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# Kuakata tourist centre



The world is blessed with many wonderful places attracting people to see the exquisite beauty of the nature. One such place is Kuakata situated at the end point of Patuakhali district. It is a rare gift that nature has offered us.

Though it may not be a singular one but is a rare spot in this planet from where one can enjoy both the views of the sun: sunrise and sunset. Tourists do not have to visit other countries for satisfying their desire of watching sunrise.

Now let us see what we are doing

to attract tourists. I had the opportunity to visit this place in 1997.

I started with an excited mind, but when I reached the place covering 22 kilometres of a narrow road crossing three ferries from Kalapara best known as Khepupara, I found myself totally disappointed as no sign of any edifice like hotel, motel, shopping mall, theatre hall, garden etc, which constitute the integral part of a true tourism centre, was there. The road was in very poor condi-

tion. If the road is developed to the international standard and other facilities like five-star hotel, motel, shipping mall, theatre and other likes are built and arrangement are made to let the people of the world know about the existence of such a rare place, I can say with 100% confidence that the money to be spent for all these will be recovered with huge interest.

**MA Alim**  
Exbanker  
Indira Road, Dhaka

## Gas and diesel prices

It is interesting to note that the govt. again and again publicises that food price is under control. But what about gas? There is anomaly between diesel and gas price. Though I am not an expert, but after a few months of my writing to the communications minister about gas-diesel price anomaly, now it is also endorsed by the CNG Association. They say gas price is higher than diesel. As a result, owners of transport are less interested in converting their engines to gas. The govt. in the past encouraged conversion to CNG. But the situation is changing. As a result valuable foreign exchange will be invested in importing fuel. The government should give serious thought to use of gas in the transport sector. In the mean time LPG gas price has been reduced. I congratulate the govt. for this right step. It has been reported that the govt. is contemplating further lowering of the prices of diesel. Such one-sided reduction of diesel price will not be productive. The govt. must rethink about gas price in the interest of saving foreign exchange.

**Acitizen**

One-mail

## Spirit of sacrifice

There are some people who

think that to buy high priced animals for 'Qurbani' is a matter of prestige but we must remember that it is of no value to Him as there is the indication in the verses in the Holy Quran-"It is not their meat, nor their blood, that reaches Allah, it is their piety that reaches Allah."

**Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haque**

Eng. Department

International Islamic

University Ctg.

## Media policy on armed forces

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's disclosure that the government was formulating a media policy for defence forces is something we should watch out (The Daily Star, November 23). Democratic tenets afford us the right to information on any public institution, be that the Supreme Court or the armed forces, and efforts designed to shield such institutions from fair scrutiny through laws would be undemocratic and counterproductive. As with any civilized nation, there would be occasional questions about professional competence of the forces, but that does not mean that the non-uniformed are less patriotic and have 'vested interest.' The Economist in its November 5 issue observed that "Bangladesh's defence preparedness is woeful vis-à-vis its Myanmar counterpart,

and it's only natural for us to ask why such is the case. You only duck behind laws if you have no answer; impact on 'morale' is a poor argument.

Let's hope that the law the government is working on is not a draconian one designed to offer much comfort to a particular segment of society. We are quite aware about the need for 'secrecy' that surrounds defence forces anywhere, but it is qualified and therefore not unlimited.

**Nayeem Jafar**  
New York, US

## Bangladesh and its neighbours

Myanmar is strategically situated to take the advantages of competition and cooperation between China and India over oil and gas resources. Both China and India are seeking to control the Indian Ocean for strategic military and economic reasons. The United States has been trying to militarise the region on the ground of fighting possible terrorist attacks and has already established an airbase on Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Apprehending that the US is hell-bent on a unilateral militarisation of the entire region from the Middle East oil fields to the Strait of Malacca, Beijing has stepped up its engagement in Myanmar. The Strait of Malacca, linking the Indian

and Pacific Oceans, is the shortest sea route between the Persian Gulf and China. Myanmar also presents a possible supply route for oil and other commodities for China. An oil pipeline linking Myanmar's deep-water port of Kyaukpyu with Kunming in China's Yunnan province was approved by Beijing in 2006. China is also Myanmar's most important defence ally, providing most of its military hardware and training.

In order to counter the increased Chinese influence on Myanmar, India has been trying to strengthen its ties with its eastern neighbour. It is spending millions of dollars to fund different projects in Myanmar which carry strategic significance for India. India is especially worried about the "maritime encirclement of India", with the Chinese bases at Gwadar in Pakistan and at Coco Island in Myanmar. India has been building up its military strength for a long time to close the gap with China. Recently, India has also started pursuing closer relations with the United States.

Taking into account the above realities in international relations, Bangladesh needs to develop cautiously and efficiently its own policies and programmes to safeguard its vital national interests when dealing with the neighbours.

**Nuruddin Azam**  
Australia

## Construction noise!

I live in Shekherter, Mohammadpur area, in the capital. No doubt it is a burgeoning locality with multi-storeyed buildings, markets and office blocks. Every day there goes up a new building. But all the construction materials are piled up and dumped by roadside, obstructing the normal thoroughfare. The roads are narrow and road condition is so bad that even the rickshaws ply in slow motion. Heavy trucks are parked here and there even in day time.

But more unbearable is that the constructions companies bring their materials to their sites at night. The screeching sound of loading, unloading of the materials, high voiced conversations and songs sang by the labourers make the lives of the inhabitants of the area miserable.

I do not really know where to get proper remedy. Where to get shelter/asylum from the lunacy of development and its mindless chaos?

**Nabila Tahsin**  
Muhammadpur  
Dhaka

## Party affiliation

Some leaders of at least two political parties were elected members of parliament (MP) using Awami League (AL) symbol i.e. boat. Reportedly, these parties are registered with the Election Commission (EC) and were allotted respective party symbols e.g. hammer, torch etc. Certain questions obviously come to one's mind.

a. Do these MPs come under the command and control of the AL parliamentary party? If so how can they project and promote their own party agenda in parliament, given the provisions of Article 70 of the constitution?

b. If these parties have not used their allotted symbols in parliamentary election when would they ever use those?

c. Is it justified for these parties to remain registered with the EC?

Hopefully, some of your esteemed and knowledgeable readers would throw some light on the subject.

**Syed Farhat Ahmad Roomy**  
Exbanker  
New DOHS, Dhaka

## Bureaucracy & politics

Why Dhaka city's streets are so overcrowded, and parliament looks so empty? It is the political magic in Bangladesh; practised for so many decades since 1972.

The Regulatory Commission failed to click and had to be disbanded. First, the lingering effects of the past colonial rule (for 200 years); and then the iron control of the bureaucracy by the political masters; (due to the poor non-dedicated leadership at the top). The latter is imperious to changes due to the deep-rooted dynasty rules of two alternating groups; maintained to continue the umbrella effect.

It means living in the past. We Bengalees seem to be ruled by the heart, although we have good brains. There is another over-crowding effect: the high density of population (per sq km); all controlled from deeply centralized Dhaka metro, capital. Bureaucracy and political governance cannot cope with such governance. It is the lack of dedication by the have-not minds. Did we achieve freedom in a too short period of time? The period of paying compound interest seems never to be ending.

An overcrowded society has the gift of the gab; and this talent is being applied negatively by the nation. The lack of elbowroom creates psychological problems; weakening national unity. The insecurity syndrome rules the days.

The reformed bureaucracy could be a powerful tool of governance, if the right reforms are carried out; and the management and administration are allowed to work in a neutral manner, in public and national interest; without political interference from the top.

But we are very sensitive to office-bearership; which encourages misuse of power. This is evident from the negative activities of the political field workers all over the country. The sense of discipline is badly eroded; and rules draw scant respect from those who wield position and power. We talk about corruption; but hardly concentrate on the hens that lay the bad eggs.

The enforcement of discipline inside the political parties is not being stressed in the media (this is a common weakness in the LDCs); and now harassment of the news media has started. The governance is easier when the average standard of living is adequate enough; but the political masters have to work harder at the foundation stages in a newly emerged nation.

**Alif Zabr**  
One-mail

## American policy

America is realizing four times what she is giving LDCs in aid. Bangladesh pays more than 15 per cent tariff while Saudi Arabia pays less than one percent. It reminds us of a proverb, "To carry coal to Newcastle." America went to unjust wars that killed so many people and destroyed the economies of the poorer countries. We can now clearly see through her tokenism. The sooner America realizes that exploiting the poor does not pay, the better.

**Tinku**  
Lalpur, Natore

## Autographs

I have been an autograph hunter since I was 12, more than five decades years ago, which is one of my hobbies.

I have already collected more than three thousands autographs (not facsimile) of eminent personalities of the world, including home also, and have also received hundreds of letters, written to me, encouraging the hobby, such as Late Sir Zafarullah Khan, first Pakistan foreign minister and latter the Chief Justice of the International Court of Justice in the Hague, British scholar, politician and Nobel Laureate Late Lord Bertrand Russell, American president John F. Kennedy, Ex-King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia and so on.

I am very eager to hold an "International Autograph Exhibition" in aid of the deaf, dumb, blind and handicapped people at home and abroad.

I appeal earnestly for everyone's cooperation and communication in this regard.

**Mohammad Anwarul Quadir**  
LLB  
Prominent Autograph-Hunter, Advocate and Journalist, and Former President of Naogaon City Press Club, Naogaon

## Price hike

A few months ago we saw that price hike was somewhat moderate but nowadays the price hike is so acute and unbearable for all classes of people.

The government should deal with the matter on a priority basis.

**Nazim Uddin**  
Dept. of Political Science  
University of Dhaka

## Mistakes in textbook

Social Studies and Bangladesh, Book-5 (Second Edition-Nov 2008) contains a lot of language errors which are very misleading for the children. The book contains a preface where the publisher did not acknowledge the errors to correct in future editions of the same. This book is mainly prescribed for the children of English medium schools in Bangladesh. Consequently, most of the children learn wrong English. For example in page 54, chapter 8, there is a wrong sentence written like - "The children of different groups of Sri Lanka varies from one another ...." But the correct sentence should be - "The children of different groups of Sri Lanka vary from one another...." There are more serious spelling mistakes in the same page. Similarly, there are more grave language and printing mistakes throughout the book.

I hope the author/publisher would take full responsibility to rectify, modify or remove the unwarranted flaws in the coming editions.

**Shadman Shabbir Rasha**  
The Aga Khan School, Dhaka

## What a country!

A news report in the daily Samakal of November 1 made me write a few words under the above caption. The report from Kurigram says that a man, who is alleged to have left no deceitful or fraudulent ways on earth untried to make fortunes and acquire position, contested in one of the parliament elections and has now become vice-chairman of the upazila!

Where are we living?

**A H Dewan**  
South Kafur, Dhaka Cantt  
Dhaka

## Whither UNO?

Following the collapse of the League of Nations, the USA and the European countries established the United Nations Organisation (UNO).

Over the last sixty years we have seen and experienced the anti Asia and anti Africa activities and performances of the UNO. The western countries also set NATO to exercise their military might as and when required without any concurrence of the UNO.

The UNO has, however, armed forces of different countries for posting in some so called 'troubled' countries in the name of UN peace mission.

We are astonished and shocked why UN peace keeping forces are not deployed in Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Gaza, Jinjiang, Chechnia and some other countries?

We strongly feel and it is imperative that we must have an Asian UN as well as an African UN to check and balance the works and functions of the UNO.

**OH Kabir**  
Dhaka

## US aid

As reported, in 2008 the aid received by us from the USA amounted to US\$151 million; while during the same period, Bangladesh exporters paid US\$573 million as export tariff! Poor (nephew) Bangladesh paid rich (Uncle SAM) USA, US\$422 million in excess of the total aid received! It confirms the saying that: "The rich are getting richer, and the poor are becoming poorer!"

Logically and rightfully this US tariff is a cruel burden on poor Bangladesh an LDC; with widespread poverty at the grassroots level! Why are we so unjustly taxed by our rich Uncle SAM? For justice and fair play, the US government should remove this unjust and high tax on our export.

They should rather give preferential treatment to LDC countries in the matter of Export tariff to the USA. The savings will encourage expansion and diversification of industries and products; thus help in increasing our export to the USA and other rich western countries.

We are grateful to the US for its aid, particularly during and after the recurring floods and other natural and climatic disasters, which are increasing in frequency and severity. Now we realise that

this is caused by the adverse effect of carbon emission by the rich and developed countries that are indirectly punishing the poor and less developed countries like Bangladesh!

The issue is not something to be ignored, more so for a poor country like Bangladesh, which will be adversely affected by the oncoming effects of climate change and rising sea levels. Will our ministries in the government wake up to the matter?

**S.A. Mansoor**  
Dhaka

## Load-shedding

Nowadays load-shedding has become a household word. At present it is a common feature of life in Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh has pushed back the clock time for decreasing load-shedding. But there is no result. In the evening electricity is very essential but it is not available.

The whole country is bound to collapse if the present condition of load-shedding does not improve. The government has to take necessary steps to check it as early as possible.

**Md. Tanjil**  
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies  
University of Chittagong

## High-tech crimes

Profits of high-tech crimes are high; hackers are able to steal without any geographical limitations. Categories of computer crimes: 1) Computers can be used as storage or communication devices whereby information can be created, stored, manipulated, and communicated electronically. 2) The computer can be used as an instrument or a tool of crime and can be used as a weapon to commit attack on the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information. High-tech crimes pose a problem to law enforcement agencies for two reasons: a) These crimes are not easily detected since the offenders can quietly commit them from any computer terminal, usually in the comfort of their own homes. b) Most of the law enforcement agencies are not equipped to deal with the matter.

**Mohammad Rajja**  
Gono Bishwabidyalay  
Savar, Dhaka

## Good move

The other day while I was going to Gulshan, a CNG (three-wheeler) caught my attention. Usually we see the CNG drivers lock themselves inside an iron framed door but to my surprise, in this CNG the passengers were also locked in with an iron framed door. It gave me immense joy thinking that the CNG owners have started taking measures to protect their passengers. And this is a much more effective way to save passengers' priceless lives and wealth from snatchers than all the measures taken by the govt and law enforcers so far.

**Khandaker Zia Hasan**  
Dhaka

# Bangladesh and democracy



MUNEM WASIF / DRINKNEWS

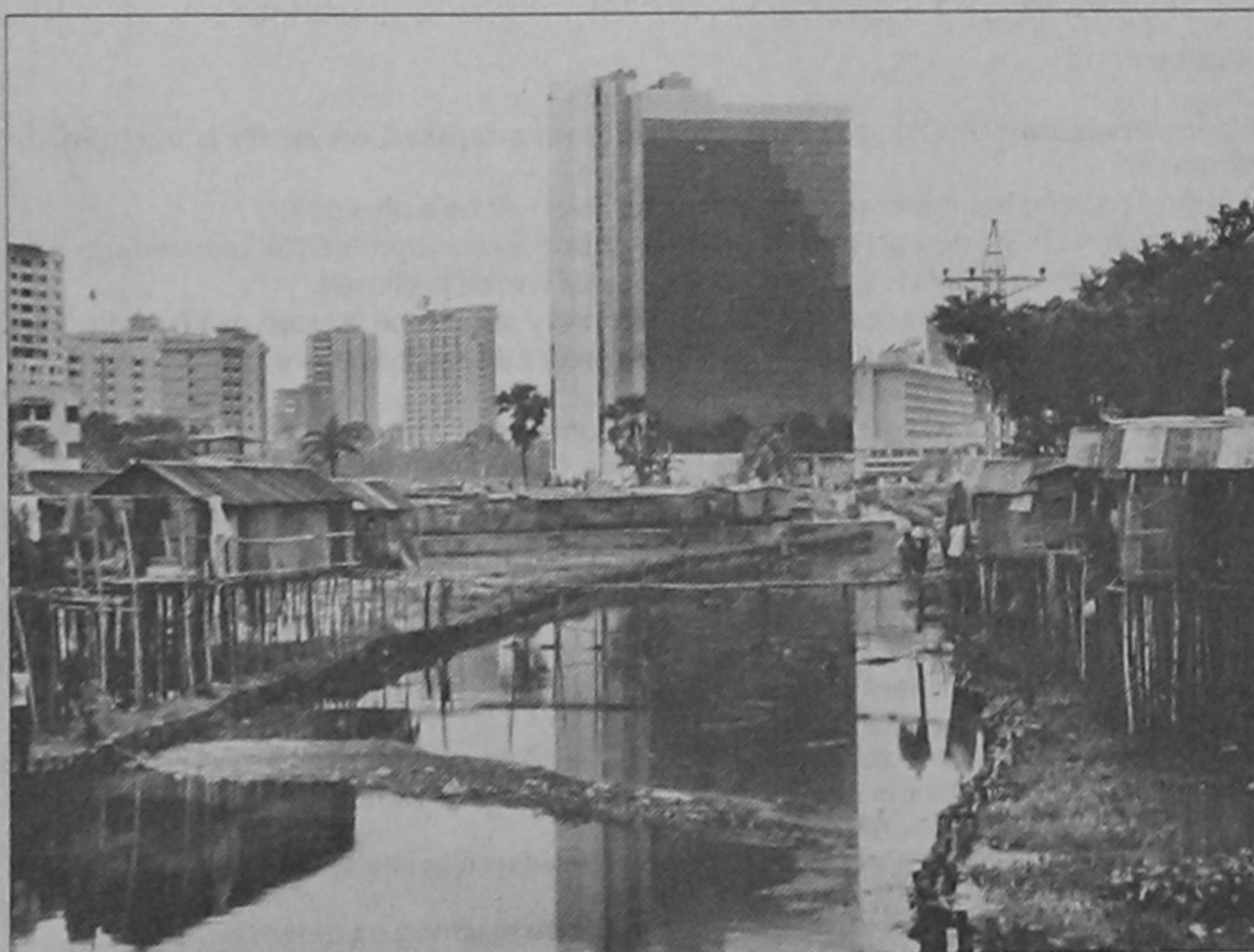
Bangladesh turned over a new leaf in the world's history with the achievement of independence through a nine month-long bloody war. It is a third world country burdened with a population abnormally higher in comparison with its small area. It is the most densely-populated country of the world whose majority of people are poor and illiterate and consequently live in extreme poverty. They cannot afford to meet their basic needs. They never bother about what democracy means and whom it serves. It is a matter out of their thinking purview. What indispensably matters to them is the interminable certainty of square meals three times a day and, if possible, the satisfactory fulfilment of their fundamental demands guaranteed by the constitution of the country.

There is no denying the fact that democracy is the best form of government that guarantees the fundamental rights of the citizens, paves the way for establishment of an egalitarian social system and ensures the freedom of thought, expression and movement. In spite of having a wide incorporation of commendable principles, democracy in Bangladesh cannot produce the anticipated result due to the unwillingness of the political parties and their destructive politics.

It is high time for all political parties to turn democracy into a rewarding and successful governance system through playing constructive roles and avoiding confrontational politics.

**Alamin Al Azad**  
Dept. of Public Administration, DU

# Hatirjheel project



Looking at the progress of this project, it seems that it is moving at a very slow pace. The much expected Tk 1,600 crore development project of Hatirjheel project is unlikely to be complete in time.

The project was taken to ease traffic congestion of the much

crowded Dhaka city and people expected a nice spot to get some fresh air with lakes & overbridges as planned for the entire project.

**Syed Shahid Hossain**  
HRBhaban, Kakrail  
Dhaka