

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Make merit the basis



SNAP/ISLAMIC DRINKERS

Results of the SSC exams have been published. We should be happy to observe that our next generation is doing well in their assigned jobs and achieving thousands of A plus or even so called 'Golden GPA'. On the very next day of publishing of results, the media informed us that this year also the students would get admission in colleges based on their GPA. This news hurts me, I strongly believe most of the students and guardians feel the same. It's total injustice to merit, it subsidizes creativity or even 'fair competition' among the admission seekers. It should be stopped right this year.

More than 62 thousand students have achieved GPA five this year. So how many standard colleges are

needed? At least 104 colleges (500 per college) will be required. Honourable decision makers, can you mention the name of standard and quality assured 11 colleges (10 percent of total demand)? I doubt.

A fairly competitive environment should be created for our next generations. They are the youngsters of global age group. To exist and to win, they have to fight with not only domestic competitors but also foreign counterparts. We should make them fit for global contests.

Md. Abdul Hamid
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Business Administration
Shahjalal University, Sylhet

graduate programmes in physiotherapy, rehabilitation, or related disciplines at the post graduation or doctoral level. Even in our neighbouring country i.e. India, universities offer undergraduate programmes of physiotherapy with four years of academic and clinical programme and 6 months of compulsory internship. There are over 250 colleges offering undergraduate programmes in physiotherapy (BPT) and more than 50 colleges are offering master's degree in physiotherapy (MPT) with 2 years' duration. PhD in physiotherapy is offered in some universities in the states like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

We cannot forget the glorious contribution of the physiotherapists immediately after the liberation war of 1971. There was a huge demand for the treatment like physiotherapy. Thousands of war-wounded freedom fighters were admitted for treatment in different hospitals with an unprecedented demand for physiotherapy treatment. To cope with the crisis of physiotherapists, Dr. R. J. Grast, the then director of RIHD, introduced the graduate course. It must be noted that today the physiotherapists of Bangladesh are working throughout the world with great reputation. At the same time, physiotherapy students from UK, Canada, Netherlands come to our country for their research.

I hope the issue will receive due attention from the authorities concerned.

Akash Pradip
Lecturer and Writer
Chapain, Savar
Dhaka

No flowery reception!

The photograph published on page 7 of your newspaper of 26th May, 2009 shows the simply and elegantly dressed Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon, welcoming the new Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. SM Krishna, with a warm handshake and not with a big bunch of flowers.

We saw recently at the entrance of all of our ministries, how the ministers were received by our secretaries concerned on their arrival for the first time.

Theirs is democracy and ours is sycophancy!
M.A Quasem Chowdhury
Dilkusha CIA
Dhaka

Universities

The failure to accommodate the ever-growing number of students seeking higher education, among other things, has necessitated the government to open up the sector to

non-government operators to run universities. Both public and private universities have been playing a very vital role in spreading higher education across the country, barring some exception. Most of the private universities are Dhaka-centric, only a few have opened campuses outside Dhaka to facilitate and attract a larger segment of students intending to pursue higher education on their chosen disciplines.

Such initiatives should be taken by others as well.
Aguardian
One-mail

Wasa water

About two years back our Wasa undertook the business of bottled water ('Shanti') like many other private organisations. They invested a huge amount of money in purchasing machineries, paying staff salaries and other overhead expenditures. Although other organisations/ companies are earning considerable profits selling bottled water, Wasa's loss is on the increase. But my question is why Wasa has got involved in such business. Their main duty is to supply water to people of this capital city through the pipeline. But many people in many areas have to remain without water. Wasa's water is not pure and is risky for health. The performance of Wasa is not up to the mark and thus they should concentrate on supplying pure water through a flawless piping network. Bottled water is for the rich and for them there are many private enterprises. Wasa is not a private company. The poor, middle income people and even the rich want pure water from Wasa at a lower price. In the name of "shanti" it should not bring any "ashanti".
Harun-or-Rashid
Sobhanbag, Dhaka

Where is my share?

Due to world recession, the govt of Bangladesh has declared several thousand crores taka as rescue package, so that the aggrieved industries or sectors are benefited to some extent. On the other hand, the representatives of FBCCI, DCCI, BGMEA, BKMEA, tanneries, agro sector etc, do often ask the finance minister, commerce minister, BB governor etc to lower bank interest rate. Unfortunately, many public limited companies did manage to raise share capital indicating fatty return on investment but some of them do not pay dividends for years, some do not arrange AGM, some could not be enlisted in stock markets and thus they are enjoying interest free capital for decades.

Many of these public limited companies will be benefited under the rescue package but as a primary share holder of those public companies I would like to have my share of govt sponsored rescue package. Those stock market manipulators of 1996 are very active now.

Mahbubur Rahman
Dasani
Bagerhat

Lifelines of Dhaka

Three cheers for The Daily Star for focusing every day in the front page the miserable condition of the lifelines- the four rivers around Dhaka. All citizens of Dhaka, irrespective of their political affiliations, should stand behind this commendable effort undertaken by your newspaper. Because of this bold campaign, the honourable High Court has acted in line with the aspiration of the Dhaka city dwellers.

What are the people's representatives living around these lifelines doing? We believe there is no time to lose. Decisive action from the government upon the land grabbers and encroachers has become a dire necessity.

Plenty of time and various suggestions and decisions were taken, but no practical results on the field were seen. May I humbly request every citizen of the country, who loves rivers, canals, forests, and want the government land to be free from grabbers, to unite behind the timely call of The Daily Star.

MMAziz
DOHS Baridhara
Dhaka

Agreat job

Our heartfelt thanks to The Daily Star, we laud its concern for our dying rivers, which if not revived will choke our cities. The picture revealed is horrifying, ten feet layer of discarded polythene bags and other waste materials are covering the bed of river Buriganga. Untreated wastes from industries are pouring into the rivers, making them severely polluted, creating a most serious situation.

If remedial steps are not taken immediately, a catastrophic situation will arise. The people should be united to protest and compel the government to take urgent action. The government must give top priority to this problem. Otherwise, we will be in great peril.

In 1971, we fought to liberate our country, now we will have to fight to save our country from pollution of all sorts. If nothing is done for the dying rivers, the day is not far away when children will learn that once there were rivers in Bangladesh.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Are we learning?

Thanks to the Daily Telegraph, British MPs are now beginning to learn the true definition of "taxpayers' money".

Unfortunately, journalism in our country works slightly differently. When there is an AL government, all the pro-AL newspapers go on an overdrive to inform the public about all the corruption that took place under the previous government (which is always the BNP as our country suffers from Bi-party Affective Disorder). And when the BNP forms the government, all the pro-BNP newspapers go on an overdrive to inform the public about all the unholy things that went on under the previous AL government.

This kind of journalism, no matter how well-intentioned, appears to be politically motivated. And the problem is not only with what gets published.

We are baffled by some of the things that don't get published at crucial times. There are many examples when one newspaper decides to put a particular story on its front-page while its rivals try to hide it in the back pages! Reading some of those half-hearted reports, it feels as though the newspaper is desperately trying to hide the story instead of revealing it. What a shame!

I end this letter with a small request to our newspapers: can we please have some reports on how many Umrah Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina have performed since 1991 (particularly when they were prime ministers)?

How many officials/staff usually went with them on each trip and how much did each trip cost? I think the people of Bangladesh have a right to know this much. Our newspapers have always shied away from publishing any detailed reports on this because both of their beloved 'netris' are involved in it. But it is our money and we want the truth now, please.

Azad Miah
Oldham
UK

Unexpected violence

The violence erupting among the followers of two sects of people in Maheshkhali has become intolerable. The common people are the worst victims. The recent outcome of the violence is the death of two followers of Kawmi sect. Though it is difficult to say clearly who is responsible and who is right or wrong, common people eagerly want a quick remedy.

Md. Ukil Ahmed
Dept. of English
International Islamic
University Chittagong

Traffic jams

Nowadays traffic jam appears to be a big curse in our urban areas. Yes, it is a common phenomenon that city people go to the market and park their vehicles on the road, as if the space of the road is their forefathers' property.

The issue has to be handled efficiently.

Aiman Bin Shaofiqul Hamid
Dept. of English
International Islamic
University Chittagong (IIUC)

Frankenstein for US?

We all know the story of Frankenstein. In pursuit of vengeance and driven by self-ego, Frankenstein wanted to kill his own creator. In the light of same fictional character, we have witnessed this week such behaviour from Israel to its stalwart ally, the USA, through its open defiance to US proposal to stop Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian lands. Being taken aback by the blunt US proposal to stop further settlements on the Palestinian land, Israel apparently has taken a path of defiance, rather than compliance with the US proposal.

It is really interesting to see how Israel can openly defy the US proposal in spite of yearly 6-8 billion dollar military aid (from the US). Over the decades, US policies on Israel and unilateral support in the UN Security Council have somehow given Israel a sense of entitlement.

Israeli lobbying groups with the support of mainstream media in the US, have been able to manipulate US policies on the Middle East for such a long time that any fair and balanced US policy seems like a fairytale now.

It is really interesting to see how the Obama administration is going to handle this situation and stick to its vow for two-state solution amidst Israeli government's latest stance. Because Netanyahu, besides being a radical him-

self, has strong backing from the ultra orthodox Jewish groups; some of them even don't want to accept any Palestinian presence in the occupied land (they believe all the land in that region can only be inhabited by Jews as God's decree).

Unless Israel agrees to stop further settlements and withdraw previous settlements from occupied Palestinian lands, the hope for future peace is very bleak.

Zafar Hadi
California, USA

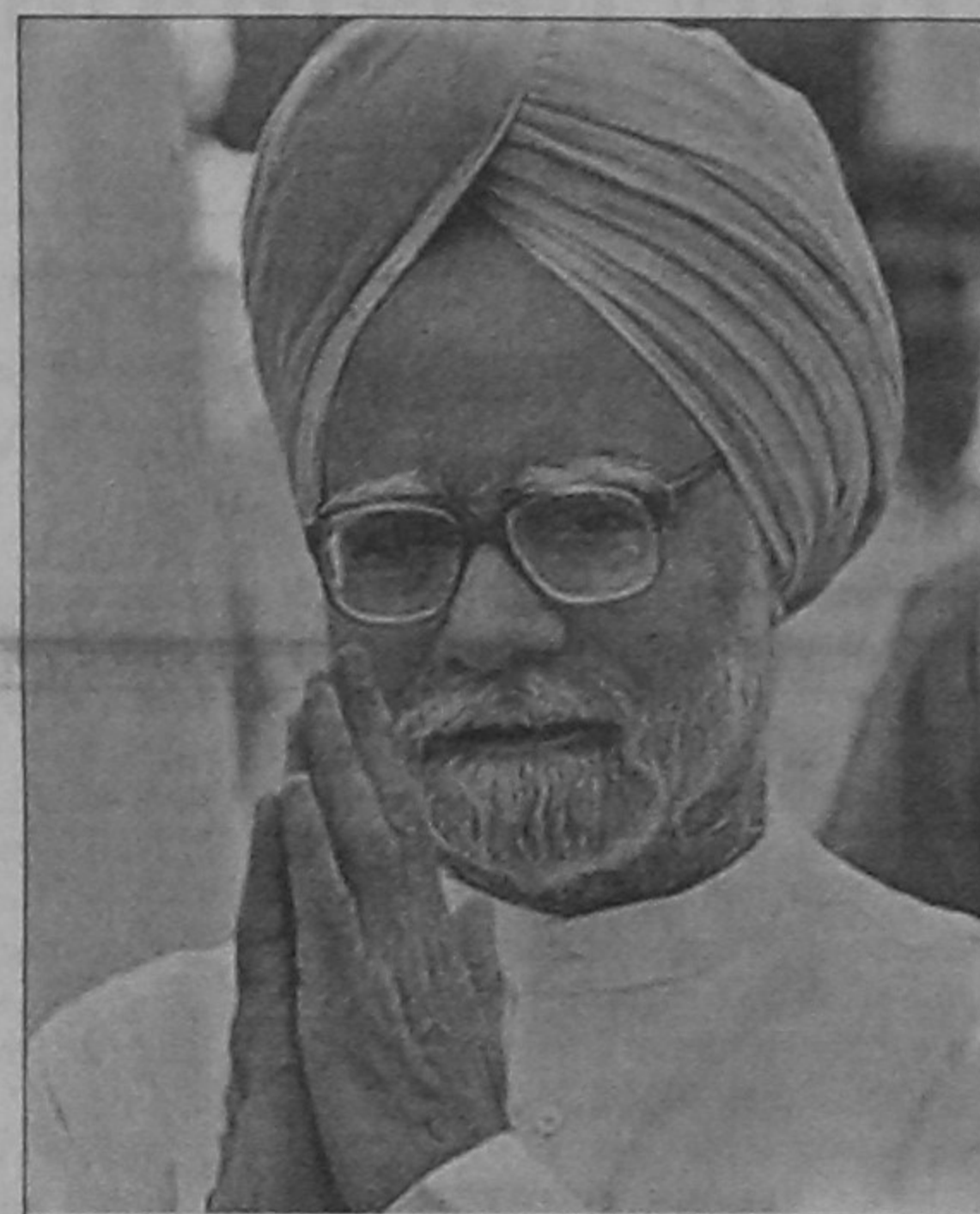
No dearth of talent

There is no dearth of talent in our wonderful land - thousands of GPA 5 students. No electricity, no water, dusty, smoky, jam-packed totally unhealthy environment where most of the valuable time is loafed off on the streets - that is our Dhaka city, even then our meritorious students are making this result. Compared to the students of the developed countries, our students have to work harder for this achievement. But what are we doing for them? A great shame indeed. Young sweet children of the parents are being forced to go on hunger strike for the third time. A final decision should be made in time.

We are destroying our merits, whereas the patriotic leaders are going to Singapore for simple treatment. Our students are working harder, but they are not getting proper recognition.

Kishore, Dhaka

Dr. Manmohan Singh



Dr Manmohan Singh was born on September 26, 1932 in Punjab which is in Pakistan now. He studied at Punjab, Oxford and Cambridge Universities. After leaving Cambridge he spent 9 years as professor in Punjab University. Then he joined in Business and Development Department of UNO in 1966. In 1969 he joined as professor in Delhi School of Economics. He successfully worked as Financial Adviser and finance Secretary to the Government of India. He was the Governor of Reserve Bank, Vice Chairman of Planning Commission and the Chairman of University Grants Commission. After the defeat in Lok Sabha election in 1999 from West Delhi Parliamentary constituency, he did not want to be a politician. But in 2004 he was elected from Assam to the Upper House and became the prime minister of India. When he was the finance minister in PV Narasimha Rao's cabinet when the financial condition of India was very bad. He performed brilliantly at that time. This is his best achievement of his life for which India will remember him forever.

Mohammad Shahidul Islam
A tourism worker

Rajuk

Rajuk has disgraced all of us. We live in England, but send money to relatives in Bangladesh and wish to buy a plot of land in order to be able to settle there in the near future. At first, Rajuk tells the applicants that any proof of Bangladeshi nationality, will suffice, when put with the application form. And then, after many of us have already sent off our application forms, they claim that photocopies of Bangladeshi passports must be enclosed alongside the application form and other documents. Now, as the selection process of application forms is an ongoing process, they inform us that all passports must be valid. If they don't have this information, then they discard the applications. Why, if they truly need the information, do they not request it? They have everyone's e-mail address, they have their house addresses, and telephone numbers. They cannot simply throw away

thousands of applications merely for lack of information, which they did not at first, request. A hefty list, is it not? Following on from that aberration, they claimed that they would inform the general public on who had got a plot by the end of the one-month following the deadline, this turned into six months. Will it turn into one year, and then two years next? We don't even have any form of confirmation, by email or by any other means that our hard-earned money has been received by Rajuk. And we, ourselves have no way of confirming this. No one answers the phone on the contact number we were given, and I have personally sent people round to the Rajuk offices, where they claim they are too busy to do anything, or to give out any information. These incidents have shown our character, i.e. to be unreliable, unpredictable, and utterly an annoyance.

Lilly Evans
One-mail

Reprieve for rickshaws

A news item a few days ago mentioned that the 400,000 (an inflated figure) rickshaws in Dhaka had been granted a temporary reprieve and allowed to ply on the roads where they had been illegally banned (in contravention to their basic constitutional rights) for over 1-1/2 years, because the DMP 'suddenly realised' that the ban was causing them hardship. What generosity! But does the ordinary traffic cop know about this decision? NO, because he is still insisting on his 'ounce of flesh' to make 'exceptions' (as I can personally testify).

This is something I had been vociferously propagating in the print media for over 20 months in 39 letters on this very subject. The DMP, with their proverbial head in the sand, did not say anything about the real cause of traffic jams and sadly you echoed their inane sentiments in your second editorial that followed the news. Even the poll opinion on the subject is hazy and inconclusive because you did not mention whether the pollsters were car-owners or plebeian rickshaw users.

By now it should be apparent to the meanest intelligence as to the real causes of traffic jams and believe me rickshaws are way down in the list! Just see the pic-

tures of gridlock now being published almost every day in the papers. Can anyone see a single rickshaw on the clogged road? To repeat ad nauseum, it is the 400,000 stretched out, gas-guzzling monstrosities that cannot even turn on Dhaka's pot-



MUNEM WASIF/DRINKERS

holed, narrow and inadequate streets without causing a traffic jam. They hog 75-80% of road space while travelling empty, half-empty and transporting about 1-2% of the privileged class at astronomical cost.

Does the gutless DMP realize

what Dhaka's roads will be like when the thousands of new, expensive 'toys' of our brand new political appointees (read masters) hit the roads? And the thousands of brand new cars waiting to be cleared from Chittagong and Mongla Ports once the new

budget is announced making these new contraptions even more 'manageable' to those waiting to wash their hands in the Ganga of easy money.

Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Gulshan-1
Dhaka