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## Sanctity of Shaheed Minar



TANVIR AHMED / ORIONNEWS

My recent trip to Shaheed Minar shocked me to the power infinity. I could not find any match with the image aired on television every 21st February and the one right before my eyes. Considering this is Bangladesh, I was less than half expecting the National Monument being embellished with fresh beautiful bouquets in the middle of November, but expecting a decent and honourable scene at such a historically blotted place isn't too much!

Many know the sacrifices we made to make Bangla our sole mother tongue. Few realize that Bangladesh is the first country to ever fight for linguistic freedom and fewer know how to respect it...everyone there was walking around in shoes. People made it an ideal place for gossiping, smoking. Young couples were romancing on the staircase right beneath the moment. These people have grown up reading the clause 'commemoration for the martyrs' in their school textbooks but they never understood the line. Their

behaviour is a total disgrace to the nation. Just visiting the national monument with a bouquet, decorating the base with 'alponas', walking bare feet only on 21st February because it's the International Mother Language Day, is not the way of paying tribute to the martyrs. These should be maintained throughout the year.

Definitely, 21st February is to be celebrated to remember the importance of mother language but at the end of the day the reminder doesn't work. Everyone starts behaving indifferently and treats Shaheed Minar like any other venues in the city. Everybody talks of independence respectfully; write great articles and speeches of the glorious victory, airs intense talk shows on historical days but they miss reading between the lines.

No one should forget the origin of independence which started with the birth of this Monument.

Fauzia Sultana Mahbub

Banani, Dhaka

## Good movie, but...

A few days back I went to watch the widely campaigned movie "Third Person Singular Number" by Mr. Mostafa Sarwar Faruki at Garrison cinema hall adjacent to my residence with one of my relatives. Since purchasing the ticket to watching the movie I was not at ease. Although the cinema seemed to be thought provoking about what is happening to a lone girl in our today's society, I think it could mislead the youth. Let me give an example--in the first scene, where the heroine Tisha was chased by a teaser and some hooligans while seeking a shelter to spend the night, I found a section of the audience making obscene remarks loudly as if their suppressed feeling found an expression in the form of the characters on the movie. From the beginning to end, such obscene remarks continued.

It is painful to note that whatever the motto of this sort of off-stream movie is, from the gesture of the audience I assumed that the young generation would not follow the ethical side of the movie.

Rubab Abdullah  
Residential Area  
Dhaka Cantonment  
Dhaka

## Food for thought

There was a time when a conservative Muslim woman would have preferred death to a touch of her body by anybody other than by her husband. It was unimaginable on the part of a Muslim woman to move outside of her home without cloaking her entire body with a 'burkha' and wrapping a curtain around the passenger seat of a vehicle where she would sit to travel. Getting photographed was also deemed sinful.

But time has changed. Airline passengers from now on will undergo full body scans as security measures are being stepped up after the alleged plan to blow up a plane on Christmas Day.

Maswood Alam Khan

On e-mail

## Girls

I acknowledge that presently the state has given the girls freedom in many areas. But the family is still a problem. First of all, a family does not want to spend money behind the girls' education. In spite of being qualified, she is often not admitted in any good educational institution if it is far from her residence. On the other hand "the situation" is completely different for a boy.

Rahat Ara Rakhi

Dept. of English  
Eden College

## Sharing river waters

The Teesta water sharing agreement is on the anvil, as reported in almost all dailies on 5th. January. From one report in a daily, I quote the Indian Water Resources Secretary's remarks. He stated, "We want to share water with Bangladesh, there is no doubt about it." What remained un-stated is the ratio of water to be shared. Even if we get the leftover, say five percent of Teesta water, even then it is sharing; justifying the basis of the very positive statement given by the Indian secretary!

The unfortunate fact of the matter remains that, most of the water of the Ganges has been taken by India, and our share is little. This has resulted in extension of the saline zone in southern Bangladesh, as fresh water Ganges flow in Bangladesh has been drastically curtailed by the Farakka Barrage built by India!

Indian foreign policy with neighbours is built on the axiom that "might is right"; and so is the corollary; that "right without might; is no right".

You only get the residue, left by the "Mighty" (translate: India). Will not get a drop more, how much you may cry!

Now, India is planning and progressively implementing another might based right of sharing Teesta waters; magnanimously leaving for us whatever is left, after satisfying all their needs! It is very much like the sharing of "Goodies" between the big bully and the sad weekling.

S.A. Mansoor

Dhaka

## Satellite TV channels

Satellite TV channels greatly divert our young generation from our rich heritage. Earlier our youths were influenced by western culture but with the introduction of satellite TV channels they are now dominated by Indian culture. Noticing that those channels were diverting our young generation to foreign culture, the local entrepreneurs launched local satellite channels. ATN, the first private TV channel, started operation in 1997. Gradually other channels came into being. At present about 17 local private TV channels are continuously airing programmes upholding our long-cherished culture and tradition. But if we shuffle through the channels we will come across the ubiquitous dance sequence of the Indian music video. Unfortunately,

and people. I have visited several websites of universities teaching with this method. I think this service responsibility should be distributed to the private organisations. One more public Open University and at least one private Open University should be allowed to introduce this system as early as possible.

Md Mizanur Rahman Shahin  
Mirpur, Dhaka

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Recently, I saw some articles published on Open and Distance Education in different dailies. Many of the articles were in favour of Distance Education and a few were against of it.

As a citizen, I have some points as well as doubts about this type of Teaching or Education method.

On 14 Dec'09, Dr Manzurul Islam described many more points in favour of it, I myself believe that it should run in our country not only in public sector but also in private sector to make it more competitive. Proper monitoring should be ensured before the permission is given. Because people may take advantages or chances again to misuse this method.

We should use the technology-based education method to make it more dynamic.

We may not have enough teachers for this method but we can train them and separate those teachers from conventional system, so that they will not mix-up themselves with both the systems.

To create a digital Bangladesh we don't have any choice except introducing technology-enabled methods in all sectors.

Md. Jahirul Haque  
Gawair, Dakshinkhan  
Dhaka

## Occupied footpaths

If any one happens to be in the Dhanmondi Residential Area, she/he will find most of the footpaths occupied by cars that are using them as parking.

Ever since Dhanmondi Residential Area has changed its habitation pattern from single house to multi-storied apartments and guests cars are not allowed inside parking area of such apartment buildings. They are fulfilling their obligation just by merely hanging a sign board stating "Guests' cars to park outside."

Some of the houses in Dhanmondi Residential Area are used as office accommodation. Such houses have made permanent arrangement to park their office cars in the footpath in front of their houses.

Moreover, a number of universities, schools, coaching centres, hospitals, and clinics have come up in this residential area wherein students, teachers, guardians, patients, doctors, guests arrive with cars and park their

cars in the footpath causing congestion and making pedestrians move through the middle of the road.

It is understood that the City Corporation is supposed to look after these aspects. The residents of Dhanmondi are paying taxes to the corporation. We want to draw their attention to blockade of footpaths by cars.

The law enforcing authorities may kindly enforce the traffic rules to stop illegal parking

Kalam Dewan  
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

## Teenagers

We are in 2010. A lot of people think we are in an ultra-modern era. So, we would like to be so fast, especially the teenagers. In this time they wish revitalization of their vigour & visionary powers. Obviously, this tendency has some positive and a few negative aspects. The positive side is that if the teenagers are devoted to their own goals in life, then they will be able to enjoy a dynamic life.

It is time for them to be judicious and they should never lose control over themselves.

Motidul Islam Shajib  
Dept. of Business  
Administration  
Bangladesh University  
Dhaka

## Consultancy firms and students

Every year a good number of students are going abroad for higher education. They are taking help from student consultancy firms. In most cases parents are allured by the advertisement of the student consultancy firms. Student consultancy firms are hiding information and giving false information for doing business. If they give proper information to the students and their parents then they can mentally prepare themselves for any circumstances.

After getting the information from the student consultancy firms, their expectations go high. But practically they are facing a different situation. Just for example, the UK has graded their colleges & universities in A and B and imposed restrictions on recruiting students. The tuition fee of the colleges varies from 2500 to 4000 pounds. Most of these colleges do not have enough space to accommodate the students as well as don't have enough classrooms. After the economic recession, the UK has made some tricky decisions for economic development. The highest revenue comes from the education sector. For that they have relaxed their immigration rules. Their main target is to collect the cash money from all over the world.

In the last six months approximately 30 thousand students have gone to the UK from Bangladesh for higher education. But most of them have the plan to do job there. It is known to all that due to eco-

nomical recession people are losing jobs all over the world. In this situation how can you expect to get job there? But the student consultancy firms are still informing that it is very easy to get a job in London.

It is to inform the government of Bangladesh that the student consultancy firms are doing business after taking the trade license from the government. So they don't have any moral obligation to the government or to the people. It is seen that many student consultancy firms were closed after they took a good amount of money from the students.

So, I must request the ministries concerned to look into this matter.

Adv. Quazi Raquibul Islam

Siddheswari Circular Road

Shantinagar, Dhaka

## A wrong policy

The year that saw a revolution in country's education sector must be painful for people who really want a change in education system for substantial development of the country. I was astonished to see Dhaka University's admission procedure that technically banned students from madrasa backgrounds from getting admitted to some key departments. More amazingly, the decision coincided with rising militancy threats that turned out to be a big obstacle for the country's development, investment and everything. This insurgency is mostly led by some madrasa teachers and students.

Let me explain how the university's decision would help breed fanaticism with more pace. We need to eradicate the threat of militancy. Since illiteracy and wrong lessons about Islam at the madrasas were to blame for the terrifying militant activities, shouldn't we take initiative to educate those people up? Even the prime minister said those people were misguided and got wrong lessons about Islam.

All we need is to make them feel they are wrong. We should have offered them quota, instead of barring them. We need some educated leaders from that community that could really rescue them from the brimming well of hate against development and the governments. Instead, we tried our best to deter them from getting higher education when some of them are coming up with outstanding results. It is a good sign that they are trying to get higher education. Some newspapers reported that madrasa students were humiliated at their viva for admission.

I think The Daily Star can play a role to remove the maltreatment of madrasa students. As an opinion leader, The Daily Star could contribute to reducing militancy also.

Adib Alamin

Dhaka

## Ship-breaking or death game?

When world leaders gathered at Copenhagen to compensate the nations affected by environmental pollution and to find out some alternatives or to reduce, to some extent at least, carbon emission to save the planet as human habitat from global climate change consequences, we are simply playing our death-games at Sitakundo ship breaking zone defying all warnings and dangers. In an explosion on 26 December last year while dismantling the oil tanker MT AGATE in Rahim Diamond Steel Product, a shipyard owned by one Hazi Abdur Rahim at Madambirhat, 4 people were killed on the spot and 2 more later and many others were injured. In the last three months, 13 people have died in three separate accidents and 22 in the last one year. Since 1984, about 1,000 people died and 6,000 injured in the ship breaking accidents at Sitakundo. At present 37 shipyards are operating at Sitakundo with about 4,000 workers. According to The Daily Star (01/01/2010) and the Daily Prothom Alo (28/12/2009), about 3,000 ships are waiting globally to be dismantled most of which will surely enter into Bangladesh and Sitakundo will grab its share, no doubt.

While other nations are shrinking their ship breaking business, imposing legal barrier on toxic ship dismantling

## Ailing health sector

We have plenty of human resources for producing more doctors and nurses; but the development plans have been rather sporadic. Lately the government has paid some attention to the plight in the nursing sector; and also have decided to offer more allowances for postings in the rural areas.

The nursing education has been enhanced; and more doctors and nurses are being appointed (the density of population is one of the highest in the world; namely about 1,000 persons per sq Km).

The provision of housing facilities in the rural areas would attract more professionals in the postings. Our medicine sector is doing well; exporting products to many countries. The welfare of the nursing diploma holders and graduates would go a long way in maintaining the correct doctor: nurse ratio. Hospital furniture and basic equipment are now made in the country. More official attention has to be paid to transportation of patients from the village homes to the medical centres; and the availability of medicines and operations at cheaper rates.

The approach to the rural services development programmes is similar in the education sector and drinking water facilities.

A Husnain

Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

considering possible harms to human life and environment, how foolish we must be to become world's largest rejected ship breaker country. With the poor innocent workers' lives, a few unscrupulous businessmen are prospering. Whose interest do we serve to dredge all the wastes and garbage from the corners of the globe? How ridiculous it sounds when someone occupying a high office terms the notorious business of toxic ship dismantling as the fueling into our fragile economy, despite its little harm. The desperate shipyard owners neither pay heed to the directives of the apex court nor bother about the warnings and directions by Explosive Department in scrapping an old ship. They hardly feel interested to spend money to clean petroleum and flammable substance off a tanker before dismantling a ship. They never ensure safety of the workers, their insurance, treatment, compensation etc. Besides, the owners are indiscriminately felling down the trees planted by the forest department to make their yard. Coastal areas are being deforested, water is being polluted by the waste substance from oil tankers, species of fish and animals are being extinguished and air is being polluted by ammonia and CFC gas emitting from the toxic ships all these are endangering the environment and the ecological balance in the area. But the culprits always go scot-free!

Muhammad Didarul Alam  
Sitakundo, Chittagong

## English medium school fees

Exorbitant fee structure in English medium schools is breaking the backbone of the middle class families which wish to provide quality education to their children. Parents have become money-minting machines for such schools. In Dhaka, different schools have different patterns of charging fees. The annual expenditure per student, including the tuition fee, bus fare, books and the school uniform cost too much to the parents as they go higher and higher each year and become burdensome for most of the

parents.

Can't the government take action to regulate a proper fee structure for all English medium schools? Can't we have a uniform fee structure for all English medium schools?

Badal Hasib

SIBT  
Sylhet

## English in nursing

English in nursing is an important issue as the course related books are written in English and this course also originated in English society. There is no provision yet for permanent lecturership for English teachers in nursing colleges and institutions. In addition to this, having no prescribed textbook in English is a serious problem.

English is not taught round the year to maintain fluency. So, the nursing students are lagging behind. But it would be a golden opportunity to fetch foreign currency if they are trained properly to work abroad.

Golam Kader Mukut  
Guest-Lecturer in English  
Dhaka Nursing College  
Holy Family Red Crescent  
Nursing Institute  
Dhaka

New look of Biman

It is heartening that Biman is going to get a different and modern look at last. (A new look Biman in sight. Star Business. 07.01.10). The present world is more watchful about the outer look of everything. In Europe, America, even in Africa and Asia, every country and their people are paying attention to the modern décor of everything they use, they see or even they eat. Though we haven't yet seen the actual facet of Biman, yet it has been revealed from the picture published in your daily that Bangladesh's flag carrier has got a beautiful look. Now, Biman will have a different image and the national flag carrier will be able to attract more passengers.

With the new look, we expect the management will also be modern, capable, honest and progressive.

Anika Tasnim  
Muhammadpur  
Dhaka

## River Madhumoti



PHOTO: MAHMUD ALI KABIR

The dead Madhumoti has become a great worry of Gopalganj people, as it has never been dredged properly. Recently the government authorities have decided to re-excavate the river and beautify the surrounding areas.

Many illegal land grabbers from the city's Moulvipara area, the Pouro market and encroachers from the two sides of the river have been evicted, but still no development work has

started.

The river is the soul of the city and its people for many reasons including daily use, cultivation etc. The authorities should not waste any more time. The people of Gopalganj demand quick start of excavation of the Madhumoti river.

Mahmud Ali Kabir  
Ex-BSS correspondent  
Gopalganj