

Dispel the disparity

It is clear that if Tk.45,000 is justified for grade 1, then Tk.4,000 is unjust for grade 20. If Tk.4,000 is justified for grade 20, then Tk.45,000 is unjust for grade 1.

M. RAFIQUK ISLAM

THE 7th pay commission for government employees recommended Tk.45,000, 37,700, 32,600, 28,850, 26,230, 20,800, 16,900, 13,750, 12,500, 9,300, 7,000, 6,400, 6,000, 5,600, 5,300, 5,000, 4,700, 4,400, 4,200 and 4,000 for the grades 1 to 20, respectively. There is an imbalance between the higher and the lower scales, in the number of grades in different statistical classes or ranges, and many other disparities -- like the previous pay scales including the last one activated in 2005. Even, the current commission suggested more discrepancies as clarified below:

In Chart A, each small triangle indicates the starting basic pay of a specific grade. The chart shows that the pay commission proposed the lower 10 grades (Grades 20 to 11) in the 1st segment of the Y-axis ranging from Tk.4,000 to Tk.7,000. Accordingly, considering the same trend of enhancement, the next 10 grades (Grades 10 to 1) would have been placed in the next segment of Tk.7,000-10,000. In that case, Tk.10,000, at best, will be the basic pay for Grade 1. But basic of this grade is proposed to be fixed upward in the next 12th segment (Tk.43,000-46,000).

An expected repairing: A top-level government employee does not

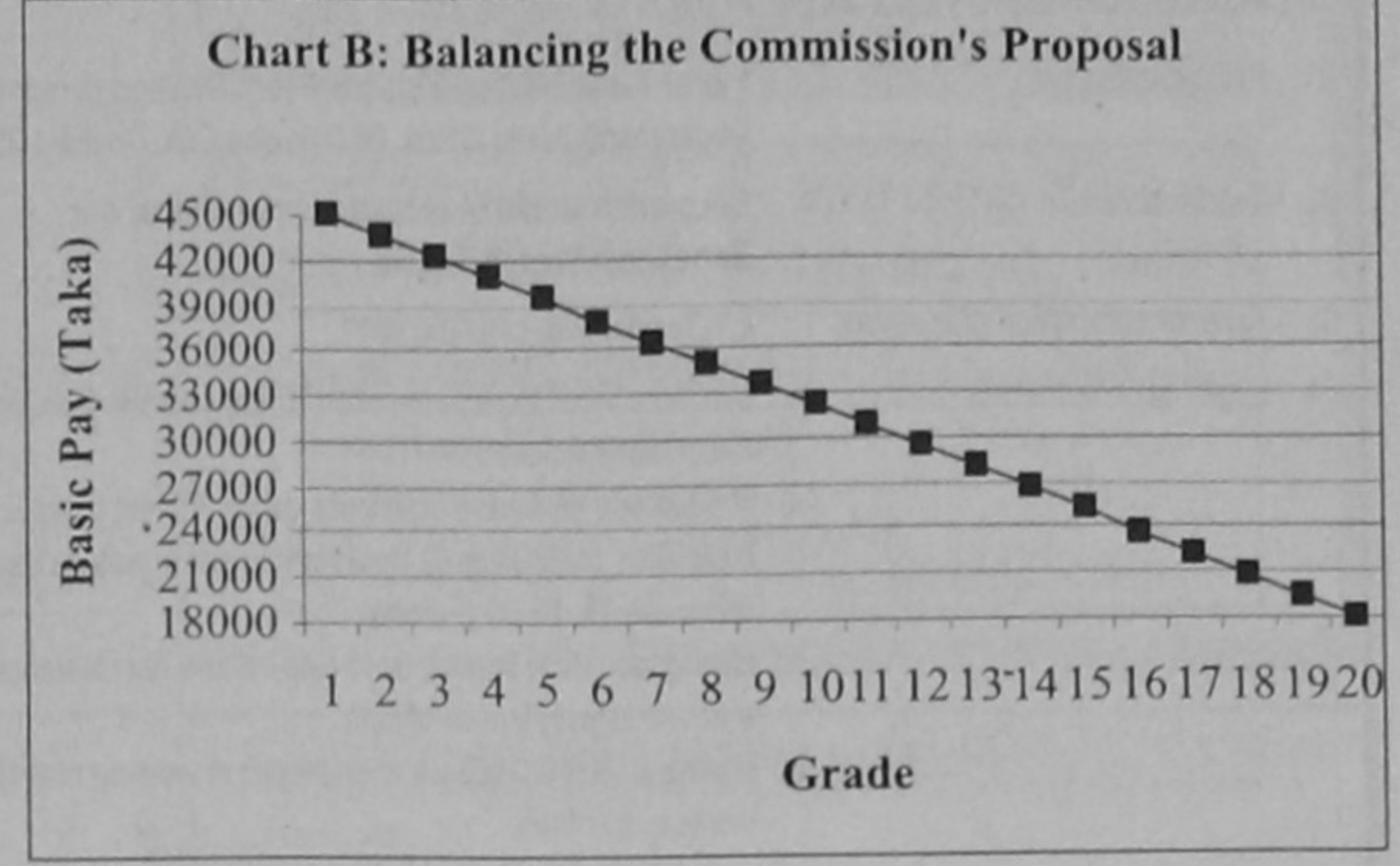
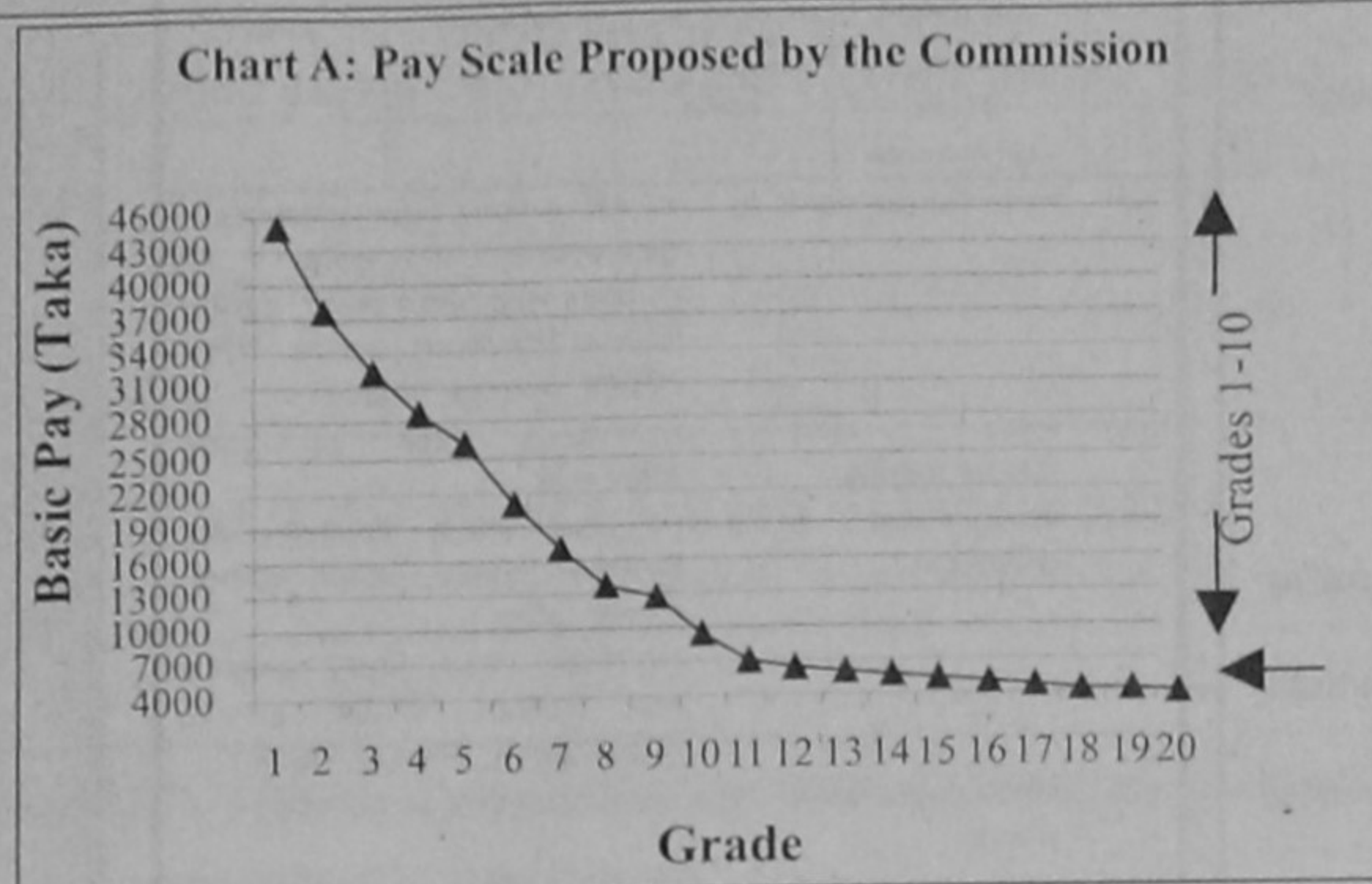
deserve a basic pay of only Tk.10,000 per month, rather we support Tk.45,000 for them. We also do not think that basic pay of Tk.4,000 per month is sufficient for the lowest grade employee. He deserves Tk.18,000.

In that case, the basics will be Tk.45,000, 43,560, 42,140, 40,720, 39,300, 37,880, 36,460, 35,040, 33,620, 32,200, 30,780, 29,360, 27,940, 26,520, 25,100, 23,680, 22,260, 20,840, 19,420 and 18,000 for all the grades 1 to 20, respectively, considering an equal difference between any two consecutive grades.

Chart B shows 2 grades, on an average, in every segment in the Y-axis with a range of Tk.3,000 (for example: Tk.18,000-21,000, 21,000-24,000, ... 42,000-45,000, etc.). It also indicates a gradual enhancement of basic pays with an equal slope.

Crude Paradox: It is clear that if Tk.45,000 is justified for grade 1, then Tk.4,000 is unjust for grade 20. If Tk.4,000 is justified for grade 20, then Tk.45,000 is unjust for grade 1. We conclude that the commission's proposal is logically nothing but a paradox!

Boomerang theory: Line charts of the basic pays of all the six pay scales executed by the government since our independence show a boomerang shape. From a geometrical view, every line graph is like an angle having two sides, like a boomerang (Chart A). A



boomerang is a weapon that returns to the thrower.

The boomerang-shaped line-graphic pay scale is repeatedly loaded on the government employees. The differences in the basic pays of different grades were never equitable or balanced, so their line-graphs were always angle-shaped rather than straight line (Chart B). Boomerang also means "to rebound."

Actually, this kind of imbalanced pay scale weakens the structure. In this perspective, it is self-destructive for the government. So, "boomerang," in both senses of the word, applies to the execution of the pay scales!

Prison cell theory: The non-gazetted government employees of Grade 11-20 are imprisoned in a pay class of Tk.4,000-7,000. Chart A also shows one grade per segment from Tk.7,000-10,000 to 43,000-46,000. But, the low-

est segment (Tk.3,000-7,000) has 10 grades! Is it logical, in any aspect? The range of the segment is only Tk.3,000. As if 10 outlaws were imprisoned in a prison cell with an area of 3,000 square inches (i.e. about 20 square feet)! Like the prisoners, the government employees of grades 20-11 (i.e. of Class IV and Class III) are living in an inadequate pay-range. As a result, they are not able to even breathe peacefully!

Top-bottom ratio: The commission proposed the top-bottom ratio as 11.25:1. The reviewed proposal is for 9.75:1 in the reports of July 2! It is even higher than the current one (9.6:1). The ratio is 5:1 in Japan and 6:1 in the US.

Last words: This analysis is a general one. Gross Domestic Product per capita, enhancement of price index and other socio-economic factors are not considered. They are to be consid-

ered by the pay commission and the approving authorities. We are ready to accept all justified differences, but they should be of single parameter.

Difference in multi-parameter implies nothing but suppression of the employees in the lower half of the national pay structure. We suggest that after fixing of the basic pays for the top and the bottom grades, the difference between them should be equally distributed among the in-between grades. We also showed that if the basic pay of the top grade is fixed at Tk.45,000, the basic pay of the bottom grade should be fixed at Tk.18,000.

Our desire is to have a straight line-graph of the basic pays, not a line-graph in an angular shape like a boomerang. The line should be with equal slope. In that case the difference between any two consecutive grades will be the same. We could observe in additional

analysis that the discrepancies clarified in this article are not different from those present in the last 6 pay scales. Always the line graphs were as angular as a boomerang! The lowest segment of every bar-chart was crowded with excessive grades, the lowest statistical class was full to the brim. Actually, without removal of the structural weakness and discrepancy, the employees of Class III and Class IV will not be free from disparity and deprivation.

Latest: The commission's report has been reviewed by the committee of secretaries, and will be submitted to the prime minister with a slight change. The change is not significant according to the newspaper reports on July 2. The analysis of the commission's recommendations will be applicable to the reviewed one.

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Iranian elections and the West

On the Iranian election, President Obama very correctly maintained a balanced position till he came under political pressure mainly from his former opponent John McCain. President Obama's earlier position was that the US should not appear to "meddle" in Iranian election i.e. internal affairs.

MUSLEHUDDIN AHMAD

THE Iranian presidential election took place on June 12, and the next day the incumbent, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, was declared the winner. This led to protests, as Mir Hosein Mousavi and his supporters challenged the outcome of the election. The US and many countries in the West also made official statements about "irregularities" in the election.

Protests took place in Tehran and some other cities and towns of Iran, and as the protests were more or less peaceful, the security forces did not intervene. But things turned ugly when demonstrators were attacked by the Revolutionary Guards on the plea that the protesters became violent due to the encouragement and support they received from the politicians and the media of the West. About 16 people were reportedly killed on the streets of Tehran.

It seems that Ahmadinejad would have probably been elected anyway, maybe by a lesser margin. One pre-poll survey done by a research organisation in the US stated that Ahmadinejad got some 62% as the majority of the rural

votes were in favour of him.

However, serious questions arose when the election decisions were given by the Grand Ayatollah, chief of the Guardians Council, as something like "divine assessment," though at some stage, because of strong protests, the council said it would order investigation of irregularities in some 50 districts. The Guardian Council should not be entitled to give a verdict on a matter of people's decision.

However, the real promise for change has been shown by a large number of Iranians, which may lead Iran in the long run towards useful reform in Iran's constitution and governance. It was obvious that many of the educated people did not like the way the Guardians Council acted.

In any case, the outside powers should not get involved in the internal affairs of Iran or any other country. The world still recalls how the UK and the US got involved in a coup for re-installing pro-Western Shah of Iran in 1953. Similar things have happened in Latin America and elsewhere. So, why lecture others on democracy? It is good that President Obama decided not to lecture, but to listen.



The Iranians can manage their own affairs.

On the Iranian election, President Obama very correctly maintained a balanced position till he came under political pressure mainly from his former opponent John McCain. President Obama's earlier position was that the US should not appear to "meddle" in Iranian election i.e. internal affairs.

His basic position was that the US should be ready to deal with the government in place, and it is up to the Iranian people to decide who should be their president. This is what should be the basic element of the foreign policy of a democratic country.

The US presidential elections are also not flawless. Serious irregularities took place in Florida, and partly in Ohio when George Bush and Al Gore contested the election. But no one condemned the US when it mismanaged its own election matters in Florida.

President Obama, however, had to change his earlier stand, and become more forceful in his rhetoric when Congress became highly critical of Iran. On June 23, he said he was "appalled and outraged" by the Iranian government's handling of the street protests. He also added: "I strongly condemn the unjust actions, and I join with the American people in mourning each and every innocent life that is lost."

On the shooting of the young woman, Neda, Obama said: "We have experienced the searing image of a woman bleeding to death on the streets. While this loss is raw and extraordinarily painful, we also know

this: Those who stand up for justice are always on the right side of history."

This statement is full of sentiment, but diplomatically less offensive, and should cause no serious problem in terms of relations with Iran.

The main objective of President Obama is to negotiate with Iran on the nuclear issue. There must not be any more nuclear bombs in the world, but what about Israel? As Israel has the bomb, how does the US and some of the West, with the bomb in their own arsenal, stop any other country in having it as a deterrent, and particularly a country in the same region?

The US and the West do not trust Ahmadinejad, but how do they trust Netanyahu? How would they ensure that Israel will never use it against Iran or a neighbour? Even if Iran develops the bomb, how would it affect Israel or the rest of the world?

If Iran ever launches a nuclear bomb at Israel -- it would be complete madness, then Israel's bomb would indeed land on Iran even before the Iranian bomb reaches Israel's border! It would mean total destruction of the region. Thus there is no chance of anyone using it. So why bother?

The majority of Israelis are ready to live with a nuclear Iran. These Israelis are undoubtedly intelligent people. They know that a nuclear bomb is not a thing that can ever be used in today's world.

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12 reasons kindergarten teachers should rule the world



THERE are four major zones of violent civil unrest on this planet: Afghanistan, Iraq, the Gaza Strip, and my local international kindergarten. The last of these is by far the most frightening, as you can see in the looks of terror in the eyes of adults who have to enter.

Every morning at 8.15, hundreds of vicious fiends in human shape create a planet-shaking amount of noise and chaos that makes the Big Bang look like a soap bubble popping.

Yet every day at 8.30 am, a young

female teacher marches onto the scene, claps her hands, barks a few words and peace descends instantly. Guns are dropped, throats are released, swords are sheathed, knuckle-dusters are pocketed and hundreds of tiny incarnations of Pure Evil sit quietly, cross-legged on the ground, thumbs in mouths. How does she do it?

The unavoidable conclusion is that this world would be a much better place if amazing women like her and her colleagues were put in charge of it. Why not give them the reins?

Here are 12 immediate benefits that would ensue if kindergarten teachers ran the world.

There would be no need for elections. Everyone would have a go at being president as long as they all lined up and took turns nicely.

There would be no obesity because people would run around hyperactively while subsisting on tiny portions of pureed apples.

There would be no nightclubs, because we'd all be ordered to go to bed at 7.30 pm.

There would be no alcoholics or drunken drivers because people would only be allowed one Coca-Cola a week, and only if they promised not to get hyper.

There would be no need to spend billions on sewage systems because everyone can just do their stuff into nappies.

There would be no wars. If someone hits someone, they have to say sorry like they mean it and make up. "George? You go and give Saddam a biiiiig hug right now."

Property developers would be kept busy because they would be constantly

asked to produce multi-block structures which would be built and knocked over, built and knocked over, built and knocked over, ad infinitum.

The use of "time out" as a punishment would make prisons obsolete. If someone invaded a neighboring country, they would have to stay in their room for a week.



The secret finger-eater saw that she would soon be fed once more

There would be no crime. If someone takes your stuff, they have to give it back and sit in the corner facing the wall.

There would be no need for massive movie budgets because Hollywood could make one film which would then be watched 73 times in a row with no loss of interest.

No one will ever get sick: people will have fantastically strong immune systems because they will be operating on the principle that items of food taste better when picked off the carpet.

There would be no bad behavior of any kind because anyone who does that sort of thing will get his bottle smacked and don't think you won't, because you will.

Don't you think it's a good idea? And adults, perverse creatures that we are, will actually enjoy the whole thing.

For more on how to rule the world, visit our columnist at www.vittachi.com.