk are in the forefront in Bangladesh politics, economy and socio-cultural environment, these are some inconsistent facts of life that are often overlooked.

Kishwar Sayeed
Gulshan, Dhaka

Cricket and security

Most of the countries like Australia and England always raises questions about security in the sub-continent.

The government's duty is to provide security. They can do it with extra security arrangements but it was an irrational decision to abandon the series with Pakistan.

Sabrina Smrity
One-mail

EU report on polls

The European Union Election Observation Mission in its final report on Dec 29 polls recommended that the EC make a provision so that a candidate could not seek election from more than one seat to create a level playing field for everyone and avoid costly by-elections. This is a good recommendation. But as an ordinary citizen of the country, I recommend one more thing for the next election. Better managing initiatives have to be taken for receiving the result sheets and used election materials.

A citizen
One-mail

Fire hazard

Now we are living in a modern age, but are we really modern? We saw a devastating fire in BSEC Habban in 2007 and now the fire at Bashundhara City has once again exposed our weakness in fighting a big fire.

Our fire fighting equipments are not sufficient for this capital city with so many high-rise buildings. The fire service is not modern and they have no high-tech equipments and the fire fighters are not properly trained.

The government should attach due importance to the matter and build up a fire service with modern equipment and trained personnel. Otherwise, fire will remain a constant source of worry to city dwellers.

Farida Begum Popy
One-mail

Pay commission

Notwithstanding a healthy proposal to raise the salary of government ombudsmen each year, we hardly see its reflection in practice. So to say, every government until now paid no attention to 'fixing up a permanent pay commission. For those who want to live honestly, a good salary structure is necessary. But nobody seems to understand the simple truth!

Shofiqul Islam
River Research Institute
Faridpur

Curse of corruption

Each & every sector of the govt. is corrupt and no work is possible without payment of graft--particularly lower grade employees & non-gazetted officials are experts in realising money from their clients through various tactics. Their demands are 15-20% higher than the govt. taxes & fees. They seem to have become more emboldened after the massive crackdown by the last CTG on corruption.

Arrest, seizure of their ill earned money/properties etc, and sentencing them to jail, did not deter them at all!

Hussain Imam Choudhury
Pallabi, Mirpur, Dhaka

A forgotten veteran

Tahmina Khan Dolly, the first woman ambassador of Bangladesh to Sri Lanka, is suffering from amnesia and passing her days in the care of some doctors in a local private hospital away from media attention. Mrs. Khan does not need any financial assistance but needs attention of her party members, as she has dedicated most of her life to the party. She was made an ambassador by President Ziaur Rahman for her hard work, efficiency and competency. She was involved in politics wholeheartedly and was a very dedicated party member even after the death of Ziaur Rahman. Mrs. Khan's contribution to the BNP is invaluable without any doubt.

She does deserve sympathy from BNP party members. Please show some respect to this veteran and do visit her. I am sure her family will be delighted to see her colleagues or well-wishers around. Let us all pray for Mrs. Khan's quick recovery.

Fariha Hasib
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Meeting of two leaders

Once again some economists and political experts have started talking about a possible meeting between the two top leaders of the country. Veteran personalities like Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, Prof. Mozaffar Hossain, Rashed Khan Menon and some leaders of two political parties have emphasized the necessity of the meeting to face the challenges of present global economic recession that may affect Bangladesh.

The idea of meeting between the country's political leaders to discuss and find solutions to important national issues is good. But everything depends, in this case, on the honesty and sincerity of the opposition leaders. If the opposition leaders' intention is only to get more and more media coverage by opposing all moves of the government calling them anti-people, then the meeting will yield



SHAHRU MOHUR UDGIN / DRINKNEWS

Save jute

Jute, the golden fibre of Bangladesh, is now disappearing and going to get its place in museum within a very short time like maslin. Nowadays farmers are not interested in cultivating jute due to various reasons.

Jute is a multidimensional crop which can be used in many ways. During the vegetative stage the leaves are used as vegetables, the fallen leaves enrich the soil's fertility, papers can be made from its green bark, its sticks are used to make hardboard, particleboard, bag, paper, fuel, fence etc. Lastly, the fibre can be used in many ways.

We all know jute goods are environmentally sound, whereas chemical goods are highly detrimental to the environment. Most of the jute mills have been closed. The govt should inspire the farmers to cultivate jute and give incentives for reopening the jute mills and thus save our golden fibre from extinction.

Save jute and ensure sound environment!
Md. Obyedul Kalam Azad
Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University
Dinajpur



AMADULL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Global economic recession

Today's world is integrated with product and market due to globalisation. Very few countries have lowered barriers to international trade in the era of globalisation. The global economic slow-down has drastic consequences on developing countries like Bangladesh. The countries that were dependent on the USA, EU and Japan as export markets for their products and tourism faced severe constraints in maintaining their growth and economic levels. This in turn adversely affected foreign exchange earnings, employment generation, and govt. tax revenues in developing countries.

How to fight recession?
Most of the countries in the world use two major tools in fighting economic recessions in their own countries i.e. one is Monetary Policy and another is Fiscal Policy. A Government can use its Monetary Policy, the regulation of the money supply or interest rates in order to influence economic growth. The impact of the Monetary Policy would reflect on the interest rate and investments. Providing adequate liquidity to the market could be controlled through Statutory Reserve Requirements (RSS). The Central Bank can use open Market Operation through changing Discount & Rediscount rates. The other tool a government could use to stimulate economic growth is the Fiscal Policy. Excise duty, customs duty and corporate tax rates could be used as an incentive to industries in an economy. Fiscal policy could lead to a decrease in income tax or an increase in spending.

Fair trade could be an instrument to fight recession in a free market economy, the private sector through its firms play a key role in economic development. In order to continue within the business, enter into expansion programmes and invest more capital into industries, carry out research and developments and enter into global market, firms must have at least normal profits. In order for them to earn normal profits, the government

should create an environment and no unfair trade practices should upset the equilibrium of the firm.

In the face of global economic recession and fight to overcome it, fair trading is an instrument any country could use as prerequisite to free trade among the nations.

Nowadays near about 60 percent of our foreign exchange earnings come from exporting garments to the USA, EU, Japan and other countries. So if this sector is not nurtured properly then disaster will be the result. Our government should extend their helping hand by providing cash subsidy to this sector. Besides this other export facilities demanded by the Chamber of Commerce should be considered immediately for the betterment of the nation.

We know that no two recessions are the same and each has winners as well as losers. Some recessions take away your jobs, your food, your sleep; some improve your careers in corporate finance, banking, insurance, mutual funds, venture capital, credit rating, consulting, e-business, capital markets, financial services, treasury management, portfolio management, manufacturing sector, international finance, investment banking, information technology etc. The recession kills any hope of a quick recovery for an industry. So what should highly innovative investors do? Will they sell potatoes and buy onions?

In today's volatile interest rate and currency markets, clients are looking for more and more sophisticated solutions. Some are taking risk and some are looking for low risk profit opportunities, while others wish to take on higher risk for proportionately higher reward. Some wish to go for exotic derivatives but utilize the opportunity for bad business practices. They don't have the patience to have strategies tailored to the country's specific needs. They should know that well structured relationships provide superior results. We must not suffer from idea fatigue and solutions should be there for the asking...after all what are the entrepreneurs, consul-

tants, IT professionals, engineers, R&D executives, operations executives, marketing executives, presidents/CEOs doing?

In fine, our present govt. as well as business people should come forward and do something to face the economic recession.

Mamun Ali Khan
Accounts In charge
Air Galaxy Ltd.
Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka

Power failure

My two younger sisters will appear in the HSC exams this year which will start from 16 April. Now it is their last revision time, so they need to study a lot, but they cannot. No, not due to family work, even they have no personal business. The problem is ELECTRICITY.

They live in Islampur village under Faridganj upazila of Chandpur district. Every day the electricity goes after 7:00pm. Then the supply is not restored before three hours.

Not only at night, load-shedding is taking place at midnight, even at noontime. It will have an impact on their results.

The problem has to be resolved on an emergency basis to save our students.

Mahfuzur Rahman Manik
IER, Dhaka University

nothing.
The BDR carnage has already helped the opposition leaders earn a lot of media attention because of their self-concluded statements which later on were not appreciated by the people. They are focussed in the media when their leaders are arrested or investigated for their corruption charges.

I believe the opposition leader should show her sincerity first by expressing her opinions in public and then meet the prime minister with a honest desire to help the nation.

Shafiqul Islam
NY, US

Slow moving bureaucracy

The prime minister's pledge to bring changes and create a digital Bangladesh is being thwarted by an unwilling bureaucracy. This is the realization of the PM herself. The top bureaucrats met the PM to assure her of their sincerity. Perhaps the government will feel assured and continue its effort to appease the hierarchy.

The same mistake was done immediately after the liberation war. The government of Bangabandhu continued with the left-over administration of the occupation Pakistan army. The result is known to everybody. Top officials conspired sitting at the heart of the government. So, we shall urge upon the government of Sheikh Hasina to please stop appeasing the inefficient, politically motivated bureaucrats.

Bring in new blood, if you really mean business.
M. Sanaul huq
Uttara Model Town
Dhaka

State of the nation

On the eve of our 38th Independence Day, it is relevant to look at the state of our country now that the 'honeymoon' period (100 days) of the

new Awami League led grand alliance is almost over. In this, the AL's third innings, the second by an overwhelming majority, what is the position of the juicy pre-election promises?

1. There is no water and no electricity! The CTG had the same infrastructure but the electricity never went off at 1 o'clock at night and there were not many scenes of people protesting in the streets with 'empty vessels'.
2. The universities are either closed or have become battlegrounds.
3. The Election Commission is gradually becoming disabled and the welcome privilege of the "NO" vote gone.
4. The separation of the judiciary is being curtailed and smothered.
5. The ACC 'customers' are flaunting their freedom and their ill-gotten wealth with 'health holidays' all over the world (no party discrimination here).
6. Traffic jams have congealed everyone to a full stop.
7. Price of rice has gone down but rise in that of vegetables, fruits, fish, meat poultry etc have more than offset the advantage. No one is better off today.
8. The 'honeymoon' will long be remembered for three ugly and gory incidents.
9. No one can blame the government for the economic meltdown, but it is also true that the amateurs at the helm hardly have a clue as to what to do about it.
10. Finally, what has happened at the Bangabandhu Medical University is a blatant example of power-mad peoples' open defiance of existing norms to sink whatever remains of our healthcare institutions.

In this connection, it is relevant to highlight the happenings (suppressed?) of what transpired some days ago when a group of mastans took over, in broad daylight, the oldest, largest and most efficient private institution for eye-care that serves thou-

sands of poor people every day. No 'law enforcers' turned up, though the Tejgaon PS is within walking distance. I understand it was only the Prime Minister's personal initiative that averted a disaster. What caught the eye were not the mastans, whom we have learnt to live with, but the introduction of female mastans, complete with borkha and jeans.

Shabash to the perpetrators for this noble innovation into gender equality!
Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Gulshan-1
Dhaka

Western hypocrisy
The warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on 4 March for the arrest of Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur (which he firmly denied) is another classic example of western hypocrisy.

From Ben Gurion till date all the Israeli prime ministers, presidents and army chiefs should be brought to book for their terrorist acts and grave atrocities committed against Palestinians and other Arab people for the last 60 years.

More than 1,400 Palestinians were brutally killed during Israel's three-week assault in Gaza recently for which Ehud Olmert, Ms. Livni and Ehud Barack should be put on trial. The US and its other western allies have been dead against Iran's peaceful nuclear ambitions. On the other hand, though Israel has never officially admitted having nuclear weapons, but it is widely recognised to have a significant nuclear arsenal.

There are estimates that it has between 75 and 200 nuclear warheads. But why do not the International Atomic Energy Agency and western powers utter a single word against Israel's nuclear possessions?

Muktadir Hussain Chowdhury
Uttara, Dhaka

We have already forgotten that smoking in public places had been banned by the Awami League government long ago, during its first tenure of governance. In that period the law was sometimes enforced by law enforcers and TNOs by apprehending smokers at public places and penalizing them Tk 50.00 on the spot. It is a matter of great regret that smoking in public places once again started in violation of the rules since the BNP government came to power in 2001.

The vendors of tobacco products have once again started their business at the street cor-

ners where they sell cigarettes to the grown up boys, resulting in an increase in the number of smokers in the country. As terrorists do not belong to any country, religion, race, creed, caste etc., the smokers also do not bother about any age, place, rules and regulations etc. and that is why we can find smokers in train, bus, marketplace, railway station, creating environmental pollution and health hazard for the country in general and for themselves in particular.

Our question is, what are the law enforcers doing?
Md. Lutfar Rahman
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Smoking in public places



GAZI NAJIB AHMED / DRINKNEWS