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the grim situation. It's high time we realised the gravity of the situation and undertook some preventive measures in order to contain the upward trend in the incidence of sex-related crimes.

Religion can play a significant role in this regard. In the words of a noted historian, "The absence of religiousness is responsible for the manifold problems confronted by the people in the present-day world." Strict adherence to the religious doctrines, teachings, dictates and rituals can immensely contribute to bringing about a qualitative change. On the other hand, the real culprits must be brought to book and exemplary punishment meted out to them.

M. Anwaruzzaman
Jhawitala, Comilla

Obama's solution

I have been campaigning for positive engineering solutions for a few years now and have written many articles and letters in the media. The carbon restriction appears to be a purely negative activity, the result of which seems to be too slow, tenuous and uncertain.

According to some British newspapers President Obama's administration is now considering a radical plan to deflect the sun's rays to tackle global warming. John Holdren, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology, outlined the idea of shooting sulphur dioxide particles, or aluminium oxide dust, or especially designed aerosols into the upper level of the atmosphere. It is hoped this would cool the planet by reflecting sunlight back into space before it can be absorbed.

Naval guns, rockets, high-flying aircraft and even hot air balloons have been suggested as possible ways to release the agent into the stratosphere.

Notwithstanding any possible undesirable side effects he added, "It's got to be looked at. We do not have the luxury to take any approach off the table."

Mr Holdren insisted that dramatic actions were needed to halt climate change because the situation was like 'being in a car with bad brakes driving towards a cliff in a fog'.

At last President Obama seems to be taking a bold action to save our planet which will not only produce cooling to keep the sea level steady, but will also hopefully end the chronic and severe drought zones on the globe.

For me the sooner such actions start, the better. Engineer Shafiq Ahmed London, UK

Wetlands

About 50% of the land in Bangladesh is classified as wetlands, and major part of this area is covered by freshwater wetlands, the total area of the wetlands of the country has been estimated at seven to eight million hectares. Wetlands of Bangladesh have great diversity, which are classified on the basis of their hydrological and ecological functions such as saltwater wetlands, freshwater wetlands (haors, baors & beels) and human-made wetlands.

The wetlands of Bangladesh are considered as invaluable components of the ecosystems with enormous economic, ecological and commercial importance, they are rich in biodiversity in terms of floral and faunal composition including migratory birds of global and regional significance.

Unfortunately, the wetlands of Bangladesh are being drastically reduced due to human interference and many wetlands are seriously threatened.

So the local wetlands management authorities should take up programmes in order to make the local community aware of the significance of wetland resources conservation and should arrange awareness raising campaigns. At the same time, the local community has to be educated on the wetland ecosystem and its resource management. Here, the government agencies and the NGOs can design specific awareness programmes.

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NOOR ALAM / DRKNEWS

Hundred days of the govt

What we can see in Bangladesh is just a repetition of the past government, except that the AL government looks closer to the people. This is the only success I can see. In reality they have added more problems to their list of what they inherited. The BDR carnage, the BCL crisis, MPs vs. upazila chairmen are some examples of what is going on. The parliamentary sessions are practically limited to a few items but no major legal reforms were initiated. The performance of parliament as of now is:

a. Routine function of electing the president, women MPs, leader of the treasury bench and leader of the opposition, and of course election of the speaker and deputy speaker was wrapped in some con-

troversy.

b. Validating some ordinances of the caretaker government and making them as law, while creating more controversy than solving any.

c. One important decision was made: trial of war criminals without participation of the opposition.

The negative sides are:

a. The opposition continue to boycott the session as they feel.

b. The leader of the opposition is only active on the opening and closing sessions.

c. Quorum was a regular crisis. The MP's were busy in business as usual.

d. No significant law making efforts were seen in this long session. Both the treasury and the

opposition members could be blamed for this.

If parliament fails to initiate long standing amendments to anti-people laws like SPA of 1974 and put democratic face to article 70 of the constitution and other reforms measures, the AL government might be facing a crisis of public support coupled with more muscle power in the opposition camp and added public support for it. Therefore, this fashionable 100 days' review of the successes and failures can easily be termed mixed, and might become negative if the AL government fails to gear up the decentralised machineries of the government.

Reader

One-mail

but there in the summer the sun usually sets between 8:00 and 9:00pm. Offices close for most people at 5:00pm. Because of the harsh and long winter, the people love the summer and the sun. By pushing the clocks in summer by one hour, the sun starts setting between 9:00 and 10:00pm instead of 8:00 and 9:00pm. As a result, they get around 4 to 5 hours after office to attend to their chores, finish their shopping, go to parks or just stroll around. And all this is done in the sun and daylight. What a wonderful idea! If you are thinking that you will start studying after the sun sets (as is the culture in our country), then you have to stay up for most part of the night. Those who have to prepare for their exams go by the clock and not by the sun.

house/building owner in Dhaka. The house/building owner purchased the required number of electric meters at a fixed price from the electricity supply office.

Now all of a sudden we have received two types of instructions from Dhaka Power Distribution Company, the successor of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority 1) Security deposit bill for additionally sanctioned load of 1 KW with previously sanctioned load of 1 KW (total sanctioned load 2 KW and payment of Tk. 375.00 for each electric meter) and 2) Attention notice for immediate replacement of the old meter.

We neither feel the necessity of having an additional load of 1 KW, nor we have applied to Dhaka Power Distribution Company for additional sanction of 1 KW load for our house/building.

We fail to understand the reason, necessity and justification for additional load sanction for each and every electric meter fitted in a single residential house/building.

We also fail to realise the need for replacement of our present electric meters which we purchased from DESA only a few years ago. How can we spend a huge amount of money for new electric meters?

Why such discrepancy, anomaly and confusion?

I went to Dhaka Power Distribution Company office, Hatchola, for clarification. It was wastage of time and

energy. Would the Ministry of Energy and Power Development Board kindly look into the matter?

OH Kabir
Hare Street
Wari, Dhaka

Sexual harassment

Every now and then the print and electronic media cover horrifying news of sex-related crimes that are going on unabated in our society and the country as a whole. They (the occurrences of deplorable sex crimes) give us enough food for thought and at the same time raise the question as to what kind of society we have been living in.

There is no denying that sex-related crimes are on the rise in our country and the occurrence of sexual harassment and exploitation has registered a remarkable rise in recent years. It needs no telling that the worst sex crime is rape and it is regrettable that rape cases are on the rise. What is most tragic and shocking is that the rape victims, in most cases, aren't allowed to survive after they are violated. How brutal and inhuman!

Not only rape, sex crimes of all categories are taking place thereby threatening the very safety and dignity of women in general in society.

One can attribute the high incidence of sex crimes to the tremendous erosion of moral, ethical and human values. Social unrest, deteriorating law and order situation, and the so-called cultural aggression etc. are responsible for

realize this fact.

I will appreciate if The Daily Star probes the matter.

Nazrul Islam
Ph.D candidate
University of New Brunswick
Fredericton, Canada

Poor decision

I am angered by the government's move to dole out Tk. 3,000 crore to exporters. If one looks at the genesis of this generosity(?) one can easily find that it is very easy to give away somebody else's money for bailing out the exporters.

It is people's money kept in government custody. The doled out amount will ultimately benefit the consumers of the importing countries (the developed ones, who are responsible for the financial meltdown) at the cost of our hard working and often deprived common people.

Our poor people, who earned this amount, will never have a chance to get its benefits.

Our exporters, mainly the apparel exporters, are one of the worst performing in terms of efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Their soaring profits are mainly the result of poor workers' (mostly women) sweat and blood.

I expect more public reaction on this issue.

Muhammad Ali, Dhaka

Opposition bashing

The government has removed all the nationalist-minded officers, educationists, military officers, etc. from their positions and then put their blind supporters in those positions. Their golden boys have forced closure of many educational institutions across the country. They are saying in parliament that Shaheed Ziaur Rahman was a Pakistani agent, he did not take part in the war of liberation!! And then your cabinet has asked Begum Khaleda Zia to leave her house in the Dhaka Cantonment. Well done!! Do you know that powers of dictators are not everlasting?

Don't you know that Shaheed Ziaur Rahman deserted the Pak army risking his own life? Don't you know that Ziaur Rahman was awarded the title 'Bir Uttom' because of his outstanding contribution in the liberation war?

AL supporters say that Begum Khaleda Zia is hatching a conspiracy against the people of Bangladesh sitting in her cantonment house. Do you think any human even with a slightly healthy frame of mind will accept this? On the contrary, people have started thinking that some ruling party people are engaged in activities that undermine the existence of Bangladesh. Some of you are saying that nobody should have two govt. allotted houses. Do you know how many people have more than two houses built on govt. land?

History will follow its own course!

Taher Mia
Kentucky, USA

Memorable Baishakh

My mother and I went for the Baishakh shopping. The market was certainly crowded as people were engaged in shopping for the Bengali New Year. The shops had the time of their sales with several people emerging in and out of the shops with loads of shopping bags in their hands. In this very crowd while seeing a pair of earrings, I noticed a very young lady with two kids holding her hands. What

surprised me was that when several people found it difficult to spare time so as to pay at least a single visit in every shop (since the shops are instructed to be shut by 8:30) this young lady was staring at the bright, colourful objects from the glass windows, not even bothering to ask the price. Just then her young daughter called out to say

'Maa, ajeo ki amra kichoo kinbo na?' (Mother, aren't we going to buy anything even today?). The mother replied very softly-'na maa kalke kine dibo (No, my child I'll buy you something tomorrow). Those were the only few words that a mother could say to console her daughter. The three of them didn't stand there any longer. Instantaneously, I felt my eyes watering, my heart crying out and found it difficult to shop anymore. I came out of the mall and took a deep breath. Why is that when flowers of happiness shower upon this mighty world only few are fortunate to get them while the others are turned away empty-handed?

Shifat Nazme
Maple-Leaf International School

Why this duplicity?

The Foreign Minister on Saturday, 11th April, described Bangladesh as secular with a majority Muslim population, and not a moderate Muslim state as portrayed by the international community. She further stated that the ruling Awami League, which led the nation in 1971 Liberation War against Pakistan, never believed in the idea of moderate democratic Muslim country. Both of her claims, undoubtedly, appear to be consistent with her party's fundamental policy. However, is not it the same party that pledged to the nation that, if elected to power, it would not pass any laws contradictory to the Holy Quran and Sunnah? Apart from frequent use of religious terms before the election, did not the party begin its election campaign by visiting the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal(R) in Sylhet and seeking divine guidance?

Are we citizens to buy the endless duplicity that our politicians are known for?

Ryan M. Haque
West Rampura
Wapda Road, Dhaka

Dubious policy

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is loved by the majority of the people of Bangladesh which was reflected in all the elections, held lately.

The interim government wanted to ruin Sheikh Hasina's political career. They lodged some cases against her. On the contrary, people's love for Sheikh Hasina and her party has increased to a great extent.

Now if Sheikh Hasina wants to ruin Khaleda Zia's political career, she is committing a mistake. Cancellation of the lease of Khaleda Zia's house and filing of cases against the bigwigs of the BNP will be counterproductive in the long run.

Samsunnahar
Fultala
Khulna

Restrictions on milk import

The honourable commerce minister stated that the government was going to impose restrictions on import of powdered milk in next three years' import policy to discourage its import. I would like to draw the attention of the government to consider the situation from the consumers' point of view. The BNP led government imposed high customs duty, VAT, supplementary duty, AIT, PSI etc. to discourage import of powdered milk on the plea that production of milk in the country would be increased manifold within a couple of years as a result of such measures. The government also introduced cash subsidy for cattle farmers. But the government could not continue the programme due to mismanagement of subsidy funds. In practice people did not get adequate supply of milk in the last one and a half decade.

Owing to scarcity of milk, the price of per litre liquid milk has gone up to Tk. 47.00 in urban areas which is out of reach of even the middle-income group people.

Kids need milk as subsidiary food staff every day. The price must be within the reach of common people. Easy import of powdered milk with reduced rate of import duties is the available alternative before Bangladesh. The government must safeguard the interest of common consumers of milk. Restrictions and high import duties could not increase production of milk in the last one and a half decade, as the situation in Bangladesh is not suitable for commercial milk production.

I would like to urge the government to reconsider its decision of imposing restrictions on import of powdered milk.

Md. Ashraf Hossain
Ramma, Dhaka



To the Speaker...

As a Bangladeshi by birth we follow the BD politics with keen interest, we watch different TV channels of Bangladesh. We had the opportunity to watch segments of the proceedings of the recently concluded first session of the 9th parliament. We were very shocked to see that some members of this parliament were telling things far away from the truth.

For example, they said that they have doubts that Shaheed Ziaur Rahman took part in the liberation war. We are very upset that their statements were not expunged from the parliament proceedings. What a shame for parliament! It reinforces the common belief that the Bangladesh Awami League is run by highly biased people.

Mr. Speaker, don't you know that you are bound to uphold the prestige of parliament? Yasmine Sultan Rockville, Maryland, USA