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## Bangladeshis killed by BSF

A meeting between BDR and BSF were held in Dhaka on July 10 through 14. The first priority of this meeting was stopping killing by the BSF in border areas. Both DGs spoke of the effectiveness of this meeting. We do not know how fruitful the meeting was, but two Bangladeshis were killed when the meeting was still on. The DG of BSF promised to look into this matter, but killing has not come to an end.

ODHIKAR, a human rights organisation,

published a report about the number of Bangladeshis killed by BSF. It says that BSF killed 848 Bangladeshis in ten years. The number of wounded people is more than 1,000.

This number is really shocking. Would the Indians ever realise what they are doing?

Mahfuzur Rahman Manik  
Student, IER  
Dhaka University



### Tagore in Islamabad

The composer of Bangladesh National Anthem and Asia's first Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore's 149th birthday was celebrated in the Bangladesh Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan on 8th May 2009 in a colourful gala of music, dance, discussion and poetry. Bangladesh High Commissioner in Pakistan Mrs. Yasmeen Murshed inaugurated the programme.

Rabindranath Tagore is considered a taboo and controversial in Pakistan since the creation of that country in 1947 and finally all works of Tagore were officially banned in government media (radio, TV, government newspapers etc.) by the orders of Ayub Khan's powerful information and broadcasting minister Khwaja Shahabuddin and East Pakistan governor Monem Khan in 1967. Partly this might be a remnant of poet Iqbal's 'noble-jealous' attitude towards Rabindranath - though both of these great poets died much before the birth of Pakistan. While in Lahore, once Rabindranath visited Iqbal's house to meet him. Iqbal was not present at that time but he did not bother to write to Rabindranath afterwards.

Also, Pakistan government-sponsored compilers and editors of the 'speeches and statements' of Pakistan's founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah had not included Jinnah's rich tribute on Rabindranath following his death.

We request the Bangladesh government to set up two Bangladesh Cultural Centres in Pakistan named after Rabindranath Tagore (Islamabad) and Kazi Nazrul Islam (Karachi). Rabindranath's universal humanistic Sufi values and thoughts have certainly a lot of potential to stem the tide of extremism.

M. Emad

Oxford, UK

### Canals

The chairman of the parliamentary committee has spoken of asking the authorities to secure the banks of the canals with concrete structures. We think it is a constructive suggestion which must be worked on. Unless there is penalisation, the danger of the canals being again targeted by encroachers will remain.

SM Najmal Haque Emon  
Santahar (Chabagan), Bogra

### Ensure quality medicine

Sometimes it seems that we take medicines to die. Different so-called pharmaceuticals are producing various items of medicines that are substandard. However, how they collect the licence to manufacture medicines for marketing purposes is a burning question to all. We know that corruption has spread all over the country, especially in all the branches of the government.

When will the situation change?

Nasir Uddin Shahin  
Dept. of English  
Dhaka University

### Uprooted people

All over the world, people are being displaced internally and externally due to conflict and persecution. Various reasons are there behind such conflict and persecution. Some people are being uprooted by racial attacks. Some are being compelled to take refuge due to civil war or political unrest and so on. Sometimes, across the globe, this conflict and persecution evict people from a large area. As a result, these harmless people are passing their days in great uncertainty.

Recently, UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) released a report on the uprooted people across the world. The number of this type of people was forty-two million at the end of the last year. UNHCR tries its best to ameliorate the present state of these refugees. But the effort is not sufficient for them at all.

On the other hand, these evicted people are wandering across the earth in search of settlement and better living. But they are being deprived of settlement and other fundamental needs. At the same time, the conflict and persecution lead them to the way of a protracted displacement. So, these people cannot come back to their previous settlement and in fine, suffer a lot.

Nowadays, the issue has been a great concern for the world communities. They should look into the issue seriously and make an innovative plan to repatriate the uprooted people all over the world.

Sayef Shahriar  
Dept. of English  
University of Dhaka

### Corruption & crime

After the 1/11 changeover, the Anti-Corruption Commission could investigate corruption cases and it successfully apprehended many corrupt politicians, businessmen, and government officials. During the two years of caretaker admin only a few could be tried in special courts set up by the administration and delivered punishments ranging from 13 to 40 years imprisonment in different cases. The rest of the cases could not be completed due to time constraint of the caretaker regime.

After the installation of the new elected government, all of them have been set free by the court while the under trial cases were either quashed or stayed by the lower courts. The present government is withdrawing many cases declaring those corruption cases as "politically motivated". The situation is such that no one will be further tried and ever punished.

It is hard to believe that there was no corruption before 1/11 in our country and the persons who were charge-sheeted by the ACC during the CTG were not involved in any sort of corruption.

If such is the case that there was no corruption before the period of 1/11, on what pretext the TIB declared Bangladesh as the "most corrupt nation". I suggest the present sue the TIB for trial in the international court for tarnishing the image of Bangladesh!

The common people do not believe that the people whose cases are being quashed are clean of and have not done anything wrong in the past. This situation of mistrust between the government and the people is not a healthy one. Our courts are finding no evidences of corruption against these people due to weak prosecution and faulty charges. It is therefore wise, at the moment, that the courts be allowed to investigate the charges by their own investigators to find truths and punish the wrong doers.

Otherwise, we will never be able to eradicate massive corruption.

Shafiqul Islam, NY

### A-bombing of Japan

On August 6, 1945, an American bomber dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, obliterating the entire city. Two days later, another more powerful plutonium bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Facing total atomic annihilation, Japan surrendered. The atomic bomb was hailed for shortening the war, saving many American lives. It might have been true. But the real reason behind the A-bombing of Japan had been described by Dr. Leo Szilard, a top atomic scientist at the Manhattan Project.

Dr. Szilard had left behind an account of his meeting with Secretary of State designate and Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee James Byrnes on May 28, 1945. The account clearly tells us the real reason behind the decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan:

"Byrnes was concerned about Russia's post-war behaviour. Russian forces had moved into Hungary and Rumania. Byrnes thought it would be very difficult to persuade Russia to withdraw her troops from these countries, and that Russia would be more manageable if impressed by American military might. I shared Byrnes's concern about Russia's throwing around her weight in the post-war period, but I was completely flabbergasted by the assumption that rattling the bomb might make Russia more manageable..."

"I was concerned at this point that by demonstrating the bomb and using it in the war against Japan, we might start an atomic arms race between America and Russia which might end with the destruction of both countries. ... I was rarely as depressed as when we left Byrnes's house and walked toward the station."

Thus atomic bombs were dropped on Japan to demonstrate America's awesome military might to impress Russia. But it did trigger an atomic arms race between America and Russia as feared by Dr. Szilard, although they were spared of mutual destruction. Now that the U.S.-Soviet rivalry is over, America must tell the world the real reason behind A-bombing of Japan and apologise to the Japanese.

Mahmood Elahi  
Ottawa, Canada

### An appeal

Mobile phone hijacking and stealing has become very common, especially in city areas. I can hardly find any mobile phone user whose mobile has not been either hijacked or stolen. In the last six months my wife lost three mobile phones and one of them was pick pocketed, one was hijacked and one was stolen. Moreover, some criminals threatened a businessman after stealing the phone which caused lot of troubles to us. In this regard, I would like to request the mobile phone companies to make a device so that the real owner of the mobile phone can stop using his or her mobile by informing the secret number to the relevant company after it is lost. Mobile companies always advertise their services but ignore one of their most important services for the users.

I hope all the companies will come forward to help their customers and this will also reduce crime in society. Please help us so that we can move with our mobile phone safely.

Dr. M. Mahboob Hossain  
Associate Professor  
Department of Pharmacy  
The University of Asia Pacific  
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

### Campus violence and police

I was watching the Bangladeshi television channel sitting at my home in UK. The news about BCL students clashing at Surya Sen Hall at Dhaka University particularly got my attention.

When I was a student of Dhaka College more than two decades ago, the college was unquestionably the best college in Bangladesh and I was proud to flash the blue identity card of my college. I am sure that the standard of that college has slipped probably irreversibly.

And I do remember that during my tenure at Dhaka University, I did have the pleasure of having acquaintance with now IG of police. I am sure that he does, like I do, remember that we had to go through hell amidst the gun-fights amongst political wings of the mainstream political parties. Many bright students lost their lives in these battles and many of the instigators of these political fights are now leading politicians of the country. Amazing, Selucas!

But what was shocking about the report on television on 6 August was the silence of the police authorities. It was nice to know that Dhaka University would form an enquiry committee to investigate the incident to expel the students but we must not forget that Dhaka University is not outside Bangladesh and the police has the right and responsibility to investigate such criminal activities.

Only an exemplary punishment following a full and required trial at the Court of Law as per Bangladesh Penal Code and Bangladesh Criminal Procedure Code would caution the future troublemakers against any repetition of such criminal activities.

I, like many, would follow this incident as an example closely even from abroad and will hold the present government and the law enforcing agencies accountable for not taking serious actions against such persistent criminality. This is my right as a democratic man. History never forgives anyone and we cannot allow the continuing erosion of the standard of Dhaka University as that is part of our pride. We have already lost Dhaka College in this process as to their standard.

Mufassil Islam  
Human Rights Advocate  
UK

### Legal issues

Every day newspapers are full of news like 'declaring the fifth amendment illegal', 'Pilkhana carnage', 'criminal killed in shootout with Rab', 'Ctg arms haul', 'ACC act to be reviewed', 'Jessore Udichi blast', 'War tribunal', 'Trial of war criminals', 'Militants issue' and many other issues like these. Legal news very often takes the place of lead news in the newspapers. Obviously, in a democratic country application of law is a routine matter. As if our life is immersed in the system of law like that of air around us. We take oxygen from air and likewise we take life support from the legal system.

But many legal matters coming in the newspapers are creating sensation and turbulence in society. The interesting point is that some legal experts have one opinion on a particular matter while other experts think otherwise on the same subject. As a result, we the general mass become confused as all of us have not studied the constitution and law during our education. The good running of the country depends on the fair application of the law.

In this context, everyone of us should have minimum knowledge of law so that we understand the application of the law, fair or unfair. As a citizen we all should know the civic laws, environment laws, traffic laws, travel laws, immigration laws and other such laws which will help us. I have seen people suffering at the airport for having no knowledge about security and immigration laws. Law abiding citizens can create a law-abiding society which can subsequently create a beautiful country having harmony, peace, progress in every sphere of life.

Md. Delwar Hossain  
East Rampura, Dhaka

## Month of restraint



MUNIR UZ ZAMAN / DRINKNEWS

Holy Ramadan, the month of restraint, is coming for the Muslims. Although there is the practice of "Fasting" in all religions, but a month-long fasting associated with other rituals are unique. Ramadan fasting, if practiced fulfilling the recommended criteria, will purify the soul and contribute to leading a healthy life. In this connection it is the individual as well as the social responsibility of the Muslims to come forward to ensure that the spirit of the holy month of Ramadan is maintained to qualify themselves to receive the promised reward from Allah, the Almighty. Let us do away with our traditional practices that contradict the true spirit and teachings of Ramadan, e.g. some isolated Muslim sections start and end the Ramadan fasting a day earlier than the rest of the Muslim population of Bangladesh. Ramadan fasting is to be started and ended on moon sighting. Geographically, Bangladesh is a tiny county and there is a little time difference between different areas. So, moon-sighting time cannot differ so much that Ramadan can start on different days. We should remember that

fasting is prohibited on the Eid day. So, all Muslims must be extremely careful on this matter and the government and the Islamic scholars have specific responsibility to bring unity on the issue.

-With the approach of Ramadan the prices of essential food items start to increase. But in fact the case should be the reverse. It is ridiculous that by fasting we increase food intake thereby forcing the prices to go up. This contradicts the real spirit of Ramadan.

- It is observed that at the start of Ramadan, all mosques remain full of devotees. But as days pass their presence becomes thinner. This should not be the case.

- In the month of Ramadan the female news readers in TV media use headscarf but at the end of the month they remove the same. No doubt they do it in honour of Ramadan but continuing with it will definitely bring honour for them.

Wishing a holy Ramadan and happy Eid to all.

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque  
Khalishpur R/A, Khulna

### Young ministers

Inclusion of a number of young ministers in the cabinet by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reflects her farsightedness and goodwill to develop future leadership. Of course some are of the opinion that in this crucial time of global recession and diplomatic congestion, senior leaders should be given more importance in case of placement and deputation. Meanwhile, I believe that the young leadership opted for is appropriate. Moreover, those younger members who have been included in the cabinet are well qualified and energetic. Here I would like to mention the name of Dr. Shireen Sharmin Chowdhury who has recently been included in the cabinet as a state minister and given the responsibility of Children and Women Affairs Ministry. She possesses a strong academic background, intellectual ability plus excel-

lent human relation skills.

It is sincerely hoped that the new juniors in collaboration with the senior ones under the able and dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would be successful in making a peaceful and prosperous Bangladesh.

Professor M Zahidul Haque  
Chairman  
Department of Agricultural  
Extension & Information  
System  
SAU, Dhaka

### Violation of law

Nowadays, it is no use writing letters to the newspaper. It seems the persons responsible are not readers of the newspapers, nor do they bother about the grievances that we general people express through this page. The complaints, sufferings of the people fail to create any impact on their minds.

Just for example, we all know that in the residential area like Pallabi Extension, Mirpur 11.5, it is not allowed to construct any building or apartment house more than six-storied. But an eight-storied apartment building (Block F) is being constructed in front of Rajuk, DCC and all other government agencies. Who should check these things?

Nazakat

One-mail

### Attention, Honourable PM

A recent news item very prominently covered by some dailies has once again attracted my attention. You have tried your best to repeatedly bring this very dangerous practice of our fruit-traders to the front. I am sure, like on all previous occasions, such bold reporting will also go unnoticed by our authorities.

I appeal to the good senses of our Prime Minister for taking urgent action. She definitely knows about it from press reports as well as bold reporting in various newspapers that this practice is leading and pushing our citizens to dreadful diseases like, kidney and liver problems and failures, cancer and other fatal diseases, etc. Does she expect us to believe that she and her ministers and advisors running the affairs of the country are so nonchalant as not to have noticed this grave issue? Is her entire machinery ineffective and powerless? If yes, she should step down from the realms of power she is holding

and let the matter be handled by someone who can take the right and appropriate remedial actions. I hope she would realise the grave situation the fruit-traders are putting almost the entire nation to. I would refrain from making any comments on the perception the foreigners living in our country, and also outside it, would have about our country's administration.

It ought to be noted that this country was, not very long ago, administered by only one governor with the required number of secretaries. The population of the country has grown manifold over the years and so has the size of our government machinery and administration. What are the ministers and the secretaries, with all the powers at their command, doing? Aren't they aware that owing to sheer callousness of their administration these fruit-traders are comfortably playing with the lives of people. We have come to the state that we are afraid of, and refrain from, offering a piece of any fruit to our children. I don't think this has any parallel anywhere else and in any other country. Our heads must hang in shame!

If our administration is incapable of adequately punishing the culprits and ensuring that this practice is stopped once and for all, what can we expect from it in tackling and solving the problems of Tipaimukh, terrorism, bombings, returning wage-earners, rampant use of black money, etc.

How long do we go on taking poison, Madam Prime Minister?

MM Rahman  
Eskaton Gardens, Dhaka

### To women dress designers...

In my office, during teabreak we usually go for tea and some snacks. My male colleagues move easily, I am telling this because they have no extra burden to carry like the vanity bag. They have pockets in their dress. But I have to carry an extra bag.

There is a common idea about women that they are not involved in earning, they have no money. So they need no pocket in their dresses! But that is far from reality today.

So, I would request 'Arong' and all dress designers to add pocket to the female dresses.

Bipasha Rahman  
BRAC TARC  
Barisal

## Tigers strike



Bangladeshi cricketers have finally proved their worth whitewashing the West Indians in both Test and the one dayers recently. They've done it on the West Indian fields and this epoch making victory against any team has created history for our cricket.

Players like Shakib, Razzak, Tanim and others showed a high profile cricketing excellence and made the opponents subdued.

We as a nation have found huge raison d'être to cheer up ourselves, to renew our belief / faith that yes we too can --- our boys do have the strength-- beat any team under any circumstances. All that they need to have is a steady mindset based on practice, patience and tempera-

ment.

However, in the wake of an uproar from some critics that the team that our cricketers whitewashed was a second class team, we would inform them that the West Indian team is one of the leading teams that has a deep-rooted culture which has so far produced many great cricketers.

The bottom line, however, is that we don't have to overreact to this achievement that the Tigers have brought about, neither do we have to undermine them --- let's go ahead!

Three cheers for our booming cricketers!

Rafiqul Islam Rime  
Agrabad, Chittagong