TOTHEFEBITOR

drink Dhaka water as a pre- O dear! Life has been glued to

A great scientist

The world lost one of the 20th century's true heroes last Saturday with the death, at 93, of agricultural visionary Norman Borlaug - a seed scientist who forcefully closed the gap between theory and practice, Borlaug is widely and justly known as "the father of the Green Revolution." His work increased crop yields in Asia and elsewhere at a time when population growth was outstripping world food production. Nobody denies that Borlaug's work saved hundreds of millions of lives.

Borlaug was more than a whitecoated ivory-tower theorist. A farm boy from Iowa, he realized early that the improved grain varieties he had developed would make subsistence farmers wary. So he and others hand-delivered his seeds to small farmers, in India and elsewhere. Aided by the Indian government - the farm minister dug up his personal cricket pitch to be a demonstration site - Borlaug got the word out across India by the mid-1960s. Yields began to rise, farmers became enthusiastic, and India's wheat crop grew by 41 per cent in two years. In 1970, Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

But even such a blessing as more abundant food has its nay-sayers. Critics complain that the green revolution uses too much water and fertilizer, has encouraged monocultures, and has helped some farmers more than others.



To which common sense can reply only 'What part of 'saved hundreds of millions of lives' do you not understand?" The same question can be put to those who object to new agricultural advances, notably the genetic modification of foodstuffs, an innovation Borlaug supported.

In South Asia, and elsewhere, conditions were right for Norman Borlaug to solve a problem for humanity, and he did so with spectacular success. We need more like him.

Avik Sengupta 'McGill University, Montreal, Canada

this God-sent boon for the

mutual benefit of all, espe-

cially the deer. Therefore, Dr

Reza's options of 1) Restricted

hunting and 2) selective cull-

ing periodically are perhaps,

the best. Briefly, we can follow

the policy of Kenya with regard

to hunting of only male ant-

lered deer. Only foreign tour-

ists paying in FE are eligible.

Prices are steep because they

have organized the whole

wildlife tourism into a flour-

ishing industry that now nets

them as much as we earn from

our garments export. My son

who stays there, has taken us

on many safaris to some of the

more accessible Parks like

Tsavo East and West,

Ambolesi, Rift Valley and the

shoreline resorts and parks

that line the 70 mile stretch

from Mombasa to Malindi.

have done, in spite of having

better natural spectacles,

the Forest Dept out of there.

Secondly, we should go for

selective culling of a number

of deer every year, that can be

sold as fresh meat or canned. A

small processing unit would

pay rich dividends and I am

sure the giant local processors

like, PRAN, ACI, Square,

RahimAfroz etc would take it

up as a CSR project even if

there is loss initially. Export

earnings from venison, skin,

antlers, bones, fat etc are also

the deer, I am against it. Why

should the deer suffer for the

follies and foibles of the

human race. Let THEM be

neutered and save the planet

Niketon, Gulshan-1, Dhaka

With regard to neutering

nothing to be sneezed at.

Dowry

The custom of giving and accepting dowry is mostly found in the rural parts of Bangladesh. Here, some families demand dowry based on the money spent for rearing up a bridegroom!

Frequent quarrels over outstanding dowry often lead to breakdown of husbandwife relationships. Frequent physical oppression on dowry defaulters often leads to premature death of young

women. Educate people on the ill effects of dowry. Sukumar Sarker (Shaan) Territory Officer Nestle'Bangladesh Ltd

Nijhum Dwip deer

My previous letter on the subject was a knee-jerk and What a pity that we cannot totally sentimental reaction replicate what the Kenyans on the proliferation of the Nijhum Deer, given my lifelong concern for our forests beauty, possibilities and and wildlife. Dr Reza Khan has infrastructure. Declare done an admirable job (DS 12 Nijhum Dwip as a Protected Sept) in putting the issue in its National Park as a first step, correct perspective given the but before anything else, get present conditions, while mine were at least 40-50 years old. Actually I was influenced by a recent documentary in the National Geographic which depicted a South African couple who reared a pair of tiger cubs on their sprawling farm, cared for them, trained them to hunt and within 2-3 years gradually released them into the wild. Five years later they were flourishing with a family. Imagine wild Bengal tigers in Africa, when this magnificent creature faces decimation in

its own homeland!!! Since one cannot depend on the Forest Dept for such dedication (DS headline of 30,000 trees plundered on the Cox's Bazar shoreline only reinforces that view), we must look to other means to rear

The city we had

The difference between the two is heaven and earth. About 80% of the city dwellers do not have any idea about the provincial capital Dacca. Months ago I came back to Dhaka from Houston, Texas. It is said that Sugarland is heaven on earth. I do not think it will be out of place to mention Sugarland is what Dacca used to be 40 years ago. Dhaka has gone back many years behind Dacca. The decline began 40 years ago and is still

There is a road between Shahbagh and Jahangir Gate used to be known as Airport Road. There was a Fountain at Shahbagh and the road divider was full of Flame Trees (Krishnachuras). During full bloom it looked magnificent. All most all the roads in Sugarland, Texas, reminds me of those lost days. There was a big tree in front of the Farm Gate Police Box, a lost sight to behold. The invading Pakistani Army chopped down the tree making it easy for the commercial entrepreneurs to build their high-rise buildings.

The Ganny's Departmental opposite GPO reminds me of all the big chain stores in the United States. Volume-wise it is not even a portion of Walmart or Sams Club but the concept was the same. There was a big water body where now stands Basundhara Shopping Complex resulting in flooding with a little rain. Not only this, all most all the ponds and canals have been filled to construct high rise buildings and apartments causing immense sufferings to the city dwellers.

The water supplied by Dacca Wasa used to be one of the best source of drinking water in the world, now it is exactly the opposite. People

volume of water supplied was Dhaka? Not really they are much more than what was dancing along the road a required compared to today's waltz, or at times samba or hip scanty supply of water and the hop. people were not forced to demonstrate with empty rename this street dance as pitchers for water in the streets of Dacca. It used to Ramadan has witnessed the take only 10 minutes to cover terrible gridlocks in the city. So the distance by a car, which now takes 2 hours or even The working hours, the waitmore. In the 1960's double decker buses were introduced standstills are never meaon the streets of Dacca.

coming from abroad are

warned by their respective

School, quite often I used to numb, dumb and deaf. take a fun ride back home on only 10 paisas.

forgotten by now that there used be a race course at the mileage either! Suhrawardy Udyan and the people used to enjoy horse race during their leisure time. It is now a story of the by-gone days.

Saleh Ayub One-mail

Trucks or tormentors?

the busiest thoroughfares in the city.

The Sutrapur to Postogola AshfaqueAhmed is the only road for Karimullah Paribag Road Beg, RCN Gate, IG Gate, Faridabad and Milbarak areas. There are four high schools, three primary schools, three colonies, police lines and Mofidul Islam office in the

of the road is only 15 feet.

jam. They use this road to kg! avoid traffic police in Jurain and Jatrabari road.

It is tough to cross the road during the day. At night crossing the road becomes almost impossible. It is also not possible for the residents to sleep.

In addition, Anjuman Mofidul Islam, a charity organization which has an ambulance service for the patients, cannot operate smoothly due to the jam. There is no traffic police here, especially from the evening. In this situation, people of this area - victims of traffic jam and unbearable noise - have appealed to the authorities concerned to solve the problem.

Most of the residents of the area feel that if the movement of heavy vehicles on the road is stopped, the problem will be solved. If this is not possible, the authorities can set up pole bars at a specific height on the road, especially near Gandaria telephone exchange, so that trucks and other heavy vehicles cannot

use the road. Mohammed Hossain Dhaka

Jamming the missions in Bangladesh not to wheels

caution against sickness. The the bituminous surface of

I hope some one will Dhaka Waltz. The month of gruelling and so frustrating. ing hours drained at these sured. So pathetic for the While a student of Shaheen nation that all have become

In recent times one positive those double decker buses for thing has transpired. Our national flag has been found Many of us must have in many of the wheel logging. They cannot be given special

And my camera within the mobile phone set went click, click. The flag posted cars are not spared either. At least those people inside the privi-The King of the jungle and leged cars are aware of this his cohorts are parading the disturbing feat. Long hours streets of Dhaka on million inside the car can cause so dollar vehicles without being much mental and physical concerned about the inevita- handicaps. I am thinking dehydration, inhalation of toxic gases, dizziness plus the mental agony. At times you try to shout at your neighbour or scold the vendor trying to sell you the most idiotic items. Are we considering the high cost Heavily loaded trucks plying the nation will be requiring to throughout the night has . handle all these ailments. We become a headache for the better do that otherwise we residents of the road from will miss all our pledges for a Sutrapur to Postagola, one of better off nation. We don't want to become "The Wheels Waltzs."

Commerce minister and TCB

barracks and Anjuman Soon after taking over as commerce minister, Faruk Khan issued confusing state-Millions of people use this ments about the role of TCB. road every day. Most of the He said TCB would have no time this road remains under role in the market and after a repair and the average width few days he stated that it would have a role! Probably, Heavily loaded trucks use he intended to appease the this road the whole day and businessmen with this statetheir number increases after ment. It is now apparent that 6:00 or 7:00pm creating this did not work since the unbearable noise and traffic price of sugar is now Tk 70 per

> Here TCB could have flooded the market with sugar and other essential items well before Ramadan. I hope the government will realise its mistake.

Farah Khan Gulshan, Dhaka

Law secretary

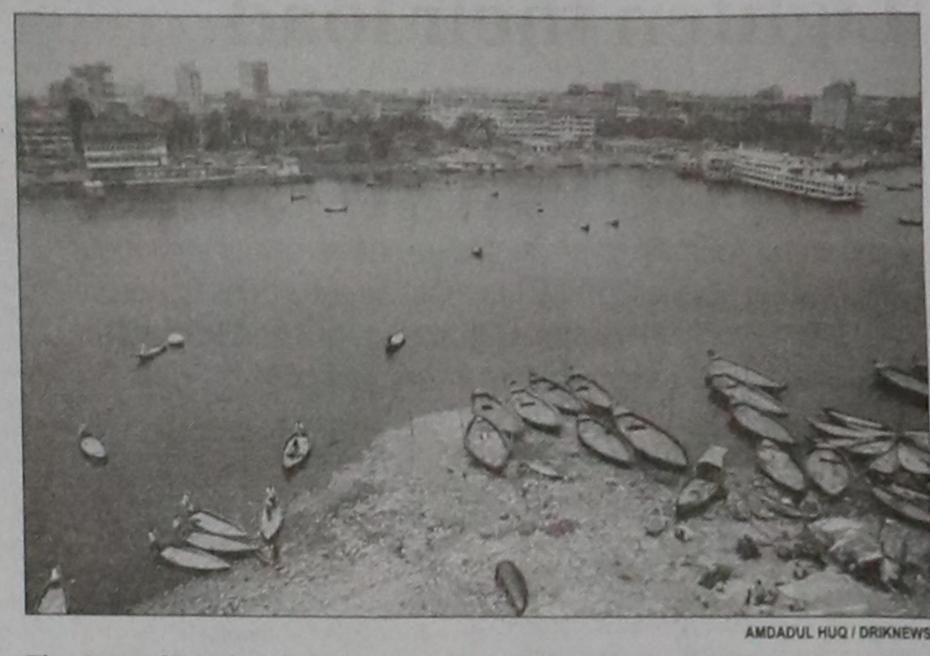
Possibly every local daily, English or Bangla, published on September 14, the statement of the law secretary that he was responsible for unlawful sacking of the two judges.

Can one imagine that the law secretary is unaware of the law and rules and regulations concerning disciplinary action against judges? S.A. Mansoor Dhaka

Deed writers

The hand writing of the quack deed writers was a problem for the people in the past. The quacks don't have enough knowledge of land laws. Also, they do not know the latest rules and regulations of land registration system, but they

Rivers



The rivers of Bangladesh basically mark development, but fresh deposits of rich both the physiography of the nation and silt replenish the fertile but overworked the life of the people. Nearly 700 in num- soil. The rivers also drain excess monber, these rivers generally flow south. soon rainfall into the Bay of Bengal. The larger rivers serve as the main Thus, the great river system is at the source of water for cultivation and as the same time the country's principal principal arteries of commercial trans- resource and its greatest hazard. portation. Rivers also provide fish, an Shohag Mostafij important source of protein. Flooding MBA, Stream-Strategic & International of the rivers during the monsoon season Management (SIM) causes enormous hardship and hinders University of Dhaka

have established their traffic rules is just another twice for the same business, tration office.

Anandanagar, Savar, Dhaka

Diplomats and traffic

September, 2009) point - that vested interest to question world, inland tax (VAT or sales no one but the tax payer of a how it is being spent. NGO's tax) is collected by the income latter's money - is moot given Bangladesh. that I never raised it. My conofficials of the country. While no matter who points it out. the diplomats may not be the Similarly, Mr. Elahi is wrong to root cause of the traffic prob- assume that I am a Canadian lem, by their apparent misbe- citizen like him just because I

As I stated in my original Shabbir A. Bashar, PhD letter - using the lamenting words of the security guard of the building in Gulshan where a diplomatic car was blocking the road - the traffic sergeants are too scared to bring the diplomats to book. Would Mr. else in the world foreign diploto write a letter of complaint to a national newspaper to get bring them to book. Abusing businessman is harassed One-mail

the point.

That is a kind of trap for the respect.

haviour, isn't it obvious that happen to live in a city named they are not helping?

supremacy in the land regis- facet of their misdeeds. That is which is completely unneces-As for pollution caused by

general people. Things should SUVs in general and who the should handle the duty & tax change for the better in this majority operators of such of goods being exported or M. Saiful Alam

Finally, I beg to differ with ArifAhmed cern is about the use of SUVs Mr. Elahi's prescription about by international agencies and where and how one can raise a abuse of traffic laws and dis- complaint. We live in a free ruption of flow by diplomatic world where we can publicly vehicles by blocking busy express our views about any roads and travelling in an matter of public interest. armed convoy as though they One's citizenship is absolutely were very important state irrelevant a wrong is a wrong

Vancouver.

Vancouver, USA

Taxpayers harassed

twice Income Tax & Value Added Tax (VAT) of a business is assessed Elahi please point out where on the basis of sale or turnover. This is unbelievable but mats act in such manner - and believe it that in Bangladesh perhaps more importantly - the sale or turnover of a busiget away with it? Not in ness is always assessed twice Ottawa, not in London, not in by two different govt. depart-New Delhi and certainly not in ments & the sale or turnover Washington, DC, that's for figure assessed by the two sure. And if they do, it doesn't departments for the same take someone like me to have business is always different! This funny thing is happening because Income Tax & VAT are attention. In Bangladesh, assessed by income tax & war? where certain diplomats feel customs department respecfree to interfere in all sorts of tively and there is no codomestic issues, there is no ordination between the two one in our foreign ministry to departments. As a result, a A.N. Mahmood

The customs department vehicles are, it's something imported, to or from other that needs to be regulated by countries only, not inland tax legislation. If these vehicles (VAT or sales tax). As far as I are operated by international know, Bangladesh is the only agencies stationed to provide country in the world where aid and assistance to inland tax (VAT or Sales Tax) is Bangladesh, then the collected by the customs Mr. Elahi's (DS 16th Bangladeshi taxpayer has a department. Around the foreign diplomat stationed should be the target of govern- tax department along with anywhere has a right to ques- ment regulation to prevent their regular income tax coltion how the former spend the such waste of resources in lection, and thus a businessman is not harassed twice.

Businessman

The Baul's passing Your second editorial entitled

"The Baul's Passing" published on 14 September seemed to contain certain factual mistakes. You wrote "Education, a difficult proposition for him considering his state of penury, stopped when he was informed by the school authorities that pupils were expected to serve in the First World War. One looking for peace of the soul could not indulge in the horror of war. Karim never went back to school." Karim, the Baul Samrat, was born in 1916, during the First World War (1914-1918). He was two years old when the WWI ended. As such a suckling baby of his age was not expected to enrol in the school!

How could he then be informed by the school authorities of the then government's intention to recruit school students to join the

(The Daily Star takes note of the point and regrets the factual error).

Volleying back....

for the wildlife.

Sikander Ahmed

Readers' instant comments on The Daily Star Online reports. Log on to thedailystar.net to leave your comments.

Rajuk fills up Shitalakhya bank for housing scheme (September 17, 2009)

for Bangladesh. Duranta

Rajuk should clearly know if this Saleque Sufi is right or wrong. It is their job and duty. Since the issue has come to limelight, the government should go through the matter again. If it is overlooked or the government fails to take the right decision quickly, matters would go beyond control. Afreen

The government should be ashamed of giving permission to fill up the river. Mohammed Ibrahim

Thanks to The Daily Star for this against all types of encroachvery useful - - Zijuk must ments. stop this project immediately. It Saif Iqbal

Can't believe this. It is a shame must show the way. We expect that all these kinds of works, which harm our rivers, will not proceed any further.

city. Rajuk has taken the initiative to solve this problem, but they have taken a wrong deci-Wasim

The government should either restore the filled up portion to its previous state or approve all the illegal development (??) projects in natural wetlands/rivers owned by private developers. WDB and BIWTA should act impartially

Whatever we say, the last bit is this is Bangladesh and anything is possible or everything is impossible here!! Durmukh

No doubt, there is acute short- Now the question is how can age of residential land in Dhaka one enforce the law effectively, if he himself does not respect see any hope for this unfortuthe law? Azmeri

> The government approved the project of Rajuk which violates environmental laws. How could it be possible? When protector becomes the grabber, what can we say? It's the organisations from doing so. best example of our government's failure.

This is nothing new for Rajuk. Never ever DIT/Rajuk had any plans whatsoever for improve-

Sharif Hosen

ment of the capital. The ultimate goal of the Rajuk officials and employees is to grab lands for themselves.

The Daily Star would do well to give up the fight against the monsters - Rajuk, politicians, mastans, and high-ups. I don't nate nation.

Dr M M Mortayez Amin

Rajuk is playing a double standard game. It is filling wet and low land to turn them into high land plots, but at the same time it is preventing other private Hassan Reza Saeed

Our politicians always think of gobbling up something. They were sleeping when the river was being grabbed. Baz

DSE's dubious move

A few days ago DSE decided not to allow any private company to offload their shares through direct listing method with the reasons not explained. The move is dubious. Through direct listing the companies with good market image and healthy books of accounts can be benefited for their goodwill. This method also denies the wrongdoings of the gamblers in the guise of so called investors. Why should the DSE want these monsters to eat away the premium of the goodwill the companies have created through dili-

gence and endeavour of their skilled workforce. A good financial analyst with acumen can see the prowling gamblers in the trading floors of the stock exchanges.

So, we earnestly request the DSE authorities to help the companies with market reputation through their participation in the capital market and devise policies in the interest of the genuine investors. Syed Muhammed Azim Ferozshah Colony

Pahartali, Chittagong

