

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Our sovereignty

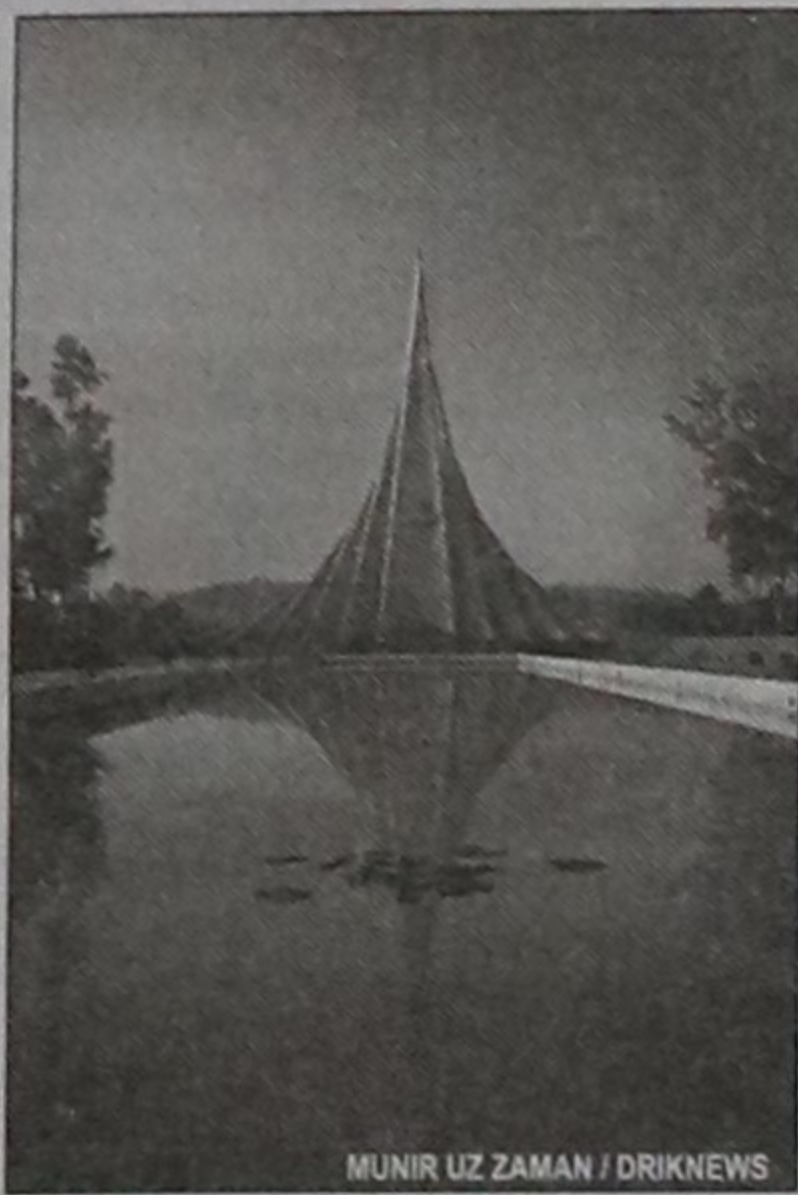
I am truly grateful to Mr. Maswood Khan who recently wrote an article (Financial Express September 20, 2009) summarizing his take on a televised political discussion show titled "Tritio Matra" (third degree) and expressing his own views on the subject of Bangladesh's geographical sovereignty. While I cannot comment on the episode itself, I see the emergence of such media circulated public debates on matters of national interest as another healthy sign of maturity of democracy in Bangladesh. I have enjoyed reading Mr. Khan's comparison of a childhood personal experience to that of the predicament of a young and weak nation like Bangladesh. However, I have some fundamental disagreements with him which I would now like to express.

Bangladesh's weakness is not confined only to its diplomacy or military might - it goes much deeper. Essentially it is the inability of the average Bangladeshi to think and act for themselves based on what they perceive to be right. Everything else follows this basic lack of pro-activeness in their character. People are afraid to ask difficult questions or formulate complex solutions for the fear of upsetting cultural norms built up over years of foreign rule where it was simply not required since one's destiny was to a great extent determined ultimately by external powers. Rather than negotiating one's way through major roadblocks, people either relegate their responsibility or when frustration reaches a boiling point, it results in violent and destructive means of seeking recourse. While violence was an effective way of ridding itself of foreign rulers, the scars remain even though the country is responsible for its own destiny. Until this much forgotten trait of survival is revived in each and every individual, national stakes will continue to be at peril at the hands of anyone who wishes to take advantage.

I am not saying people in Bangladesh are fundamentally weak - far from it. There needs to be introspection and focus on becoming reliant on one's self, on sharing responsibility and on learning management skills, so control over direction is no longer beyond reach. Some of this will come naturally with time and through perseverance and some of it through being creative once people start taking some pride in their achievements;

the Bangladesh army is the darling of the UN peacekeeping missions because they are disciplined; the Bangladesh cricket team is a focused group who have dedicated themselves to training; Bangladesh garments industry is successful because management has been able to harness an easily trained low cost labour force. While there is nothing inherently lacking in the people of Bangladesh, there are no short cuts and it's never too late to change course to a path of self-sufficiency.

Mr. Khan suggests Bangladesh should rely on strategic alliances for safeguarding its sovereignty. This may be a second tier option, but it is fundamentally flawed as a first option. Today Bangladesh is a good friend of the United States but in 1971 it was merely an inconvenient conflict of interest for the US



MUNIR UZ ZAMAN / DRINKNEWS

administration that was a strong ally of Pakistan. Today Bangladesh is at odds with Myanmar which he cites as being backed by China and he professes to seek the might of the United States to tell China to back off to protect the interest of Bangladesh. But wait, isn't China a huge investor in Bangladesh? And aren't China and the US two of the biggest trade allies who have more pressing issues of mutual interest than dealing with what's most important for a third country like Bangladesh? Instead of fostering a feeling of enmity with its neighbours, shouldn't Bangladesh be actively trying to advance itself where the neighbours have more to lose than gain by harassing it?

Bangladesh's biggest asset is its people. Untapped, this is now its biggest burden. Instead of leading,

most "leaders" are involved in jostling for petty causes that not only distract them but often stands in the way of national interest. Most Bangladeshis seem to pride themselves in giving vetoes against someone else's ideas rather than providing constructive support or alternatives; the legal system inherited from foreign rule specifically designed to stand in the way of the ruled rather than provide protection to them has not been modified for self rule; knowledge is seen as something to be used as a weapon to put someone down rather than be shared and put to practical use; anyone in a position of authority very quickly forgets the all important responsibility for which they were given that authority in the first place. With these destructive values that the Bangladesh society espouses, blaming all its ills on its neighbours is yet another way to justify inaction. Doesn't it seem audacious then to go ask another nation to protect Bangladesh's sovereignty? It is the Bangladeshi laws, taxes and high bank interest rates that are preventing local industries from succeeding; while its neighbours are sending out satellites into space, manufacturing their own cars and building townships dedicated to science and technology all connected by a well planned transport system, Bangladeshi experts from a certain self acclaimed institution of engineering and technology could not even seem to demolish a multi-storeyed building without causing death and building codes for the crowded capital city. Why? Because no one is allowed to question anyone's authority while everyone points to someone else when it comes to responsibility: there is no public accountability.

Until there is healthy public debate about these root causes and the dysfunctional value system, outsiders will always take advantage of Bangladesh. No amount of sugar coating from the savviest of Bangladeshi diplomats can convince even the friendliest of its allies to take on the task of protecting its sovereignty unless as a nation it shows that it is serious about its own survival and is prepared to do its fair share of the work.

Shabbir A. Bashir, PhD
Vancouver, USA

in San Diego how is America. He told me it is just like Hotel Sonargaon all over America. I thought he was kidding, but when I arrived in Houston I found the truth. Very recently my nephew came home on vacation from Japan. I asked him how is Japan. I got a similar answer.

In this connection I must say the City Corporation is an utter failure in rendering services to the people. When a vehicle becomes old, it needs overhauling, when overhauling does not help, it needs to be replaced. Likewise, the City Corporation too needs overhauling, if it does not help it needs to be replaced.

Had this been the situation in the United States, the Mayor would not have been able to stay in office for a day even. People must be made aware of their rights and responsibilities, only then we expect to see a cleaner Dhaka. As a taxpayer I have the right to live in a hassle free clean city, likewise I have the responsibility to keep the city clean.

The world has now become a global village, where do we stand in the community of nations? We must go for action before it is too late.
Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Kalabagan, Dhaka

Top priorities

For protection of basic human rights, equality, peace, distribution of social justice and sustainable social development, we have to create awareness about trust based relations among the people of all religions. Empower the people at grassroots level to fight jointly for their fundamental religious, political, economic and legal rights.

We can end terrorism through promotion of tolerance and inter-religious dialogues. We should struggle collectively for durable peace, elimination of terrorism, human development and protection of human rights.

In our world there should be no room for bloodshed. We should try and work for the betterment of humanity.

Let us stand for global peace.

Mohammad Rajja
Nepal student society, Dhaka

Stop the blame game

Could you please tell our honourable prime minister to stop the blame game? This is a very common habit of our political parties and leaders to look back and to blame each other. Nothing has progressed in the last 38 years, not even the mentality of our political leaders. We need to see something very positive.

It's really a shame for us. Corruption, dishonesty of our leaders have turned our country into a hell. Still we have time to think about it and save our country from dirty politics. I request you leaders, please look forward and do what you need to do to develop our country. The world is changing so fast.

We want change, the change that you have promised.

Rafiq Aziz
Edmonton, Canada

Obama and Americans



The world was surprised when Barack Hossain Obama got elected as the president of the USA. The white Americans still cannot accept him easily as their president. People have assembled against Obama's health policy. People have the right to demonstrate and give or publish their opinions/objections against the government but their language in this case is very objectionable. They call their president "thief", "Muslim", "foreigner", "socialist" etc.

Most white Americans believe that America should be governed always by the white Christians. Although the US preaches democracy among others, they have a most undemocratic mindset. Even a considerable portion of white supporters of the Democratic Party hesitate to accept a black Obama. Former president Carter has rightly said that the Americans are not in a position to accept a black man as their leader, but as president Obama has the right to get proper respect from his countrymen.

Harun-or-Rashid
Sobhanbag, Dhaka

Palm oil plants

Palm Olin (locally we call palm oil) is a low cost edible oil. It is very suitable for human consumption from health point of view. Its yield per hectare is much higher than all other known vegetables edible oils. The palm tree originated from the African continent. But at present Malaysia and Indonesia produce the largest quantity of palm oil systematically and export it to different countries.

Developed high yield variety of plants when cultivated in a scientific way, discovered by research and development, has produced even a few tons of oil from a hectare of land in a year in Malaysia. It has been proved that palm oil tree plantation is suitable for Bangladesh soil and climate. In the last decade Bangladesh imported more than one million tonnes of palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia annually and the quantity is increasing with increase in per capita income over here. We have been consuming palm oil in the name of soybean oil as the traders sell palm oil as soybean oil. We know that palm oil is suitable for health and it also increases taste of food items.

In coastal areas a massive palm oil tree plantation is very much needed to lessen the devastating effect of natural calamity owing to global warming. The job seekers who went to Malaysia and worked in palm oil gardens have practical experience in palm oil tree gardening. They would be an advantage for massive plantation of palm oil trees in



our country. They can be engaged for palm oil tree plantation, especially in coastal areas. The devastating impact of storms that affect the coastal areas as a result of climate change could be reduced to a great extent with massive palm oil tree plantation. Bangladesh can also take technical help from friendly countries like Malaysia and Indonesia for massive palm oil tree plantation.

As it is a labour intensive work, such plantation would lead to generation of employment for the poor people.

The agriculture extension department and the forest department may be assigned to take separate projects for palm oil plant cultivation in Bangladesh. The business of extraction of oil from palm fruits can be assigned to private sector entrepreneurs.

If all these measures are adopted it is expected that within a decade Bangladesh will become self-reliant in edible oil.

Md. Ashraf Hossain
Central Bashabo
Dhaka

Gulshan-Banani Lake

Very recently, a number of shanties /structures were built around the lake. Almost every day new ones are being built. People living in those structures right on the lake are using the lake as their defecating place. The sight is simply disgusting and from

the environmental point of view horrifying. Seems there is total lack of governance. If Rajuk people are making money out of it, then what is the Department of Environment doing?

Recently, the prime minister of the country declared that no unauthorised occupation of public land would be allowed. The PM also

declared the govt's firm stand on protecting wetlands, lakes and rivers. I am drawing the attention of Rajuk for immediate corrective measures.

I am encouraged to write to you as your daily has recently done a few features entitled "HELLO MAYOR" Can you do a feature on the subject? Mufazzel Hossain
One-mail



BPDB's Local Tender Notice

"বিনামূল্যে সাপ্লাই বাডি
ব্যবহার করুন"

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resource/Power Division.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Power Development Board.
3	Procuring entity name	Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present.
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	Procurement of 50 km-ACSR Merlin Conductor.
7	Invitation for tenders Ref No	Pur-201/2009-10/Rev.
8	Date	23-09-2009.

KEY INFORMATION

9 Procurement method Open tendering method.

FUNDING INFORMATION

10 Budget and source of funds BPDB's Revenue Budget (Local).

11 Development partners (if applicable) Not applicable.

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12 Project/programme code (if applicable) Not applicable.

13 Project/programme name (if applicable) Not applicable.

14 Tender package no. GDL-08 (FY: 2009-2010).

15 Tender package name Procurement of 50 Km-ACSR Merlin Conductor.

16 Tender publication date 23-09-2009.

17 Tender selling date 29-09-2009 to 21-10-2009.

18 Tender closing date and time 22-10-2009 at 11.00am.

19 Tender opening date and time 22-10-2009 at 11.30am.

20 Name & address of the office Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Selling tender document (principal) Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Selling tender document (other) Not applicable.

Receiving tender document Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Opening tender document Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

21 Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting N/A.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

22 Eligibility of tenderer Renowned local manufacturer.

23 Brief description of goods or works Supply of 50 Km-ACSR Merlin Conductor.

24 Brief description of related services N/A.

25 Price of tender document (BDT) Tk. 1,000.00 (one thousand only) as Pay-Order (non-refundable) from any schedule bank in Bangladesh in favour of the Director of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.

26 Lot Identification of lot Location of delivery Tender security amount in Tk Completion time in weeks/months

- Procurement of 50-Km-ACSR Merlin Conductor BPDB's Central Store at Tongi Tk. 2,00,000.00 4-months from the date of contract signing

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

27 Name of official inviting tender Md. Abdul Wahed.

28 Designation of official inviting tender Director, Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.

29 Address of official inviting tender WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.

30 Contact details of official inviting Tel: + 88 02 9550532, 7120089 Fax: +88 027126151

31 The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.

Biddyt/Jan-254(4)/24/9/09
GD-4388

Md Abdul Wahed
Director (In-charge)
Directorate of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka



BPDB's Local Tender Notice

"বিনামূল্যে সাপ্লাই বাডি
ব্যবহার করুন"

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resource/Power Division.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Power Development Board.
3	Procuring entity name	Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present.
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	Procurement of Different Types of Insulator & Accessories.
7	Invitation for tenders Ref No	Pur-122/EREUDP/Raj/2009.
8	Date	24-9-2009.

KEY INFORMATION

9 Procurement method Open tendering method.

FUNDING INFORMATION

10 Budget and source of funds GOB.

11 Development partners (if applicable) Not applicable.

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12 Project/programme code (if applicable) Not applicable.

13 Project/programme name (if applicable) Emergency Rehabilitation & Expansion of Urban Areas Power Distributions Project under BPDB, Rajshahi Zone.

14 Tender package No. 4G (FY: 2009-2010).

15 Tender package name Procurement of Different Types of Insulator & Accessories.

16 Tender publication date 24-9-2009.

17 Tender selling date 01/10/2009 to 21/11/2009.

18 Tender closing date and time 3/11/2009 at 11.00am.

19 Tender opening date and time 3/11/2009 at 11.30am.

20 Name & address of the office Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Selling tender document (principal) Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Selling tender document (other) Not applicable.

Receiving tender document Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

Opening tender document Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

21 Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting N/A.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

22 Eligibility of tenderer As per tender document.

23 Brief description of goods or works Procurement of Different Types of Insulator & Accessories.

24 Brief description of related services N/A.

25 Price of tender document (BDT) Tk. 500/- (five hundred) only.

26 Lot Identification of lot Location of delivery Tender security amount in Tk Completion time in weeks/months

- Supply of Different Types of Insulator & Accessories BPDB's Project Store at Rajshahi BDT 50,000/- 3 months from the date of contract signing

27 Name of official inviting tender Md. Abdul Wahed.

28 Designation of official inviting tender Director, Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

29 Address of official inviting tender WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.

30 Contact details of official inviting Tel: + 88 02 9550532, 7120089 Fax: +88 02 7126151.

31 Special instruction Any tender received by the purchaser after the deadline for submission of tenders shall be declared late, will be rejected, and returned unopened to the tenderer.

The purchaser reserves the right to accept any tender to annul the tender process, or to reject any or all tenders at any time prior to contract award.

32 This tender will be performed according to "The Public Procurement Rules-2008.

Biddyt/Jan-254(4)/24/9/09
GD-4391

Md Abdul Wahed
Director
Directorate of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka