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AMJUL HUI / DRINKERS

## 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

### 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 Aktel 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 Aktel 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 read them with much curiosity. I welcome the organisers of this encouraging venture.

It is hoped that side by side with academic assistance for English, these two organisers will arrange competitions on pronunciation, English debates, spelling and extempore speech. I think such competitions in English learning will help a lot to make EIS programme meaningful and attractive.

**Md. Abdur Rahim**  
Asstt. teacher  
Nawab Faizunnesa Govt. Girls' High School  
Comilla

### Quorum crisis

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? **Arun Kumar Dev**  
Dept. of Statistics  
Dhaka University

### 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. Fakhruddin 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.

Now let us take a look at what all has been happening in combating corruption since the present mohajote (grand alliance) government under Sheikh Hasina came to power.

Almost all of those convicts who were sent to jail, or were absconding, have come out on bail granted by the High Court after they filed appeal to it against their convictions. Cases against all those who belong to the ruling party and who have not yet been chargesheeted are being withdrawn by branding the cases as "politically motivated."

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 charge sheeted.

If BNP wins the next parliamentary election scheduled to be held in 1914, it is most likely that all cases against BNP leaders will be disposed of in the same way without

## River erosion

Bangladesh is an active deltaic plain in a constant state of morphological change. There is a large seasonal variation in the flows and the sediment carrying capacity of the rivers. The rivers in this deltaic plan are categorized as either unstable such as the Meghna or very unstable such as the Padma and the Jamuna. The Jamuna is of a braided and eroded nature. The annual erosion rate is 8,700 hectares. The erosion has led to destruction of villages rendering thousands of people homeless every year.

The newspapers reported that the Jamuna river erosion took serious turn at Swashanghat point and the portion of the embankment of the western bank of the river collapsed within moments, and people living near the embankment started running to and fro following the embankment collapse.

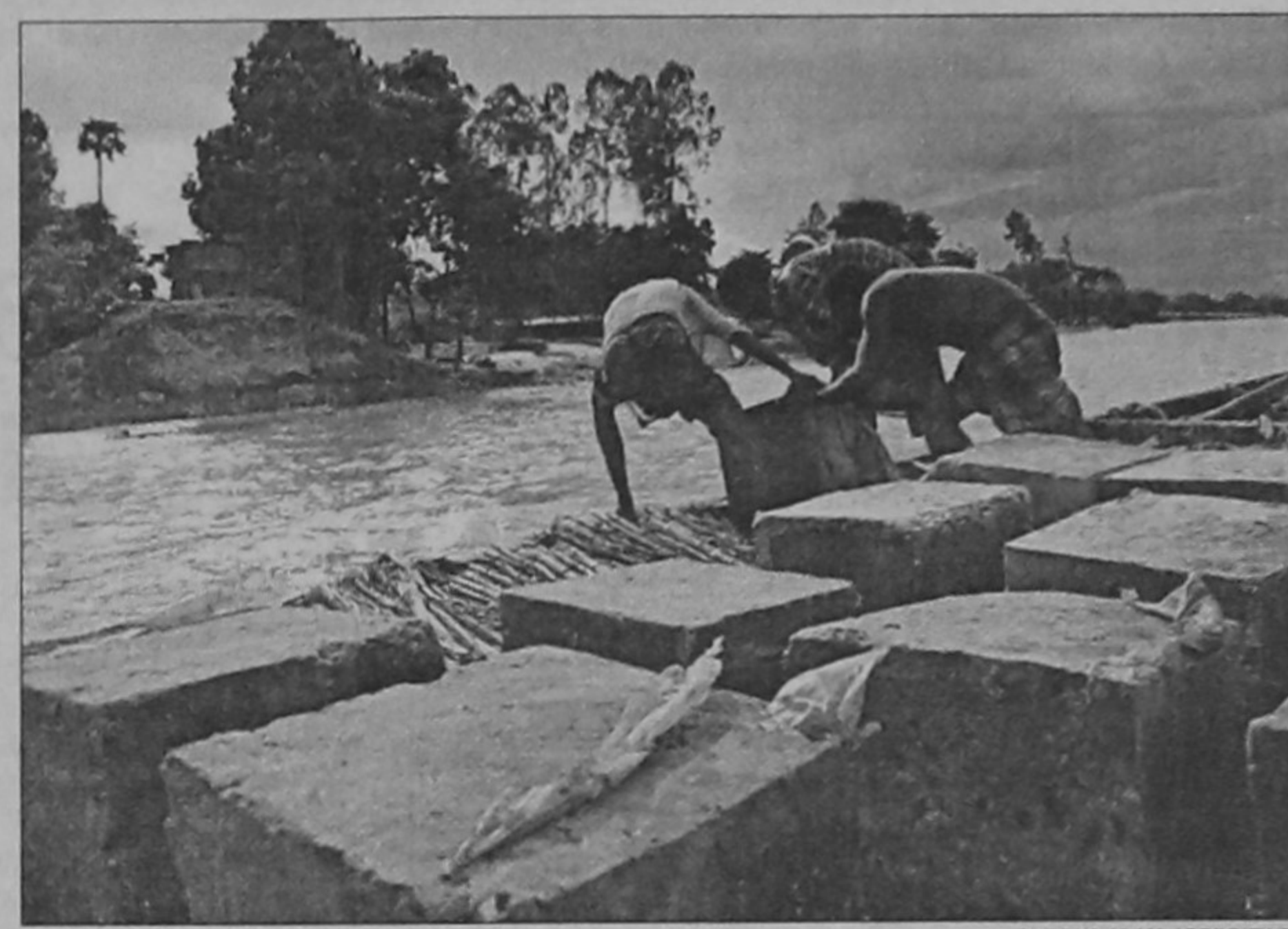
In Bangladesh every year rivers engulf enormous amount of agricultural fields, destroy hundreds of homesteads and make thousands of

people homeless. Those affected by river erosion take shelter further inland if they have any other land there, otherwise they either take shelter on the embankments or migrate to urban areas.

Time and again they had to move from one place to the next as the river engulfed the land they settled on. Another growing concern is that important towns and infrastructures are being threatened by riverbank erosion.

A poor man is more insecure than a rich man as he is more vulnerable to different crises. He has less economic strength and lower social status, as such he has less capacity of coping with any crisis. So, we can say that river erosion is creating long-term poverty and it is also a key reason of poverty in Bangladesh. We must try to mitigate this problem.

**Md. Mohsinul Hoque**  
Student of MS  
Dept. of Geography & Environment  
University of Dhaka



QUDDUS ALAM / DRINKERS

any fair trial. They will have to suffer 5 years more than their AL colleagues for losing the 2008 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 mohajote 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**  
Mohakhali DOHS, Dhaka

### Talk shows

Nearly all the private TV channels are running talk shows every day. It was a popular show in the days of immediate past caretaker government for various reasons. It gave openings for the public opinion to ventilate and to air - sort of communication established between the government and the people. And talk shows became popular. It also relieves some burden off the private channel operators from the point of financial implications as it costs least to arrange a talk show.

Now time has changed. And

it has changed the faces in TV talk shows. Now we are facing two-fold problems. We see the same face every day in different channels. Even it happens that the same person is giving his/her opinion in different channels on the same day and even at same time. Barrister Moudud, Nazmul Huda, Iqbal Hasan, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir are the regular faces and are teaching the nation lessons on morality, democracy, good governance etc.

I would request the private channel authorities to bring people whom the viewers respect.

**Dr. MM Mortayez Amin**  
Dhaka

### RMG in disarray

The spine of our economy, the garment sector, is really in vulnerable condition these days. This sector earns more than 75 percent of the foreign currency in exports, employ more than 35 lakh people directly (80 percent women) and about two crore indirectly. Unfortunately, we are losing this resource, achievement and contribution to economy hastily. The losing process should be stopped right now. No excuse can be enough to continue this devastation.

Global economic recession made us worried, especially in this sector, losing exports to developed countries. But till now most of the garment factory owners are continuing in the hope that at some point the difficulties will be removed and the organisations will run smoothly soon. But what is happening to this industry? Who will answer? Of course, and beyond any doubt, the government.

The growth appears to have declined considerably. Buyers are losing interest rapidly and they are switching towards our competitors. Sabotage at the industries has been a common phenomenon. Buyers now believe that Bangladesh has lost its steadiness to be able to produce & supply products timely without disruption like in the past. The buyers are reluctant to maintain a high level of business relationship with a country which is portrayed as one where workers in its garments industries are seething with discontent and can trigger large scale rioting any time. Garments industries operated by foreigners were targeted and they threatened to pull out their investments from Bangladesh. The matter of concern is that nearly 60 percent of the industries in Bangladesh today do not have adequate work orders.

The unrest continues in the garment industry - another worker was killed as rioting spread across the whole garment factory area in Ashulia. Recently, for consecutive three days in different regions, the so-called workers resorted to destruction. It seems that the government, the sole guardian, is not so concerned to punish the real culprits. Without stopping this trend right now, how will you protect the main pillar of the economy in the upcoming days? Please save this sector and safeguard the economy of Bangladesh.

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

## Memorable Test victory



PHOTO: AFP

The nation is celebrating a joyful moment at the win over West Indies in the first Test in Kingstown. The win over West Indies will regenerate cricket and invigorate cricketers to repeat the same kind of results in future. The nation admires the golden boys for their heroic performance. Team Bangladesh played memorable cricket. Skills and efforts with commitment/patience are preconditions for the players to keep up the momentum.

May Allah bless the players and all concerned.

**Md. Mosharaf Hossain**  
Chittagong

### 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 maidservants 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 seeded 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 yogie 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 tokai.

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

shaws; 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 ghora-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 Bengalese 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 kochuripana (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 spoil diners? The JS never discuss these points. The opposition is on holiday, setting its house in order. The old order would return? One junior 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?

**Alif Zabr**  
Dhaka