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# Congratulations, Shakib Al Hasan

At first, I would like to thank Shakib Al Hasan for his great achievement. Frankly, I was surprised when I heard that Shakib Al Hasan won the Wisden Cricket magazine's Test Player for 2009 for his great performance.

The triumph came on the back of a sterling season for Shakib, in which he took 45 wicket including five five wicket hauls and scored 498 runs in 8 Tests.

For this achievement he had to contest with others cricket superstars like Gautam Gambir and Graeme Smith.

Shakib said, "It is very exciting. I am extremely happy and it is really the best award I have ever had because journalists from all over the world voted for me. This joy is heard to express in words."

I hope he will do even better in the days to come.

**Mohammed Jamal Uddin**  
Dept. of English  
International Islamic University  
Ctg.



wicket hauls, and scored 498 runs at an average of 35.57.

It is great going!

**Mahfuzur Rahman Manik**  
IER, Dhaka University

Apropos the report "Shakib Al Hasan, the world-beater" (October 09), no congratulation is enough for Shakib Al Hasan for his brilliant all-round skills on the field which fetched him the prestigious Wisden award of the Test player of the year. Unlike T20 or ODI, Test cricket remains the ultimate yardstick for judging the character or prowess of a cricketer and Hasan has passed the "litmus test" with head held high, eclipsing the likes of Sachin Tendulkar, Graeme Smith, Jacques Kallis, Andrew Flintoff and Andrew Strauss. Also we should not forget that

Bangladesh gets much lesser opportunities to play international cricket than the "elite" teams which make Hasan's feat all the more creditable.

Not only is he a great all-rounder, Hasan is also a brilliant captain who led from the front and helped to bring laurels for Bangladesh in recent tours of West Indies and Zimbabwe. Thus with Hasan in their midst, the Bangladeshi cricketers will surely conquer the world in near future. Lastly, I thank the Wisden authorities for remaining neutral and giving due honour to the eligible ones, a trait which is increasingly becoming rare in this clout-driven world.

**Kajal Chatterjee**  
Peerless Nagar  
Kolkata

## Harassment at airport

This is to let you know that on September 29, 2009, I had flown to Thailand for a 15-day trip with a group of friends from Dhaka. On arrival, however, at the Thai airport, Shubarnabhum, some immigration officers were asking to check our dollars in hand. Instantly, we showed them the dollars available along with our passports. Since we were in a group our group leader carried all the dollars. I could have shown them at least 200 dollars and some Thai Bahts as well. However, without any reason or explanation, the officers took my friend AKM Hassan and me into custody. The officers forced us to take pictures like convicts and also forced us to sign a paper, which was written in the Thai language. We were also held up for about four hours, before being deported. We were literally treated like criminals.

It is worth mentioning that I

am involved with the media in Bangladesh and have a good reputation. I have travelled to many countries for both work purposes and personal reasons. I still cannot fully comprehend the behaviour of the immigration officers at the Thai airport.

I would also like to mention that I have visited Thailand several times. Being a proud citizen of Bangladesh, I felt humiliated and disgraced at the fact that I, along with my friend, was treated in such a way in a foreign country. I also cannot help wondering if this has become a normal behaviour of the Thai immigration officers to practically pounce on foreign guests in their country, especially those from Bangladesh and other countries from South Asia.

I would like the authorities to look into this seriously, so that something like this is not repeated in the future.

**Mehbooba Mahnoor Chandni**  
Moghbaazar, Dhaka

## CTG and our politics

In the media we hear about the controversial performance of the caretaker government. It is very interesting to watch that the period from January 11-2007 to the election in December 2008 is always mentioned and all blames are put on General Moeen and his army intelligence. But can we forget the period from late October 2006 to the so-called 1/11? Do we remember how president Iajuddin Ahmed misused the provision and the position of the head of the then caretaker government? Have we forgotten that some invisible power was running the show from behind the screen? Definitely, the General and his intelligence chief were not behind the screen, public perception and media reports pointed out fingers elsewhere. This is the truth of the matter. If we fail to recall all these events together with the alleged

charges being discussed in the media, these will just be forgotten.

Regarding our intelligence service, the less said, the better. They have just been a political tool drastically curtailing their professional capacity to operate freely without being accountable to the appropriate civilian institution and authority. I am really sorry to mention that at one stage the public perception was that the intelligence service of Bangladesh has been out-sourced (?) I know this is a perverted, frustrated thinking and not true, but just a rumour. To convert this service into an effective national service we need basic reform including rigorous training at home and abroad and the most important thing is to make it accountable to the political institutions with full transparency as long as it does not cut across our need for secrecy. Please do not keep them above scrutiny and

allow them to create an artificial fear among the citizens that nobody should discuss about the secret services' performance and action.

Coming back to General Moeen, my question is how can you spare other Generals who killed democracy in the past and we gladly accept their illegal and undemocratic actions? This is simply a double standard. If their rules were seriously and constantly questioned and put to trial, perhaps president Iajuddin and General Moeen would never ever come in the picture.

I am neither a supporter of General Moeen nor any kind of martial law. I am interested to see a single standard of our democracy.

**A reader**  
One-mail

## Polythene bag as headgear

A photo appearing on the last page of your daily on Friday, October 9, shows a child on a motorbike with his head protected from rain with a polythene bag. Your reporter probably found it interesting, but you should immediately publish the photo again with the warning that it can be fatal, many children in the Western countries were killed through suffocation by polythene bags when they tried to use such bags to mimic the headgears of astronauts. Due to this reason you can see holes punched in polythene bags covering readymade garments with warnings to keep these away from children. One can of course cut out the front of a bag to keep the face open to air if one badly needs to protect a child from rain.

**Dr. K Siddique - e Rabbani**  
Professor & Chairperson  
Department of Biomedical  
Physics & Technology  
University of Dhaka

## General's assertions

Recently, Mr. Moeen U Ahmed, the former chief of army, in an interview, with a Bangladeshi media in the USA claimed that he was the only general who never tried to grab power. He, a few days ago, bragged again in another news media that if he wanted to be the president of the republic, there was none who could stop him. It seemed to me that perhaps his rant is the outburst of pang for his controversial role in the immediate past regime.

Yes, he is the only general who issued myriad political sermons, wrote a political book which surely were a transgression of the service norms and rules and has set bad instances for the present and future government servants.

Yet, I can remember that he

is the only general who was considered as the "meddlesome" general of the country by the Time magazine in 2008. Mr. Ahmed should know that history itself determines the proper niche of any ruler, mere vaunting exposes only the hollowness of its merit.

**Ahmed Munir**  
Purana Paltan  
Dhaka

## DST and children

In order to alleviate the sufferings of people from the frequent power outages, the clock was advanced by one hour two months ago. The concerned minister said that the clock would be put back in October. Nevertheless, the DST system remains unchanged up till today. On the other hand, power failure still remains a regular feature of day-to-day life all over the country. Hundreds of thousands of agitated people staged an angry demonstration against the frequent power disruption in the upazilas of Birganj, Thakurgaon, Gaibandha, Gobinganj, Netrokona and Mohanganj in Dinajpur district a couple of days ago. The locals alleged that for the last one month, they got electricity for only 2 to 3 hours in every 24 hours. This indicates that the situation of electricity remains the same as it was before. People in the Chittagong Hill Tracts also continued to go through the same situation. School children, parents and teachers have to undergo an ordeal every day as the children could not get up early in the morning. Besides, students could not get enough time to prepare for exams in the morning as they need to rush to the school. In this situation children are the worst victims here.

In order to alleviate the sufferings of these innocent victims (school children), the clock should be put back.

**K. Rema**  
New Gulshan, Bandaban

## For some chairs and a house!

Remember the immortal lines of Shakespeare? My horse, my horse, the kingdom for my horse! The BNP's stand for some extra seats in parliament and Khaleda Zia's residence seems similar. There really is no issue. She was allowed to stay on in her husband's temporary residence after he was killed in a military putsch. She is no more in that state of pecuniary state. Therefore it is not expected that she stays on in that house and carry on with her political activities. I remember having written in these columns of your e daily before the last elections that a level playing field should start

at home. I said that one leader lived in Dhanmondi under public scrutiny for 24 hours. Any one could monitor her movement or those of the ones who came to her residence, the other was ensconced in her citadel where it was impossible to know what was happening after a certain hour of the night. How can she be allowed to stay on in a temporary home forever and carry on with her political activities from there? She should come to the people who have elected her twice and install herself in a house within people's gaze. Let her move to the other house in Gulshan given to her by the government or wherever she wants to be. But she must not be allowed to stay on in the cantonment. As for the seats in the front row in parliament, they were allotted those commensurate with their total number of lawmakers. So what are they grumbling about?

In reality the BNP, born as a party within the confines of the cantonment, was born to rule any whichever way, or so they think. They can not imagine how to play the role of a viable opposition. They will never come to parliament this time also. But if they pursue their self-destructive politics they will be eventually doomed.

**Fahmida Intekhab**  
One-mail

## Agricultural country

The land of Bangladesh is very fertile and so the farmers should be in better condition but that is not happening. The farmers farm in the field hoping for a good return but most of the time their dreams are shattered and as a result the farmers are selling their land to the builders.

The policy makers in the agriculture sector should address the issue.

**Md Mahbubur Rahman**  
Dhaka



# Sonargaon

Sonargaon is the oldest capital of Isa Khan's kingdom in Bengal. It is situated close to Narayanganj. The renowned Muslim traveller Ibn Battuta visited it in the 14th century. It is the eastern terminus of the Grand Trunk Road, which was built by Sher Shah Suri in the 16th century, and which extends approximately 2500 kilometres across northern India and Pakistan to Peshawar in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province.

A few years ago, a universal heritage preservation group listed Panam Nagar of Sonargaon, which is of noteworthy archaeological and artistic interest, as one the most endangered historic sites in the world.

The heritage conservation group says structures in the preceding capital of Bengal will be totally cleaned out to posterity unless preservation actions are taken at once.

It is fairly true that Panam's monuments have suffered from unlawful occupation plus there were not enough funds to protect and preserve the site, the government should put the site underneath the authority of the Department of Archaeology and the government is expected to actively work to guard and conserve the site.

The World Monument Fund, a non-profit organization with offices in Spain, United Kingdom, France, Portugal, United States and Italy identifies and helps to preserve the world's endangered historic and cultural sites and artistic and architectural heritage. Such help is worth taking.

In the end, it can be said that Sonargaon is undoubtedly a renowned historical place in Bangladesh. Due to lack of adequate funds and care it is on the verge of extinction. Scientific methods and proper restoration system rather than artificial repairing can ensure the existence of Sonargaon for a long time to both the foreign and domestic tourists with a view to making Bangladesh popular around the world and helping flourish the tourism sector.

**Shohag Mostafij**  
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# Volleying back....

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

## Govt to go after jam in a big way (October 8, 2009)

We have been listening in last few years about underground rail, expressway plans to reduce traffic jam. So far it is in the planning stage. Immediate action plan is necessary to ease traffic jam through building flyovers at several places which will be much less costly. Widening of existing roads may be examined as an option in this context.

**S Alam**

Unlike the previous governments' plans, we expect to witness implementation. No more words, this time we need real work.

**Mohammad Ala Uddin**

The one and only solution to Bangladesh traffic jam is to build an electric train line within every city with an inner city loop. BD should have taken this initiative long time ago.

**Mohammad S Islam**

Floating people in Dhaka city must be controlled. Some Head/Central offices, schools, and departments must be relocated outside of Dhaka city to control traffic jam.

**Forhad Khan**

PM Sheikh Hasina addressed some key issues of our national life very candidly. Traffic Jam in Dhaka city is taking away valuable working hours, making people sick and weak. It must be mitigated by all possible means. Action programmes must be implemented. AHN must be implemented in a way that benefits the Bangladesh economy most. Bangladesh must carefully open its doors and windows to all Indian states and Myanmar. Bangladesh must explore its gas and

coal resources expeditiously to fuel its economic growth.

**Saleque Sufi**

Please state the starting and finishing time. Otherwise, it is hard to believe!

**Asad Bulbul**

Please do something immediately so that the unbearable traffic jam can be handled properly. If the wheel of lives of the people of Dhaka city remains under the vicious circle of traffic jam, then development can't be expected.

**Shariful Alam**

Hope something will be done.

**SZ Tahmina**

Traffic jam has always been a major problem for a country like Bangladesh. The country could have improved its GDP if the government could provide the proper infrastructure support. Time is money & this jam kills a lot of valuable time along with energy. The government should go for more & more flyovers.

**Ziad**

Staggering time-table for immediate relief from daily traffic jams. It will spread the peak time over a longer period. Relocate the seat of the government to any suitable place about 50km from the city.

**Md. Mahbubul Huq**

The govt must stop the train line in Dhaka city and build two or three storied roads and immediately build 20-25 flyovers all over Dhaka city. Metro must be there for

mass people. You must stop all minibuses which are the main nuisance in Dhaka city.

Now do not talk, the govt must put all efforts to finish it within one year.

**Imtiaz**

I wonder whether we will ever see a result on most of the troubling issues.

**Asif Ishaque Ali**

They should pay more attention to train service, both local & inter-district. Side by side they should enforce traffic laws strictly.

Do not offer bank loan for buying cars!

**Nasir Ahmed**

Action please! No more words!

**Ferdous Jalil**

Our policy makers were unable to forecast the problems we are facing now. Our first & foremost solution is to reduce population growth rate to negative up to 20/30 years. Underground rail is too costly to finance for Bangladesh. PPP can be taken as a source to reduce dependency on foreign debt. Decentralization may be another way to solve the problem. Proper co-ordination should be maintained between policy making & implementation.

**Mohammad Anis Mahmud**

Thanks to the PM for giving a clear statement in parliament about many important issues which is directly related to our life. We are continuously hearing from every govt about their plan to solve those problems, but implementation of such

plans is still a far cry.

**Selim Reza**

I hope the PM's comment on the traffic does not remain in words and pages. The 1st priority should be given to making new roads as we have only 5% useable roads (out of the present 7%) which must be wide enough along with wide footpaths for pedestrians. Enough room should be provided in-between both ways (the islands) so that trees can be planted and when necessary flyover can be built without disrupting the traffic which we saw during the making of the mini flyover at Mohakhali and Rampura.

Without making new roads there is no point in making flyovers as the present problem will remain, only the location of the congestions will be different.

**Sohel Ahmed**

I think traffic jam of Dhaka city may be resolved by strictly controlling population growth and private vehicles.

**Md Asaduzzaman Shamim**

The government should take projects to construct new roads as much as possible in Dhaka city, though it is a tough job. Otherwise, the problem will increase the sufferings of public. Under the Hatirjheel project, the connecting road between Rampura and Karwan Bazar is to be given priority.

**Md. Ashraf Hossain**

Our prime minister has been talking tall and if she fails to perform she will be caught in her own trap.

**Farida Akhter**