



AMDADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Local fruits

Each and every season in our country turns up with its appeal. Wherever and whenever you visit the different parts of country, you will find nature is clad in deep green, trees are laden with fresh, colourful, and mouth-watering fruits. Even if you do not have the chance of visiting rural areas, pay a visit to a local fruit market, you will see a variety of fruits in different times of the year. We should encourage everyone, particularly our children, to develop the habit of eating more and more domestic fruits like jackfruit, guava, blackberry, pineapple, watermelon, mango, plum and many other types of fruits that grow in our fertile land. It is a widely known fact that the flora and fauna in a region are inex-

tricably linked to each other. The fruits that grow in a particular region are very essential for the people living in the area and consumption of these fruits rather than exotic ones increase vitality of people. In other words, we should give priority to our domestic fruits over fruits imported from abroad. Moreover, local farmers will be more motivated to grow more fruit trees which would have a significant impact in reducing air pollution.

Furthermore, we can save a lot of foreign currency as the fruit sellers have to spend a lot of money to import it from foreign countries.

G.S. Hossain
Rahmatganj, Chittagong

Unregistered cars

I have been driving in Dhaka for the last 16 years. I have seen that unregistered cars are being driven in Dhaka city with no hesitation whatsoever in front of the law enforcers. Surprisingly, even in Dhaka Cantonment these cars are moving freely. Has the government officially allowed people to drive cars without numbers for an indefinite period of time?

Syed Murshed
Uttara
Dhaka

Indian HC's comments

I am writing regarding the recent remarks made by the Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravorty which were beyond any diplomatic norms, to say the least. His dismissal of expert opinions regarding the Tipaimukh dam would have been met with outrage if it were in any other country. But this is Bangladesh, as usual, the response from our foreign ministry was meek.

I am writing regarding another comment from the Indian HC that approximately 25,000 Bangladeshi visa applicants don't come back from India!

My question to him: How did the Ambassador come up with the numbers? Was a professional study done regarding illegal immigration (i.e. what exactly is the attraction etc)? Did the Indian HC also do a survey as to how many Indians are working here in Bangladesh (possibly illegally)? The numbers would be staggering. As usual, the Bangladeshi govt. possibly does not even have a clue.

Enough is enough and we need tough/visionary leadership from our foreign ministry. This is high time that we stand up to this kind of unprofessional remarks. This is souring the relationship between India and Bangladesh even further (let alone the Farakka/Tipaimukh issues) and also is not going unnoticed by millions of NRBS all over the world.

Bangladesh-India relationship needs to improve for the sake of the region and the millions inhabiting it.

Yamin Ibrahim

One-mail

How could the Indian High Commissioner call the visa seekers of Bangladesh "touts and brokers"? This is a highly derogatory remark about the citizens of an independent country from a "diplomat". Has he not learnt anything about diplomatic norms before his posting to a sovereign country? How will he react if we term the Indian visa seekers as "cheats and terrorists"?

Actizen

One-mail

Better service needed

Khulna to Dhaka via Mawa is an important route.

However, better bus service is needed on this route to cater to the ever increasing number of travellers.

Kamal Hossain

Khulna

Obama's historic speech

The 'FRONTLINES', a publication of the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs, USAID in its latest (July 2009) has published the main features of the historic speech which the US President Barack Obama had delivered in Cairo on June 4, 2009. In this speech which has been translated into 15 different languages on the White House website, President Obama said "I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect". The US President further said "Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments, community organisations, religious leaders, and businesses in Muslim countries around the world to help our people pursue a better life." Obama pledged US foreign assistance for education, women's rights, democracy and economic development. Expressing respect for the rights of

women to choose a traditional life style, the US President added "I do believe that a woman who is denied education is denied equality.... And that is why the United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams". The President also announced an initiative with the Organization of the Islamic Conference to eradicate polio.

We greatly appreciate the feelings and good wills the US President expressed in his Cairo speech towards improving relations between the United States and Muslim countries.

It is sincerely hoped that the hostilities and mistrusts existing between the United States and the Muslim world will be significantly dissolved by President Obama's Cairo speech. In reciprocation, the Muslim world leaders should also take initiatives to resolve the crisis between the Muslim countries and the United States of America.

Islam is a religion of peace and restraint. Islam never discriminates human beings for their religious identity. The Holy Quran is explicit about one thing that there is no compulsion in religion.

We sincerely hope that President Barack Obama with his new vision and mission would help the suffering Muslims of the world to establish their genuine rights, for example, the rights of Palestinian Muslims.

Professor M Zahidul Haque

Chairman

Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System, SAU, Dhaka

Lure of lucre!

A front-page report from New York on the large numbers of corrupt officials netted by the police for corruption in New Jersey USA was published in a local daily on 25 July. Is this a new manifestation of the principles of free enterprise? What was however really surprising was the inclusion of five Rabbis (Jewish priest) among the 44 people arrested! Here we have priests, who are considered to be pious and supposed to teach us about good and right living with high moral values, joining the ranks of the corrupt! This only demonstrates what the lust and lure for the lucre can lead to!

Fortunately for us, no Imam or preacher from the church are on this unholly list. What action has the Jewish religious set-up taken about

Road network

With the monsoon setting in, Dhaka's traffic situation is getting out of control and the sufferings of the general public have increased almost three times compared to what it was before the rains came. The city's drainage system is no better than the other utility services which our government is supposed to deliver to the people who have voted them to power. Every day new cars and rickshaws from other neighbouring districts are coming to the city. The city has shortage of parking space as there is no guideline for residential, commercial and industrial areas.

Schools, colleges and universities are growing like wild mushrooms and the authorities concerned, especially the UGC, is giving licence to these universities without looking at the facilities. As a result, none of the private universities in Dhaka has either a campus or proper parking lots, playgrounds.

Like all the past governments, the present government still has not taken up any major programme for making new roads

and bypasses for smooth flow of traffic.

Dhaka lacks east-west connections more than north-south ones. The town developed in the north south direction due to its geographical location as both east and west were low lying areas/wet lands, but unfortunately none of the past governments, including the AL and its grand alliance member Jatiya Party which were in power for 5+10 = 15 long years, did not take any initiative for

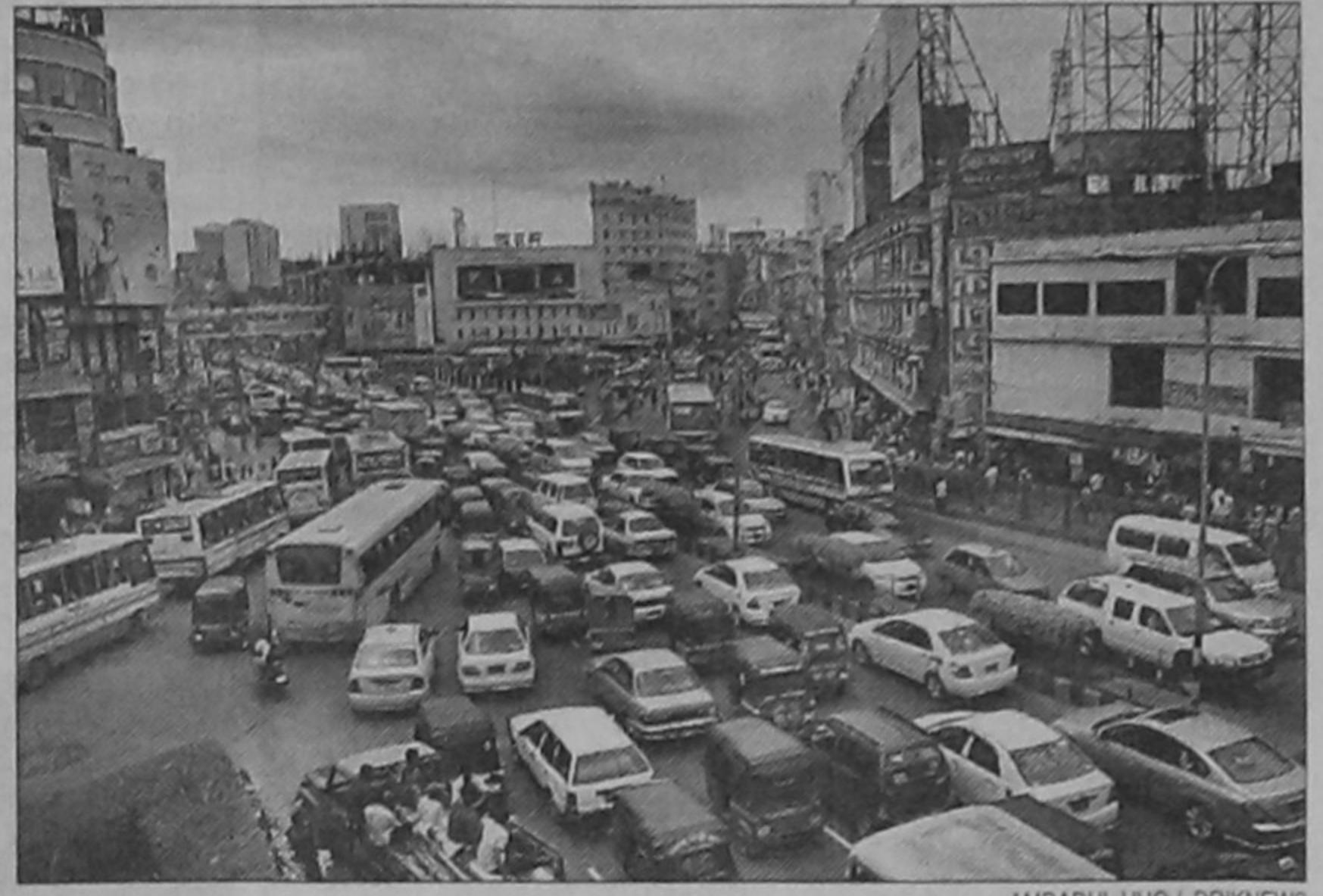
constructing the ultimate east west roads, rather all the governments of the past let the eastern and the western side of Dhaka grow in an unplanned manner.

Dhaka needs at least six east-west and six north-south roads which will eventually end up at the ring road surrounding Dhaka.

The government and Rajuk, please wake up before this capital dies.

Soheb Ahmed

Dhanmondi, Dhaka



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Inspiring words

Mr Kajal's letter on our cricket is both inspired and inspiring. From Kolkata he shared the joy of our cricket team's triumph in West Indies.

He has indeed answered the questions raised by the critics of Bangladesh cricket very well. There is no doubt that he is a great well-wisher of our cricket team.

The spirit demonstrated by him has to be placed in the right perspective. We, the people of the subcontinent, have many things in common. In fact, Bangladeshi cricket fans are roughly divided into two camps: the Indian fans and those fans of Pakistan. They support these two teams with as much enthusiasm as the Indians and Pakistanis themselves do. Indeed, cricket has brought people closer to each other!

I was a great fan of the Indian team in the seventies when Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Viswanath were the backbone of Indian batting. I still remember many memorable innings played by these two.

Finally, thank you, Mr Kajal, for your inspiring words.

Mansur Raja

Dhaka

Traffic and Rajuk/DCC

The DMP commissioner was right to blame DCC and Rajuk for the nagging traffic congestion in the city. If you look around Gulistan which is abutted by DCC and Rajuk offices, you'll find almost all the markets owned by DCC without any space for even a single car. The building designs must have parking spaces with a specified calculation. But unfortunately all the DCC markets' parking spaces have been converted into underground shops forcing the cars to be parked outside. DCC is realizing the rents from these illegal underground shops and the officials concerned undoubtedly got 'something' into their pockets. We don't have any other watchdogs to oversee this abject violation of laws by the people who are entrusted with the responsibilities to enforce it!

The other areas notorious for traffic also have the same problem - markets and buildings without parking spaces. I request the JS bodies concerned, as they are the people's representatives, to open an enquiry and take appropriate steps, and stern punitive actions against those who are responsible for violating building codes, who do not shoulder the responsibilities to oversee it and who pocketed handsome amounts by allowing these underground shops to operate.

We want to see a free flowing Dhaka city and want a vigilant JS watchdog to save us from wasting numerous man-hours.

Dr. M M Mortayez Amin
Consultant, Labaid Fertility Centre
Labaid Specialized Hospital
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Drought in Bangladesh

Drought has long been considered to be a hazard responsible for ups and downs of many civilizations in the world. Drought occurs when rainfall is absent for a prolonged period of time, causing earth to parch, wells to dry, underground water to fall, crops to wither leading to crop failure and scarcity of fodder for livestock. Because of meagre supply of water, food and fodder both humans and livestock suffer untold miseries. Drought extends its ominous tentacles slowly but surely. In Bangladesh, drought in the northern districts is very common. The hydrological and climate conditions of Bangladesh are characterized by 'too much water in the wet

monsoon season and too little water in the dry months, creating a drought environment. Now it is the Bengali month of Sravan and the rainy season is going to be over but there has not been enough rain. Rainfall in June was 37% below average and in July 21-22% lower than average.

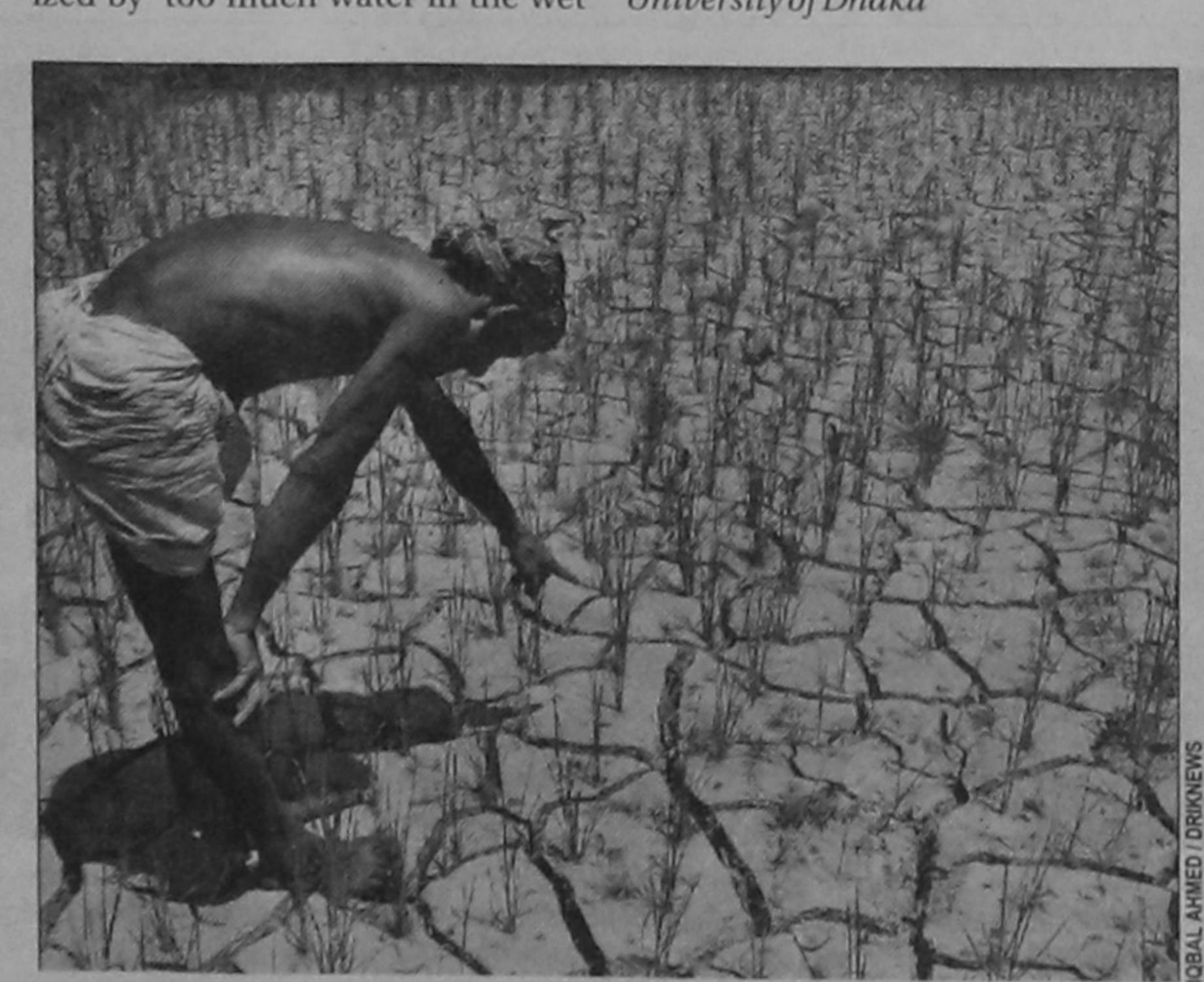
The bad weather of this monsoon may put many farmers in a difficult situation. So, the government should take a long-term mitigation programme in order to alleviate the effects of drought.

Md. Mohsinul Hoque

Student of MS

Dept. of Geography & Environment

University of Dhaka



Poor handling

A proverb goes ---- even a mad man can choose the things which are better for him. It seems we are worse than lunatics. Yes, I am talking about our maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. We know that we have a vast area in this adjoining sea as per international rules. But our two neighbouring countries India and Myanmar want to have a more than fair share of the Bay. They have already filed their claims to the UN. But we are still doing nothing. Some months back, Myanmar tried to install some heavy machinery in our territorial waters to extract oil, gas etc. India often sends their naval vessels into our territory.

We have to handle the issue a lot more efficiently to avoid incurring huge losses.

Harun-or-Rashid
Sobhanbag, Dhaka

Shahjalal University, Sylhet

Admission tests

Results of the HSC exams have recently been published. We are happy to see the lovely faces of our next generation who have done so well. But the smiling faces will become gloomy very soon, we easily understand, when the dates of admission tests will be announced in different higher educational institutions. They have to run from post to pillar in a very restless manner during this period. The guardians and applicants take it as normal as they know the reality of our country. But the problem arises when the authorities declare that the admission tests will be held on the same day in different universities.

I think it's not fair. The government/UGC should take the necessary steps to coordinate the whole process, so that a candidate gets the option to appear in admission tests of different universities.

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