

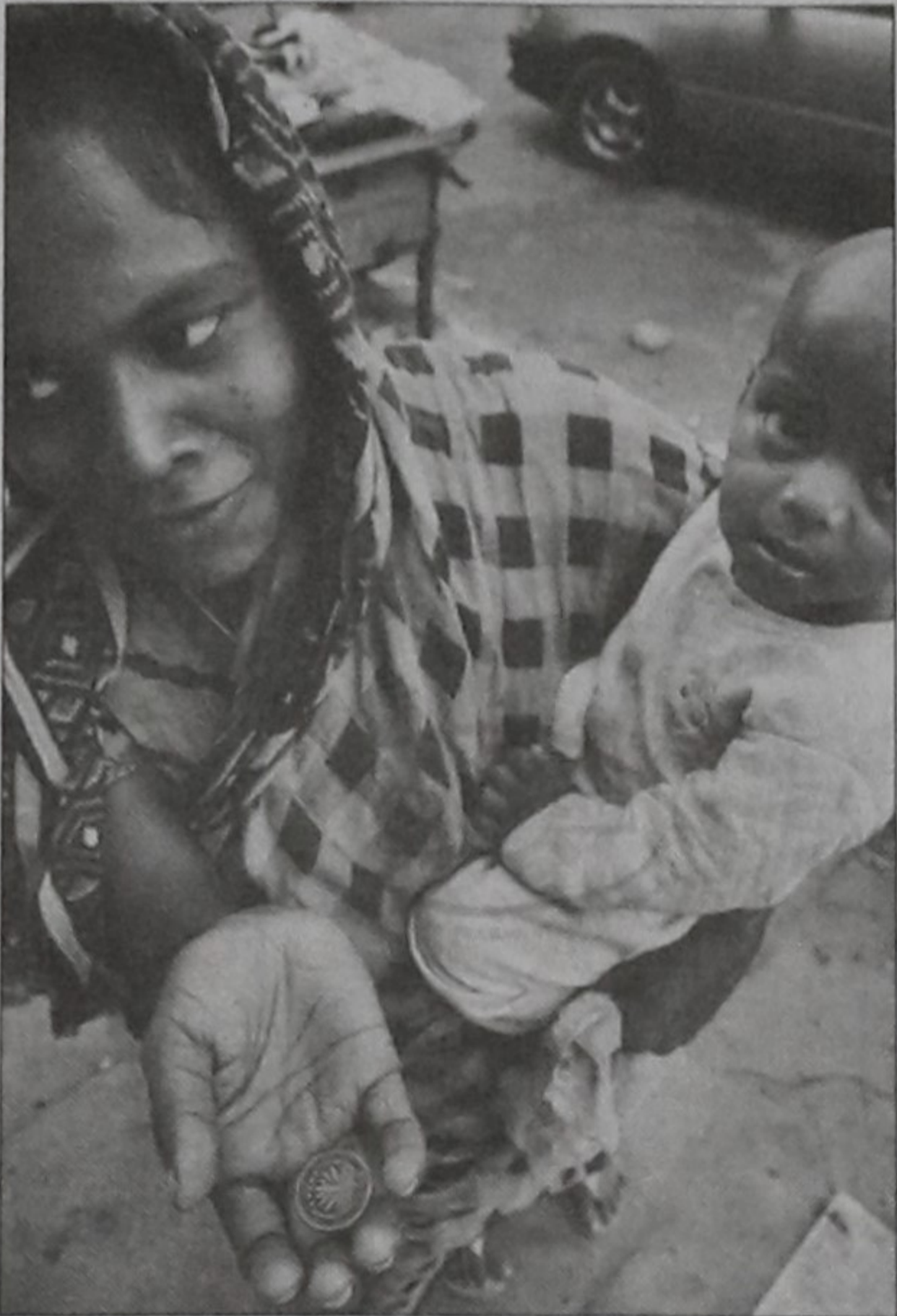
Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

# Beggars and vehicles

In the streets of Dhaka city private cars and beggars have increased in huge numbers. The common increase of private cars and beggars is synonymous which may have some meaning from economic point of view. Private cars have increased traffic jam and beggars also cause traffic jam. But here the point of interest is beggars not private cars. The beggars are poor but all poor are not beggars. There are professional beggars too. Women beggars with babies are common. Some people pretending to be pir/fakir are also found begging. Children are also engaged in begging. Foreigners visiting the country fall prey to the beggars. There are beggars everywhere round the clock. It is often seen that crippled beggars are lying on footpaths suffering from cancer, leprosy, malignant tumour, swollen, protruded eyes etc. Religious places like mosques and mazzars are full of beggars. During prayer time men, women and children remain awaiting outside for begging while devotees are praying inside the mosque, as if beggars need not pray. There is also no question about men and women begging together. It appears that beggars need not be worried about heaven and hell.

In Islam begging is discouraged, though it particularly encourages helping poor people for their well-being. But I find that nothing is advised from the mosque discouraging begging. About 40% of the people of the country leave below poverty line. Poor people become beggars due to social injustice, natural calamities, river erosion, unemployment, failure of the govt. and over and above non-fulfilment of the constitutional right to have living and livelihood ensured for all people of the country.

We see that the government is giving huge subsidy for electricity and gas to the able citizens whereas the poor, especially the beggars, are beyond the reach of



these facilities. They deserve a share of what is spent for the well being of the people. Begging must come to an end.

Md. Delwar Hossain  
East Rampura, Dhaka

## Governing Bangladesh Bank

Since its inception as the central bank of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bank is performing various duties that include formulation and implementation of monetary policy, intervention policies in the foreign exchange market, advising the government on the interaction of monetary policy with fiscal and exchange rate policies, the impact of various policy measures on the economy and proposing legislative measures it considers necessary to attain its objectives and perform its function. It also holds and manages the official foreign exchange reserves of Bangladesh. Bangladesh Bank's other functions include promoting, regulating and ensuring a secure and efficient payment system, including the issue of bank notes, regulating and supervising banking companies and financial institutions etc.

As the economy of Bangladesh has expanded manifold from the seventies to this new millennium, while the nature of the responsibilities of the central bank remained almost the same, the volume of the work has increased enormously. To manage this huge amount of work efficiently and satisfactorily the central bank has to think innovatively. The Central Bank Strengthening Project (CBSP), under the guideline of World Bank and IMF, has been working in this area. The pivotal idea is to make the central bank a modern and dynamic organisation.

Although the bank remains 'Autonomous' in paper, in reality it is directly and indirectly controlled by the government. The best way to build a modern central bank is

to decrease the number of employees and go for automation. While the number of unemployed educated young adults is mounting every year one might argue the measure they are applying in achieving the desired goal for the central bank.

The number of vacant posts for 'officers' in the bank is more than seven hundred and there has not been any recruitment of officers since 1993 (source: Human Resources Department, BB). Recruitments for other posts are also stopped for decades now. As the junior officers are getting promoted to the higher posts there is now acute scarcity of manpower at the junior level. The only recruitment the bank does is the recruitment of the Assistant Directors (AD) who are first class officers. In every batch there is a recruitment of hundred ADs. However, as the financial and other facilities of the ADs compared to other private banks and autonomous organizations are particularly low many of the bright new employees who join the bank as AD eventually switch to other jobs with lucrative salary.

With the new Governor taking over, Bangladesh Bank needs a new direction to overcome the global financial challenges and prove itself an effective and dynamic player in the context of 21st century. However, to achieve this goal fresh blood land innovative thinking are necessary. Some of the new thinking and measures that should be implemented to make this very important organization of the country dynamic and capable are as follows:

The central bank should take immediate steps to fill up the vacant posts. The volume of work of the bank has increased enormously in the

last two decades. To manage this work efficiently Bangladesh Bank needs new outlets particularly in the capital city Dhaka. Although the Bank has a branch in old Dhaka (Sadarghat branch), it does not have any in the new part of the city. Huge traffic jam often makes it difficult for the private bank personnel, businessman and people to travel all the way to Motijheel from the new parts of the city like Gulshan/Banani/Uttara. In this regard opening a new outlet of Bangladesh Bank in Uttara would be a prudent decision.

The Central Bank Strengthening Project should be given the authority to decide what would be better for the bank and its employees. It should be bold and prompt in putting forward its proposals. CBSP should not be a project to implement the plans of World Bank and IMF only.

Md. Nurul Islam  
Former Employee of BB  
Mirpur, Dhaka

## Alternative fuel!

An innovative Japanese engineer Mr. Takashi Yabe, at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, has developed a thermal based laser fusion of magnesium particles as a prospective fuel source! It is an incredible discovery, based on magnesium from the seas and oceans round the world; and the union heat harnessed from the sun! Both raw materials are nature's gift to mankind and available free!

The process developed, called the magnesium energy and injection cycle named MAGIC by Engineer Yabe, could one day remove our dependence on finite traditional fossil fuel! The main crux of this breakthrough is in transformation of magnesium

chloride from sea-water to magnesium oxide using the sun's ray and producing clean energy! The by-products are magnesium oxide and water; which can be recycled back to the MAGIC cycle probably endlessly!

There is around 1800 trillion tons of magnesium in the earth's seas and oceans, as calculated by Engr. Yabe. The white powdered magnesium oxide, has however never been considered as a viable source of usable energy; since to reduce the oxide to pure magnesium powder needs extreme temperatures up to 4,000 degree C, not considered realistic.

Yabe and his team have designed a process extracting magnesium chloride from seawater, using a special evaporating technique. Next, magnesium chloride is converted to magnesium oxide in a vacuum tank by plastic Fresnel lenses to focus beam of sunlight into lasers and sending it through microscopic fibres to concentrate the heat that can produce the refined magnesium powder. This magnesium is recombined with water, in the MAGIC engine, creating heat and hydrogen that powers the car! The by-product, magnesium oxide can be reconverted to useful energy again by laser heating! This work cycle thus can be repeated.

The pure magnesium produced can also be used in fuel cell batteries. This is at least seven times more powerful than the lithium batteries that power hybrid and electric cars of today. This MAGIC cycle engine represents the ultimate harnessing of solar power and ocean's resources for meeting our energy needs, at least for the next few thousand years; or till superseded by easier and cleaner fuel replacement source to provide power to meet our needs which is bound to increase day by day.

Engr. S.A. Mansoor  
Dhaka

## Shift BINA from BAU campus

Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA), a national research institute, can't run its research and administration smoothly because of bad student politics. As it is located on Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) campus, leaders from the ruling party demand 'chanda' from its employees, tinker with the tender process, recruitment is based on the ruling party's list and, above all, the entire administration is totally helpless because of their dominant role in every situation. The authorities can't take any decision against the ruling party student leaders, all the time the leaders enter into BINA campus and threaten the authorities with dire consequences.

I would request the government to shift this Institute from the BAU campus. Hafiz Chandan  
An agriculturist

## Facilities only?

The 3rd session of parliament resumed on 4 October and participation of the main opposition is again uncertain. This is really disappointing. The 29th December parliamentary election was an overwhelming election where all the voters from all sectors of society participated spontaneously. It is true that in most of the constituencies the BNP did not come out victorious, but in every constituency the BNP candidate got a lot of votes. So why are they not participating? They are the representatives of the voters. But I think that the BNP does not think like this. They are only thinking about their personal and political issues. They should put their position and activities on the manifesto as an opposition party. Because it could help the voters to rethink on the issue of casting their votes for the BNP.

But one thing is very interesting: when the government gives any facilities to the MPs, the opposition MPs never refuse to accept them. Nowadays people are aware about their political rights and civic rights. Please don't try to misguide them. All the MPs should be aware about this.

Sabina Parvin  
Indira Road  
Dhaka

## World Teachers' Day

World Teachers' Day is celebrated once a year on October 5 since 1994. Its endeavour is to garner support in favour of teachers and to make sure that the needs of future generations will be met by teachers.

As far as UNESCO is concerned, World Teachers' Day represents a noteworthy token of the awareness, understanding and appreciation displayed for the crucial contribution that teachers make to education as well as development.

Education International (EI) (the global union federation that represents education professionals worldwide) sturdily believes that World Teachers' Day should be internationally recognized and celebrated around the world. EI in addition believes that the principles of the 1966 and 1997 Recommendations should be considered for execution in all nations.

More than 100 countries observe World Teachers' Day. The efforts of Education International and its 401 member organisations have contributed to this recognition. Each year, EI launches a public awareness campaign to bring to light the contributions of the teaching profession.

It is difficult, during these tricky times, to seek out mechanisms that care for the teaching profession. It is also essential, despite the emergency, to make sure that investment in teachers is adequate and fair to the demands made upon them. It is the teaching force with its experience, skill, knowledge and prudence which can fetch new insights to universal solutions.

Shohag Mostafij  
MBA  
University of Dhaka

## Death of a big cat

The death of yet another big cat, a black leopard, on the 29th September Tuesday is really unfortunate. From the beginning of this year till now, approximately four big cats including two Royal Bengal Tigers have been killed by people and God knows how many more are being poached in the Sundarbans without being noticed. The animals in Dhaka Zoo are also not in good health and some of them have even died. Why so many animals have become sick at the same time and why the vets have failed to cure these animals are yet to be explained.

The black leopard was captured by a tiger capture committee formed by the locals. Capturing a tiger is acceptable only if it is to be released into its habitat later. But the opposite happens in our country. This committee captures and kills the animal which is an absolute breach of wildlife preservation act. Who has given them the authority to kill the captured animals? If the forest officials know about this committee, why haven't they made the committee aware of the crime it is committing by killing these endangered species?

What does it all prove then? Bangladesh is incapable of sustaining wildlife, be it in captivity or in the wild? Nazneen Ahmed  
One-mail

## Young people

The thoughts, principles and energies of young men and women are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. The evils of young men and women, as well as their dreams and aspirations, are a necessary constituent of the challenges facing today's societies and future generations. In all parts of the earth, young citizens, living in countries at diverse stages of growth and in different socio-economic situations, aspire to live better lives in their societies. Convinced elements would help this process, such as ensuring education, access to employment opportunities, adequate food and nutrition, a physical as well as social atmosphere that promotes high-quality health and protection from disease, pleasure of human rights and basic freedom, contribution to decision-making processes etc.

The world has experienced fundamental political, economic and socio-cultural changes. Young people represent agents, beneficiaries and victims of such changes which will inevitably affect us into the next century. In many countries, the changing global situation has created conditions that have made it more difficult to achieve development of youth because of limited physical and financial resources for funding youth programmes and activities, inequities in social, economic and political conditions, including racism and xenophobia, hunger and malnutrition, changes in the role of the family, inadequate opportunity for education and training, gender discrimination; high levels of youth unemployment; armed conflict and confrontation; continuing deterioration of the global environment and increasing incidence of disease.

Today's global youth population, ranging in age from 15 to 24 years, is about 19 per cent of the people inhabiting the earth. The majority of these young men and women live in developing countries, and their numbers are expected to increase well into the twenty-first century. A special concern is that the economic difficulties experienced in many developing countries are often more serious for young people. Although young people in industrialized countries comprise a relatively smaller proportion of the total population, due to generally lower birth rates and higher levels of life expectancy, they are a social group that faces particular problems and uncertainties regarding the future, problems that have to do in part with limited opportunities for employment.

Mohammad Rajia  
Nepal Student Society  
Dhaka

## Edward Kennedy

Salute to Ted Kennedy, a supporter of our 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.

We, the people of Bangladesh, have expressed deep shock at the death of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, a most valiant supporter of our Liberation War. He died of brain cancer on August 25, 2009, at the age of 77, at his home in Massachusetts, USA.

American President Barack Obama has honoured him as the LION of the Senate who served as a brilliant Senator for about forty years.

Senator Edward Kennedy visited refugee camps in West Bengal in India during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. He became one of the first international leaders to visit Bangladesh after our independence.

As a keen autograph-hunter (non-facsimile), I got a golden opportunity to receive the autographs of the three Kennedy brothers. Assassinated President Mr. John F. Kennedy wrote a letter to me, dated December 27, 1960, in reply to my letter, congratulating him on his presidential election victory. Two brothers, assassinated Senator Robert F. Kennedy and his youngest brother Senator Edward M. Kennedy, sent their autographs jointly in 1962.

I have been collecting autographs since 1958 during early school-life, and have already collected autographs of more than three thousands eminent personalities of the World, including seven American Presidents.

Mohammad Anwarul Quadir (LLB)  
Advocate and journalist  
Chakdev, Naogaon

## CEO and helicopter

Recently, a news report was published in one of the leading Bengali newspapers with a photograph of a small helicopter which had just landed at Rajshahi Airport. I read the related news and understood that the CEO of a bank accompanied the owner of the helicopter to Rajshahi. They were in the middle of their business tour in the north-western part of Bangladesh. I found that the reporter strongly criticized the CEO for accompanying a prospective investor.

I would like to analyse the report from a different viewpoint. The persons who travelled using the helicopter are busy people. If they were using motor vehicles from Dhaka to Rajshahi region, the volume of work they had done would have taken at least three days. They were to travel sitting inside the vehicle for almost 30 hours. Secondly, if they were travelling by a vehicle they would have suffered physical and mental fatigue.

I believe, they were not supposed to use the helicopter if there were regular passenger air links between Dhaka and Rajshahi. The Dhaka-Rajshahi air link was abruptly stopped during the period of the last caretaker government.

When I was a child I found that there were two flights every day between Dhaka and Ishwardi. All these two flights were full of passengers. The price of gold was Taka 144 at that time and the one-way air ticket was Taka 40. When Bangladesh Biman operated morning flights every day between Dhaka-Rajshahi during the decade of eighties and nineties, the passengers had to fight for a ticket. Later,

when the Dhaka-Rajshahi flight was re-scheduled to the midday and frequently failed time schedule, the number of passengers declined.

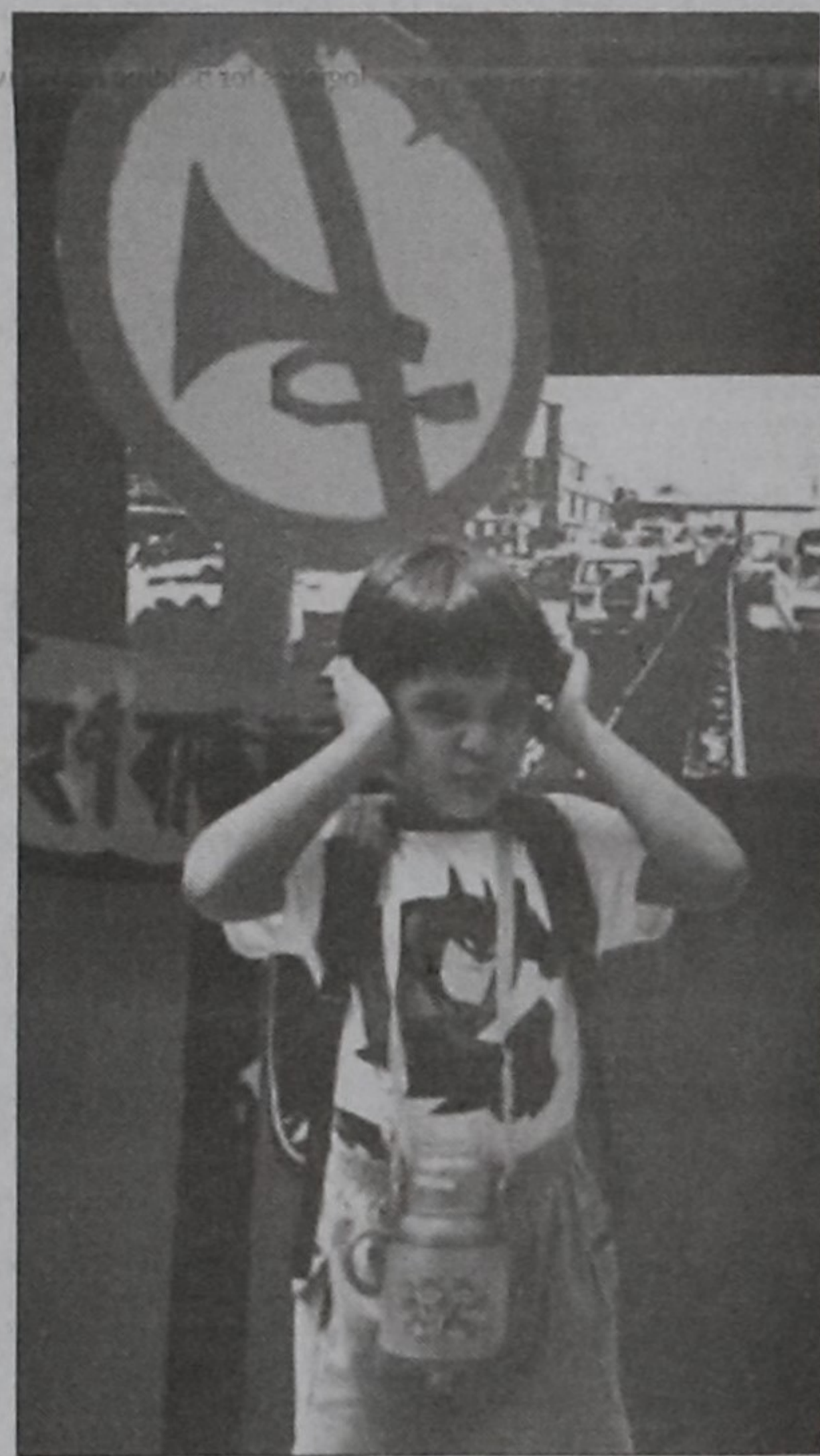
The people like CEOs of banks, university professors, and other high officials are entitled to airfare from their offices. They do not consider the price of the tickets. All of them have transport facilities in Rajshahi area through their local offices. On the other hand, one who can maintain his own helicopter to travel inside the country is definitely a powerful man whose visit to the Rajshahi region must be encouraged, not criticized, for the greater interest of industrialization of the most neglected part of the country.

I observed in the developed countries that CEOs of the banks and high government officials visit prospective projects using logistic support of the investors. It is a convention and practice. We are to see that they do not give any privilege to the entrepreneurs who provide logistic support.

Recently, one company from Singapore started marketing air conditioners and refrigerators in Bangladesh. I requested the CEO of this company to set up his assembling plant at Rajshahi BSCIC area. He agreed. But when he learnt that Dhaka-Rajshahi flights are not in operation he refused to set up his assembling plant at Rajshahi. He said my products can travel by truck, but I cannot travel six hours by road from Dhaka to visit the assembling plant.

Dr Anwarul Hasan Sufi  
Professor  
Department of Psychology  
Rajshahi University

# Noise pollution



Every day we hear lots of noises cracking our ears and beating our nervous system. Similarly, we see a huge jam in front of our school gate. This continues from the very early morning to 8:30am, while our class has already begun. The students can barely pay their attention to the class.

The authorities concerned should do something about it.

Shadman Shibbir Rasha  
The Aga Khan School  
Dhaka

## Crossfire killings

I refer to your editorial of 5 October. Although such killings are regrettable, the law and order forces have a duty to interrogate and recover arms and explosives from criminal gangs and have an inherent right to defend themselves if under attack. Similarly, if a criminal attempts to escape they have a duty to give warning and if it fails, to stop escape by shooting down the escapee.

To label such incidents as "cross fire killings", or "extra judicial killings" and demand stopping these without any official probe into any such incident, are highly irresponsible and de-moralising for

the law enforcers.

Obviously, as the number of arms and ammunition and the number of terrorists and criminals are on the increase in the land, such incidents are likely to increase.

Before clamouring for stopping such incidents it is necessary to establish by official or journalistic probe that this is a deliberate policy to get rid of the criminals without judicial trials.

So, I have full sympathy and support for the minister who defended such actions but please note I would never support such an official policy.

Engineer Shafi Ahmed  
London, UK

# Ensure quality medicine



The aim of taking medicine is to recover from the diseases, not to fall further sick. The real situation is different in our beloved country. Sometimes it seems that we take medicine to die. The so-called pharmaceuticals are producing various medicines that are

not of the required standard.

However, how they collect licence to manufacture medicine for marketing is a burning question. Nasir Uddin Shahin  
Department of English  
University of Dhaka