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# An overcrowded city

There is no respite in traffic jam situation, no matter what action is taken. At times it seems to me with the activities of our leaders that they are aliens and are not aware of the problems the country is facing.

Day light saving, time staggering are the best examples of such an action. Day light saving is in vogue in the United States not to save power but to increase and enhance the productivity of that nation. In Bangladesh it was introduced to save power, I wonder how much power has been saved over the period when it was in vogue. This concept can be compared to a knife in the hands of a surgeon and in the hands of a dacoit. The knife in the hands of a surgeon saves a life and the knife in the hands of a dacoit kills a life.

Now to mitigate the sufferings of the commuters, the age old concept of time staggering is being tossed around to make a buffoonery of the people. As long as I can remember market holidays has been in vogue since Pakistan times, it is nothing new, rather it is old wine in a new bottle.

It has been reported in the media that about 2000 people a day are entering Dhaka city from the different parts of the country in search of livelihoods. If this trend continues unabated, Expressways, Highways, Monorails, Flyovers nothing shall be of any use.

To do away with this menacing problem, the trend has to be reversed and that is the best solution. In order to make this a reality, the government has to go into action to provide the means of livelihoods to the people all over the country and put an immediate stop to



PHOTO: AMRUL BAWI

the influx of 2000 people a day into the capital. Gradually, the process has to be reversed by providing whatever that lures people into the capital.

If I am not wrong, Bangabandhu back in 1975 harboured the idea of dividing the country into 60 provinces, appointing thereby 60 governors in a bid to decentralize the administration and prevent Dhaka from overcrowding. The present government is clamouring to go back to the 1972 constitution but has not shown any interest in the aforementioned novel concept of the founding father.

**Saleh Mohammad Ayub**  
Kalabagan, Dhaka

while crossing the roads, overtaking, loopholes in traffic rules and so on.

So, the traffic rules have to be enforced strictly.  
**Bipra Kanungo**  
Momin Road, Chittagong

## Beggars, everywhere

More and more people are now on the streets, educational institutions and offices begging for help. Today a sickly man came to our college with a paper cutting featuring his picture and his story that he was once a very brilliant student but a serious disease blighted his dream. Thus every day people with diverse problems are begging, applying diverse tactics. But as Allah has told us not to be stingy, a very few good souls extend their help to the paupers not considering whether their cases are fake or genuine.

I only wonder what this government is for. Is it only to let some people become abnormally rich and leaving the rest wallowing in abject poverty? Thousands of people are suffering from serious diseases. In the absence of proper free treatment in the government hospitals, they are going from door to door for help but their cries are ricocheting off the rock wall of man's greed and stinginess.

Selina, a poor mother of our locality, gave birth to a baby girl with a severe cleft in her face. She took her daughter to several places but to no avail. Fortunately Selina met a medical team from Mendigkids International, America. Later I communicated with MKI and fortunately they granted the treatment of Maya, Selina's daughter. Maya is now back from MKI and slated to go there twice more time for further surgery. All the expenses are being born by MKI authorities. But I'm sorry to mention that here in our country even some doctors and policemen took from Selina a handsome amount of money for only signing the necessary papers. Shame on us! Against this backdrop, cannot the government devise a plan to mitigate the sufferings of the teeming millions?

**Abdus Subhan**  
Lalpur, Natore

## Whither rule of law?

The areas where the rule of law does not exist are too many to be discussed here. Hence, only a few may be picked up to speak for the rest.

Let us discuss the much talked about public administration situation. This is a vital area as all the activities of the government are carried out by the public servants. The efficiency of the government largely depends on them. Besides, it is an area where the largest number of employees finds scope to earn their

bread, as the government is the largest employer. To manage a huge number of employees, the colonial masters (British) had formed various commissions and framed recruitment, promotion (growth and elevation in service) and retirement rules and regulations. These were followed rigidly then for employment of people in various cadre and non-cadre jobs.

These were then considered so fair that young people with requisite qualifications were attracted and competed for career jobs. Once recruited it was thought that his/her job and promotion prospects were protected by law. Some expressed that exit was more difficult than entry since if a job was to go, it could not go at the whim of anybody but through the due process of law. Only the proven guilty persons were to lose their jobs or promotions according to the nature of the offence committed.

For long, during and after the colonial days, rule of law in public service matters were followed and people had little or no grievances. But the rot started from the Pakistani days when a late Field Marshal subjected a good number of officers to his whims and fired them. That episode is known as "three not three" (303).

No single government here alone could be blamed for ignoring the application of rule of law in service matters. The earlier governments did so. In 1992. Many junior officers were promoted illegally to the post of Joint Secretary, superseding their seniors. This was challenged in the court of law. But disposal of court cases being time consuming, many good officers had to retire taking with them the pains of deprivation, while many had to serve under their juniors with pains of humiliation.

The above is the story of the past. But the situation is not much different now.

**Abu Imran**  
Dhaka

## Blair's position

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair appeared at John Chilcot Inquiry to vindicate his position in the run-up to Iraq War. His appearance is followed by a series of appearances of his key cabinet members such as Geoff Hoon, Jack Straw, Alastair Campbell, Jonathan Powell, Lord Goldsmith. Blair talked in evangelical tone defending his move in the light of JIC report and September 24, 2002 dossier and expressed no regret for the war. He said that he did believe back then the proliferation threat of WMDs by Iraq was obvious although it has been refuted by the Butler Inquiry. He defended the idea of regime change and branded Saddam Hussein a profoundly wicked and psychopathic man referring to his use of chemical weapons at

# Healthcare in rural areas



A. M. AHAD / DRINKNEWS

While a country like China devised practical ways to deliver healthcare to rural populations by deploying its band of 'barefoot doctors' from the 1960s in a transitional phase, and then went on to expand full-fledged medical education facilities, chronic shortage of doctors in rural Bangladesh almost four decades after Independence remains a worry.

To introduce an undergraduate study of a shorter duration to produce doctors for rural areas is not desirable. It will compromise the quality of education and training. Is there anything rural or urban about human anatomy and diseases? The government should instead concentrate on improving the infrastructure in primary health care institutions, and curb rampant absenteeism which is the major flaw in the health care delivery system in rural areas.

Bangladesh is a rapidly progressing country and its doctors and engineers are respected across the world. Introducing a three-and-a-half year course to churn out alternative cadres of doctors at this juncture would not be a retrograde move. It is not as if rural folk do not need specialised care. Specialty hospitals need to be built in rural areas also. The government can think of having a separate quota for rural doctors, who can be absorbed after completing housemanship to work in rural hospitals only. Only those who agree should be allowed to apply under this quota.

**Avik Sengupta**  
Biochemistry  
McGill University  
Montreal, Canada

## Chhatra League's activities!

We always wait for some good news about our country but most of our days begin with some disappointing news.

The very first night of oath taking of the present AL government, the student wing of the AL captured many university halls. The prime minister should not be in the position of a patron of the BCL activists.

The prime minister is showing a lot of courage in her decision-making and is earning popularity. She won her present position by peoples' vote and not by Chhatra League cadres' assistance. Chhatra League is damaging the AL's image.

We do not believe that Sheikh Hasina is not capable of bringing the unruly BCL under control. Only she needs the 'will' to do it.

Hon'ble Prime Minister, please ask your men to tie them up, the sooner, the better.

**Shafiqul Islam, NY**

## Killing at RU

The recent brutal killing of a student of RU should be an eye opener for all pro-liberation forces in Bangladesh.

This is what they did during the Liberation War. They brutally killed the best sons and daughters of the soil. Remember, no matter how liberal they pretend to be in TV talk shows and seminars, a brutal appetite for revenge is hidden in their minds.

Therefore, all pro-liberation forces should unite and work together for the betterment of the country.

**Farah Khan**  
Gulshan, Dhaka

## Are humans aliens?

A news report headlined "Humans are aliens", recently published in The Daily Star, made me think whether we humans are really aliens or not.

British Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe believes that humans are aliens and shares a cosmic ancestry.

The scientist claimed that the human race began as microbes brought to Earth by comets millions of years ago.

"Each time a new planetary system forms, a few surviving microbes find their way into comets."

"These then multiply and seed other planets. We are thus part of a connected chain that extends over a large volume of the cosmos. Evidence is pointing inexorably in this direction."

It is quite interesting to know that we humans are aliens!

**Mahmud Ali Kabir**  
Ex-BSS correspondent  
Gopalganj

## Warrant of arrest

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the law minis-

try has sent back the proposed Criminal Procedure Code (amendment) Bill to the ministry for further rectification on repealing the provision of warrant of arrest in defamatory cases against the journalists, editors and publishers. (Law & Our Rights: The Daily Star: 6.2.2010).

We should congratulate the government for taking the epoch making step. But the ministry should also consider what the chairman of the committee commented that there should also be provisions of law if citizens are harassed by the journalists.

I think it should also have a provision that there should not be more than one case regarding one report published in any newspaper. Once a case is filed against any report of a newspaper, no more cases should be taken cognisance of anywhere in the country. Otherwise, for a single report even hundreds of cases may be filed to harass the journalist.

**Monzur Rahman**  
Dhaka

## Home minister's statement

Abu Bakar Siddique, a third year student of Dhaka University, lost his life during a bloody feud between two groups of Chhatra League hooligans. A meritorious student, who was said to have

no political affiliations whatsoever, fell victim to a despicable act perpetrated in the name of student politics.

While reacting to the incident the home minister said that these things happen, it is not a big deal. But if she would put herself in the shoes of the victim's parents, she could not have uttered this. For the aggrieved parents of Abu Bakar it was like their world crumbling before their eyes. The minister's comment was not only insensitive but also disrespectful of the sentiments of his parents.

The prime minister should take action against the culprits. Her silence in this regard will only exacerbate the situation further.

Abu Bakar came from a humble economic background. His parents saved everything for his education. They may be poor in terms of money but richer than many in morality, because they understand the value of education and knowledge.

**AK Shamsuddin**  
Canada

## Reckless driving

Every day in almost all parts of the country road accidents take place. Some major and minor reasons are responsible for this, like, reckless driving without obeying the rules and regulations of traffic system, pedestrians' indifference



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## Rampage at RU

**Shibir kills BCL man, cuts tendons of 4 others; 100 more injured in clash (February 10, 2010)**

When justice is done only to the people in power, then these things are bound to happen. In this case, the dead student belongs to the ruling party and the home minister ordered the police to arrest the killers within 24 hours. However, when Abu Bakar was killed, what we had heard and read in the newspapers was simply shocking.

**Nasir**

The police failed to stop the violence and allowed the hooligans to enter the campus. The intelligence failure was also there.

The university authorities claim that they are not the guardians of the students. I fear that there is no control of the govt over the country.

**Amit Khan**

What is our government doing to stop

campus terrorism? Both parties should be ashamed and our law enforcing agencies should be declaring war against these terrorists. This is terrorism at its worst!

**Guest**

Is it the beginning of another civil war? How come Jamaat along with its Shibir outfit have not yet been proscribed to save democracy?

**Shamin**

I urge all the political parties to help law & order to be restored in our educational institutions.

**Manzoor Ashraf**

When Nomani, RU secretary of Shibir, was killed by the Chhatra League, why didn't you give the same order?

It might be a revenge killing.

Mr. Mayor, when a Moitree activist was killed by BCL terrorists, what did you do?

**Third-eye**

It is utterly shocking to see these pictures. The student wing of the party that collaborated with the Pakistani army is still practising the same thing that Pakistan did to us. Should they be given the opportunity to do whatever they like? I think not.

**Moinak Islam**

What did the authorities do when a Shibir leader was killed by BCL early last year? What did they find in their inquiry report? Did they take proper steps to prevent such violence again? What happened to the Nomani killing case? Any progress towards justice? When the formal justice system fails to provide justice, the victim takes revenge.

**ZI Biswas**

Honourable Education Minister, how much blood of our sons do you need to ban students and teachers' politics?

**Farid A. Azam**

Students must not do politics in the educational institutions at all. When will our politicians be wise enough to deal with those problems?

**Baz**

The person, who cut the tendon of a

hand of a BCL leader named Hamid, in broad daylight at Chittagong in the mid 80s, was also able to avoid justice then.

**Saleh Rahim Ahmed**

In the past few weeks, we are witnessing some unnatural deaths in our educational institutions. And no action is being taken against the perpetrators. Only an even-handed approach can stop the cycle of violence.

**Jumana Sarwar**

What is the problem if we ban student politics? In the developed countries, no one will find this type of use of the university students by ruling or opposition parties. Our political parties are making each of the universities a training camp of their armed supporters.

**Md. Shahidul Islam**

Hundreds of poor families spend their savings to send their children to university, hoping that they would return qualified; instead the parents get a dead body.

Anyone caught with weapons within the university should be brought to justice.

**Hossinur Rahman**

Political parties do not have the skill to run the country.

**Zerosopher**

Can killing and cutting tendons of fellow students be Islamic? We demand an explanation from them.

**MAS Molla**

Our govt should pass a law to ban student politics and should act now to create a congenial atmosphere for learning. Exemplary punishment should be given to the culprits.

**Nesar Ahmed**

Student politics should be banned for a certain period and all the groups should be arranged in a new mould. Otherwise, more subversive activities will be seen in near future.

**Sajjad Hossain**

Student politics of 1952, 1969 and 1971 had helped us to make our country independent, whereas the current student politics brings nothing for us but disgrace.

**Rudra Pratap Deb Nath**

Perhaps the national psyche is reflected in the comments here. We are a divided nation and our opinion is based on our own feudal mentality and interest. To a hard-core Awami League supporter, there is a huge difference between the death of Faruk Hossain (RU) and Abu Bakar (DU). To the parents of the young boys, it is the same. They buried their dreams. Please ban student politics, once and for all.

**Fakhr**