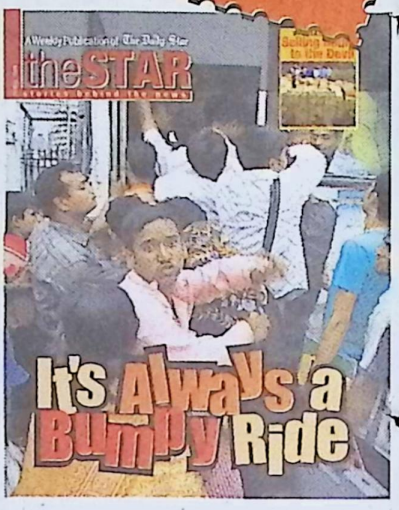
letters

Commuting in Dhaka

Your cover story "Commuters Taken for a Ride" was a timely piece. Travelling in Dhaka has become a torture, especially for the middle class. There are some issues that your article should have explored. The yellow cabs, run by Navana and a few other companies, are air conditioned and relatively safe because they have individual numbers, and they are connected to a central control centre by wireless. Nowadays, the number of yellow cabs seems much less. The black cabs on the other hand are very unsafe. The mostly Indian-made cars often break down stranding passengers in the middle of the road. The drivers are often involved with muggers. The government should take steps to ensure that enough of the yellow cabs are on the roads. The process of issuing road permits should be made smooth. Fitness of the cabs must also be checked carefully. The law enforcement agencies must make sure the companies have total control over their drivers.

It is also strange that A/C buses have disappeared from our roads. Your story says that they are expensive to maintain. But many people like me would happily pay more to enjoy a comfortable ride, rather than having to squeeze into a bus with standing room only. I hope the government and private entrepreneurs will address these issues immediately.

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White Tiger and Contemplating Navel



While leafing through the old issues of your magazine I came across an article titled 'Visioneme: Our Own Academic or Subaltern Gaze' (Volume 14, Issue 627). Pedantic though the title is, as it flashes the photo of Aravinda Adiga, one of my favourite authors, I took the trouble of reading the piece. Written by an Assistant Professor at a private university, where to study would cost the subalterns (or an 'ultra-poor person'), to quote the professor himself, a fortune, the article claims that Adiga has won the Man Booker Prize after impressing the authority by becoming sarcastic about his own society and country, washing one's own dirty linen in front of the imperialists. The whole idea is too simplistic and smacks of the old putrid version of Marxism that we were familiar with in the early sixties. I think it is time the writer (who also proudly declares that he has bought the book from 'the street hawker'; a pirated copy?) must know that a novelist's prime (if not sole) responsibility (this word I am using quite grudgingly) is that of a laundry (wo) man. Dissecting reality and reinterpreting it for herself and before her readers is what an author does. Whatever this jargon-filled article tells the readers, *White Tiger* brilliantly portrays the reality of a budding capitalistic society, a country where quasi-feudalism, lumpen capitalism and the transnatiotionals (Abdus Selim will approve) cohabit peacefully. Adiga truly writes back to the centre, and like Ekalabya's arrow it hits the centre of horror, true horror.

Saiful Islam
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S.S.C Results

Once again, the SSC results have been published across the country. Needless to say that the students who achieved good results in their first public exam are ecstatic with happiness. But will their happiness be short-lived?

It is a matter of great regret that most of the students who got GPA-5 in the exam may not get admitted to their first choice colleges. Nowadays, it is a common phenomenon that obtaining GPA-5 is easier than getting admission to a renowned college or university. A large number of students compete for a few positions at the most prestigious institutions.

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINE:

Letters to the Editor, Star Diary and Write to Mita, with the writer's name and address, should be within 200 words. All articles should be within 1,200 words. A cover letter is not necessary, but every write-up should include the writer's name, phone number and email address (if any). While The Star welcomes unsolicited articles and photographs, it cannot accept the responsibility of their loss or damage. The Star does not return unsolicited articles and photos. Response time for unsolicited write-ups ranges from three weeks to two months. All articles submitted are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

All materials should be sent to: The Star magazine, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215, Fax: 880-2-8125155 or emailed to: <thestarmagazine@gmail.com>

It is recommended that those submitting work for the first time to The Star take a look at a sample copy beforehand. Our website is: http://www.thedailystar.net/magazine