



ANDADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Aging Shishu Park

Due to its affordable costs and exiting rides, Shahbagh's Shaheed Zia Shishu Park was once a famous hang out place for Dhakaitees. Maintained by Dhaka City Corporation, this park was a buzzing place for teenagers and adults alike. But those golden days of Shishu Park are gone by with the passage of time. Now Dhaka has a good number of parks which are maintained by private enterprises and these parks are way better than the Shishu Park in terms of rides and all other facilities. Moreover, we have now water parks as well in our country like the developed countries. So I think people of Bangladesh are not deprived of getting their desired entertainment options since we have no dearth of entertainment parks. But the high cost of these privately run parks does not encourage lower class people and even the middle class people can hardly go to these parks. So generally Shishu Park is still the only source of entertainment for majority of lower and middle-income people. But the age-old rides and run down vehicles of Shishu Park hardly attract the visitors nowadays. Dhaka City Corporation is neglecting to allocate the required budget for Shishu Park from the very beginning and hence the same age old 12 rides without any renovation have been frustrating the visitors for a long time. Several projects for development and

renovation of the park couldn't be implemented in the past ten years due to bureaucratic tangles. But kudos must be given to the persons who are constantly maintaining the age old rides of the Shishu Park. The sheer hard work of the maintenance staffs of Shishu Park is responsible for no major accidents from these run down rides. But things should not go this way. It has been heard that by the end of this year, some new rides will be added to Shishu Park and the park will be renovated. But so far no indication in this regard has been revealed by the people concerned. Dhaka City Corporation must wake up and take the appropriate measures to improve the sorry state of Shishu Park without further ado before it's too late. The frustration of common people for lack of government run entertainment park will be worsened if the authorities concerned do not pay heed to improving the condition of the Shishu Park. People have the right to have affordable entertainment and the government definitely should not neglect this issue of importance.

Shishu Park needs urgent attention. Is anybody listening?

Nazmus Saquib

Dept. of English
Stamford University
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Reflections on life

As a life-long resident of Dacca/Dhaka city, life in 2009 is different to me: we cannot find and engage a maid-servant [bua]--not available! Decades ago, I remember about the maid-servants we exported from Dacca to Calcutta [Rs ten pm] They also acted as dai (nurse) to the children in the household; who later grew up and married and the maid was allowed a pension after retirement!

Indirectly it means that our standard of living is rising, in flats, hi-rise living! We (family members) have to do all the chores ourselves: washing, cleaning, cooking, and going to bazaar. It tells on the retired couple, with the child abroad studying.

Another problem in this global village: watch your English inputs; and resulting output. The mixture of Yankee English and Saheb English is confusing; not to speak of the eerie spelling checks. The former citizens of the British Commonwealth were steeped in the Empire culture: uniformed and turbaned khansamahs, while the Saheb-seped soda attired in a T-shirt.

Today, we miss the cushioning effect of social formalities [still noticed in West Bengal] led by black-wealth. Today money is everything in life; there is no respect for plain living and high thinking. Note the power games: Nadal (tennis) is burnt out (as expected); compared to the yogic stance of Federer. Manmohan Singh [so self-effacing] wouldn't be recognised by a stranger as a Prime Minister. Stark materialism resulted in the Indian cricket team's exit from the 20/20 cricket (press report): big money in cricket today [commercial contracts]. An Indian movie (Slumdog Millionaire)---know baneyga crore-pati) won several Academy Awards for depicting scenes (to the rich West) so common in the Third World cities---the lives of the toka.

I sold my BMW abroad, before returning to Dhaka after retirement (no place to drive); and still ride the pedal rick-

shaw; and avoid the metered auto rickshaws, for displaying the fare meter without using it (note the performance of the senile governance)! I remember my school days in old Dacca when ghoras-gari could be engaged at the rate of three hours per Rupee; rice and milk were eight seers to the Rupee; and Manchester saree [for mother] cost only Rupee one and four annas [when twelve Rupees equalled one Pound Sterling]

These days the son got angry as he lost three years at the private university in Dhaka due to shortage of funds. Why should it take three decades for a new nation to stand on its feet? We are suffering from this official systems losses. We Bengalee gripe as usual; plus the gift of the gab disintegrates us. Where to seek shelter?

A middle class pensioner
Dhaka

Prices of essentials

The prices of essentials are going up as Ramadan approaches. At the same time, the country is facing the primary flood situation in some regions. And the performance of the government in controlling unwanted situations has been facing questions so far.

All these factors might have worked behind a misery that people suffered in the past. The international market factor that was credited in the previous year for higher prices should not be an excuse this time, we hope.

Egg and potato, two common foods in our menu, should be available at reasonable price. These can contribute positively as they are less vulnerable to flood and crop destruction. Import of eggs is an option to maintain the supply in Ramadan, at least. This may reduce the plight of lower end people a bit.

Depending only on TCB is not a viable option as we saw earlier. So, market control and monitoring comes into the table and should not be bypassed at any means.

The logistics working behind the kitchen market

must be supported before any unwanted situation arises.

And the drive against food adulteration should be a non-stop process. People demand it, whatever be the regulatory aspects against it.

Let us hope for a relaxed Ramadan.

Asraf Ali

One-mail

Politics

Our politics is neither polite; nor does it tick (infected with ticks). We are beating about the bush. Our rivers and politics need to remove the silt also. How to salvage our sense and sensibility? Our politics is creating a negative image outside. Not interested? Get out of the routine mindset!

We want to be practical and fast, but the approaches to the problems have to be analysed. For this, political consensus is needed at the national level, but it is simply not there----the continuity of the tools adopted for national salvaging.

What has happened to the homogeneity in our culture?

Bangladesh is split and divided internally, into at least three factions: two dynastic, and one religious. Flow with the tide, like kochurupana (water hyacinth)?

What's wrong with our base/foundation? Premature? The issue is taboo? Why we cannot mature (in the right direction)? Why philosophy in politics has died out? Too pragmatic, for instant results?

Now the elected regime is chasing the former Caretaker Government---vendetta effect? The proof of the pudding lies in the eating---regardless of the changing chefs. The problem is with the spoilt diners? The JS never discuss these points. The opposition is on holiday, setting its house in order. The old order would return? One senior minister rightly got fed up---the impatience of the young generation.

The regime's priorities are in a mess. Where are the reformists, to chase away the opportunists?

Arun Kumar Dev
Dept. of Statistics
Dhaka University

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Md. Abdur Rahim

Asstt. teacher

Nawab Faizunnesa Govt.

Girls' High School

Comilla

Politics

Recently, TIB reported that over Tk 5 crore has been wasted already this year due to lack of quorum in parliament sessions. This is not desirable.

The MPs are expected to perform their duties with a sense of devotion.

Mahfuzur Rahman Manik

Student

IER, Dhaka University

Why should this happen?

Human beings are a strange creature of the Almighty. Sometimes they say one thing but do the opposite.

In our neighbouring West Bengal of India, we see the hypocritical activities of the communist party. Great affection for the poor, landless people! Admirable non-communal mentality! But in the name of industrialisation, this communist party brutally extirpated the poor minority Muslims from their own land and home. Now millions of minority poor Muslims are landless and homeless in West Bengal due to the humanitarian activities of the Communist Party. In the recent election, the West Bengal voters have rejected this communist party for their hypocritical activities.

In 1971, the Islamic fundamentalist groups and their co-operator Pakistani Army killed 30 lakh Muslims in the name of Islam. Why should such things happen?

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Power distribution

Dhaka Power Distribution Company was formed on 1st July, 2008. After the failure in running DESA in a profitable way, DPDC started its activities. During the first few months after its inception, its systems loss was reduced and remarkable enhancement in earning was recorded. Great zeal and vigour were found in DPDC officials and employees' minds for attaining progress of their organisation. It is to be noted that no trade union activities were found during this period. Now several labour organisations have got their registrations in DPDC. According to DPDC law, anyone who has any affiliation with any political party must be disqualified for enrolment in DPDC. Now the old game has started, particularly by one organisation which claims itself to be backed by the present ruling party. They are trying to take control of different offices of DPDC.

The decision makers should handle the issue efficiently.

Anonymous
Employee of DPDC

EIS programme

The Daily Star and Aektel have jointly taken EIS (English in schools) Programme to better the condition of English of the secondary schools. It is a well-timed and laudable initiative which will create an awakening among the students to learn English with new enthusiasm and zeal.

The other day I had the opportunity to join a seminar arranged at Miami Hotel, Comilla by Aektel and The Daily Star. Professor Shahin Kabir presented different aspects of the EIS programme. The English teachers and head teachers present in the programme felt much motivated at her presentation about the EIS programme. I, returning to my school, apprised my students of the programme. I have got a very positive response from the students. On the 24th June, 2009, we got three copies of The Daily Star. Seeing the English daily our students got immense pleasure and began to the read them with much curiosity. I welcome the organisers of this encouraging venture.

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Quorum crisis

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Role of TIB

It is unfortunate that the role of TIB is being questioned by the lawmakers including the speaker and the prime minister. I can see that I am not the only one who raised immediate question after the TIB "calculator politics" was widely mentioned in the media.

The purpose was apparently to undermine the image of parliament and ultimately discredit the basis of democratic order. Unfortunately, my letter has not found any space yet in a daily newspaper.

If one examines the TV ads and other media reporting by the TIB, it is mostly using the calculator and perception reports without a scientific explanation of their findings. In case of the parliament quorum the math is outrageous and seemed to be a political gimmick. The objectives and the operational strategy of the TIB are not transparent.

If I am not wrong, their parameter to grade corruption level of a country includes a number of criteria. Interestingly, about one third of the marking goes for covering the foreign trade facilitation i.e. corruption free access by the foreign traders. I stand for correction on this point and other issues relating to public perception about their political choice.

TIB should listen to various comments of the lawmakers and others like me and address them to keep up their image above controversy. Quadir

California, USA

Who was corrupt?

During the period of the caretaker government (CTG) of Dr. Fakhrudin Ahmed Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) filed corruption cases against a large number of politicians belonging to both AL and BNP, government servants and businessmen. Many of the accused were proved guilty in the lower courts and, on being convicted, were sent to the jail. Some of these convicted persons were tried in absentia as they had fled the country. People in general, including the mid level leaders and workers of AL and BNP, hoped that at least some of their senior leaders and businessmen who financed these politicians, and the government servants who were genuinely corrupt would get punished; the country and the political parties would get rid of the corrupt leaders; and the state bureaucracy would to a great extent be free from corruption.

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It is being rumoured that the government may arrange for presidential clemency for all those politicians, naturally belonging to the ruling party, who are already charged.

If BNP wins the next parliamentary election scheduled to be held in 2014, it is most likely that all cases against BNP leaders will be disposed of in the same way without

any fair trial. They will have to suffer 5 years more than their AL colleagues for losing the 2009 election!

Justice delayed is justice denied. In greater national interest the government should take up a case with the Honourable Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to constitute some special benches of the High Court to expeditiously deal with corruption cases.

If the mahajote government fails to take the above-mentioned actions the country will plunge deeper in corruption. The whole world will continue to call us a corrupt country. The people of Bangladesh will turn away their faces from AL in the next general election. The whole world will find us as the only corrupt country in the world with no corrupt persons individually within the country. The question will naturally arise, "Then who was corrupt in Bangladesh?"

Syed Ashrafuzzaman

Mohakhal DOHS, Dhaka

Quadruped

Quadruped