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Our ports



WAHID UJUMAN / DRINKNEWS

Chittagong port is one of the costliest ports in terms of freight. Ship owners have increased freight a number of times due to delay in getting berth and thereby unloading cargo. Moreover, expensive dredging in the Karnaphuli River had to be carried all round the year to keep the port running. Under the circumstances, consultants were engaged to study in detail and submit recommendations. Consultants studied in detail for a long time and termed the port dead. They recommended

going for a deep seaport further down. I had an occasion to attend a meeting at the naval headquarters, Dhaka, to review the report and recommend action. The meeting was adjourned without decision. The Mongla port also needs massive investment to cater to freight from Nepal, Bhutan and India.

Under these circumstances, how far is it justified to allow India to use our port?

Serajul Islam
Gulshan, Dhaka

Five killers hanged

The five killers paid for their brutality and sins against Bangabandhu family and Bangladesh. However, 'merciful' hanging of these five sadists could hardly atone for the 15 August (1975) victims (and millions of people who died before the Supreme Court final verdict on Bangabandhu killing was delivered in 2009).

Nonetheless, now people might draw some solace from the knowledge that at least some killers of 15 August did not go unpunished.

M. Emad
Oxford, UK

Justice delayed, but justice was meted out finally in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Now Sheikh Hasina should punish some leaders of the Chhatra League who are spoiling her party's democratic image through hooliganism.

Rubab Abdullah
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka

Haiti disaster

All of us should take a lesson from this humanitarian disaster.

We express our deepest sympathy for the people of Haiti and urge all to extend their helping hands to the survivors in Haiti.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
Jamea Rahmania Madrasa Chittagong

Century-old tracks

In Bangladesh, railway is the oldest mode of transportation since British period. When the British colonizers ruled our sub-continent, they built up the railways. In our lands they made rail lines and since the independence and post-war Pakistan, no new tracks were set up and what we are using now were made by the British. But as everything is transitory, with the passage of time those railway tracks now are in dilapidated condition and still we have to use them.

We expect that the present government will handle the issue efficiently.

Bipra Kanungo
Momin Road Chittagong

Rivers

The front-page picture of your daily of January 24 is shocking and devastating.

Rivers and waterways have been described by a great statesman of recent times as the lifeline of a country, meaning blood vessels. I have heard in the country of that great statesman that any one found guilty of polluting or contaminating the waterways is awarded death penalty.

The pitch-black water of the river is, as a matter of fact, a dire warning of a serious catastrophe awaiting the nation. It can very well be compared to a blood cancer afflicted person awaiting death, in such a case only a single person is the casualty, which is not also welcome. In case with polluting the waterways of a country, the nation is the victim comprising millions of people. The processes of contamination have probably been going on unabated for a considerable period of time, resulting in the disappearance of aquatic lives. The toxic water is probably being used for irrigation of crops and also for many other purposes resulting in the slow poisoning of the nation.

The culprits responsible should be dealt with the severest form of punishment as they are slow poisoning the nation to death. There should be no leniency or clemency in executing the punishment to the criminals responsible for such a serious crime.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Kalabagan, Dhaka

Pope and Jews

Regarding the AP article "Pope defends Pius against Jewish critics at Rome Synagogue", January 18, 2010.

I commend Pope Benedict XVI for defending his recent decision to move Pope XII a step closer to sainthood. Despite largely Jewish efforts to cast a dark shadow over Pope Pius XII's good character it is an irrefutable fact that Pius II and the Catholic Church saved more Jews in Europe during the Second World War than any other party, with the only exception being the Allied liberating armies themselves.

He often acted secretly and silently because, in the light of the practical situations of that complex period of history, he foresaw that only in this way could he avoid the worst and save the greatest possible number of Jews.

In 1946 Isaac Herzog, chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, wrote a letter to Pius XII thanking him for helping Jews during the Holocaust and for "sheltering thousands of children, who were hidden in Catholic institutions".

Pope Pius XII promoted intense charitable work on behalf of the persecuted, without distinction of religion, race, nationality or political affiliation.

Paul Kokoski
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Campus violence

It is distressing that police seized, raiding different dormitories of a reputed college like Dhaka College, a revolver and a number of sharp weapons last week. Moreover, opening the newspaper, we constantly find pictures of violent mobs coming into collision with opposition party vandalizing vehicles and burning them on the roads.

The reputation of Dhaka College, which could be considered as one of the best colleges in the subcontinent in the past, is dwindling.

The authorities concerned should look into the matter.

Mostafa Al Mahmud
HSC Examinee (2010)
Dhaka College, Dhaka

Better performance needed

A business report published in the DS business page with the headline "Bangladesh moves up in trade logistics efficiency", drew my attention and made me happy.

Well, every Bangladeshi would be happy to know that Bangladesh has emerged as an 'over performing' country in proving efficiency in trading goods around the world. The World Bank survey report confirms it. Bangladesh has now the 79th position. It was in the 87th slot in the 2007 survey. In terms of international shipment Bangladesh

ranked 61st, which was 96th, and this year's report in terms of infrastructure has placed the country in the 72nd position, which was 82nd.

The report is satisfactory, but still Bangladesh is not in a position which could make the countrymen proud. Bangladesh needs to be in the top 20.

I must thank the World Bank and its President Mr. Robert Zoellick as he said "Economic competitiveness is relentlessly driving countries to strengthen performance".

It is time for us to look forward to show our performance.

Mahmud Ali Kabir
Ex-BSS correspondent
Gopalganj

Cheating by shopkeepers

I refer to the two recent letters published in your daily on the above subject. Being a housewife myself, I am facing this problem every day. It appears there is no one in our government who is concerned about his matter.

If you work out the losses of the housewives every day it will be several lakh taka every day. Now who will compensate for the losses incurred every day by each family?

We have an elected government in place. Parliament is also working as per rules. The government is committed to a "Fair Deal" for the people.

We request you to write a strong editorial on this subject.

Mrs Rahima Zaman
Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Dhaka

A movie or a magic?

Avatar is the tale of a former Marine who finds himself forced into hostilities on an alien planet crammed with unusual life forms. As an Avatar, an individual mind in an alien body, he finds himself ragged between two worlds, in a frantic clash for his own survival and that of the aboriginal populace.

It's one of the most luxurious cinemas ever made, and it shows in each frame, with unbelievable CGI work, overwhelming landscapes and remarkable flora and fauna.

Mr. James Cameron, Congratulations!
Shohag Mostafij
MBA-Stream: Strategic & International Management
University of Dhaka

Student politics?

Before being a student of university I heard about the negative sides of student politics from seniors. Since I have admitted myself in a public university, now I am a disappointed spectator of brutal and horrible student politics in our motherland. I started my 1st day of university on 17 December 2004 and I got the chance to count the black and disgraceful days of student politics in our country. I cannot tell you the correct figure of slaughtered students but I can understand the feelings of those families. They are helpless.

The only fault is that they belong to the poor class. As they are weak (economically), they are unable to study in foreign universities or famous private universities. These helpless but meritorious students are used as the tools and mortgaged by the politicians to run the country. We lose many students every year and its only remedy is to close the institutions for an indefinite period. The dreams of

their parents are buried.

Md. Rafiqul Islam
Dept of English
SUST

One year of the govt.

Our opinion on one year of Awami League govt.? Do we have freedom of press and right to information?

If yes, call a spade a spade. Why no autarky but wastage of public money and misuse of govt. transports?

Why occasional price hike of rice, lentil, potatoes and sugar? What have been the performances of the Ministry of Commerce and TCB? Why illegal toll collection on roads, highways and clashes over tender submission?

Why on the one hand BNP lawmakers are boycotting Jatiya Sangsad and on the other hand drawing their pay and allowances like old Awami League lawmakers?

Why do the flood, cyclone and 'river erosion' affected people continue to suffer for indefinite periods?

Why don't Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleida Zia meet with each other?

Whither 'Din Badaler Pala' - the pledge for Charter of Change?

Whatever have been the circumstances the greatest failure of the Awami League govt. is load shedding.

However, the greatest success of the Awami League govt. is the momentous, free and colossal distribution of textbooks to schoolboys and girls on the eve of Happy New Year 2010.

OH Kabir
Dhaka

Education

Education is the back bone of a nation. I hope the present government will see the point.

If we want to really improve our condition, the salaries of service holders should be fixed according to their academic qualification.

Advocate M. Saiful Alam
Savar, Dhaka

Good humour

Recently, Dr. Rajiv Shah was sworn in as the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Dr. Rajiv in his swearing-in function presented a long speech highlighting various aspects and goals of the USAID. I have gone through the full text but I liked the humour Dr. Rajiv had presented in the beginning of his speech which I would like to share with fellow readers. It read: "When I began preparing my remarks for today, I asked my wife, Shivam, for advice. She told me - when you get on stage and everyone is cheering for Secretary Clinton, just pretend they're cheering for you."

Professor M. Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka

From limousine to bus

From limousine to public buses could not stop the outgoing CEO of JAL (Japan Air Lines) from heading towards bankruptcy. He cut his own pay, took meals in company cafeteria, and even came to office on public bus to contain costs, but all to no avail! The Japanese government now has brought Inamouri, a Buddhist priest, to try and bail out JAL from "Financial Jail" -- so to speak! This AFP news report was published in a local English daily on January 19th.

We, particularly our public enterprises, got much to watch and learn during this

New Year pessimism

The general elections are being held at regular intervals, but the political culture is not improving. It indirectly means that the feedback from millions of voters have no democratic effect on the ruling political regimes.

Our political culture has become stale, due to domination by two parties, which believe in dynasty rules. It means living in the past, instead of looking forward. They party comes first; and the democratic gestures have second priority. Coming to power has become big business.

Parliament is in limbo, being boycotted by the opposition; claiming democratic rights. This boycott by the successive opposition parties has turned into an ignoble culture. This posture is very much evident in the third world; and in the newly emerging nations.

Cultivating democratic principles

politically is a tough job in the LDCs. The leadership cannot reach higher levels, due to negative economic attractions. Internal democratic modes are not cultivated inside the political parties. The umbrella effect is very much evident. It would need a revolution to set the mentality into the right lanes in public interest. The latter has to be placed before the general masses in more attractive formats. Almost one half of the voters are illiterate, and live at or below the acceptable economic level. Hence political exploitation is the norm. The office bearers hold the advantage and leverage, as breaking the law and rules have become the norm. This is due to political sycophancy to sustain the dynasty regime (the have-not mentality).

How to get out of this bottomless pit?
AMawaz
Dhaka



STAR

Political culture

The political culture of Bangladesh is termed by many as confrontational. This simply means such a form of political culture which is very much antagonistic and investigative. Almost each and every political party of Bangladesh is not railed in the right path of development, rather each of them is derailed from the genuine direction of democratic polity. This unexpected and abominable political practices not only deter development initiatives but also cause a number of problems. Such a form of hostile and ill political motive seriously deprives the common people from the light of overall development. In our country, this sort of politics has been a crucial issue. Because of the absence of an appropriate democratic polity we do not see proper co-ordination and co-operation among the political parties. For example, our leading opposition party, the BNP is hardly concerned to play a constructive role in terms of participation in parliament. On the other hand, the AL-led grand alliance, current ruling party, is also a bit reluctant to listening to the grievances and demands of the BNP.

For overall development, for example, social, political, administrative and economic, our political parties should come forward to join the mainstream of the democratic polity. Otherwise, the nation will always lag behind.

Md. Abdul Hannan
Dept. of Public Administration
Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, Sylhet

IT and we

It is nice to see that the country moving quite fast in terms of information technology in recent years. The notion of "Digital Bangladesh" is now a concrete truth. The latest proof is the novel and bold step by NCTB in publishing its e-textbooks on its website. With the advent of internet, like every other sphere of life, education has got momentum with never-ending wide range of learning materials and aid being just a click away, that too absolutely free.

The mobile internet has made the job easier and so it is a matter of mere wish for a student like me to read, take notes and memorize and thereby prepare for the exams, even while aboard a bus, stuck at the seemingly never-ending traffic jam, by dint of mobile internet technology. So, this is no wonder that the NCTB's website has already received overwhelming and record hits from home and abroad to force the website collapse a number of time since NCTB uploaded the e-textbook just a few days ago. This is really an epoch-making and praiseworthy move. This can be an effective and modern solution to the problem of not being able to distribute the textbooks in time to the students and teachers, not just of the country but also all over the world.

IT and we

I welcome this move and thank everyone concerned at the NCTB.

A Rahman Shibly
Applied Linguistics and ELT
Department of English
University of Dhaka

Therefore, we request the public not to become violent, give the driver a chance to help the victims and let the law-enforcing agents investigate the case and take proper action.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

For this reason, many injured people are deprived of prompt medical attention.

Therefore, we request the public not to become violent, give the driver a chance to help the victims and let the law-enforcing agents investigate the case and take proper action.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Fatal addiction

Drug addiction is now an alarming problem throughout the world. In recent years, drug addiction increased significantly in Bangladesh. The local and international organizations are also alarmed by the current rate of addiction. Surveys show that about ten percent of the patients of our hospitals are cases of drug addiction and the addicts are generally young men averaging 22 years of age.

Initially, one takes drug for his/her curiosity and excitement, and about 50 percent of the addicts are influenced by bad association. They start with cigarette, then heroin, opium,

hemp, wine and recently yaba and ice pill spread dangerously. Some take various types of drugs when they become frustrated. Failed relationship and broken hearts are also major causes behind drug abuse among young people.

One of the major reasons for increase in drug addiction is the availability of addiction materials. The law enforcement agencies have failed to stop the drug business.

Sohel Nawroz
Student, Faculty of Fisheries
Bangladesh Agricultural University
Mymensingh



LITON RAHMAN / DRINKNEWS