

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Historical discovery

Bulu's report from Bogra on 6 February is an important link in our national history. This discovery of an ancient city gate by a joint Bangladesh-French archaeological team depicts the rich aspects of possibly our earliest history of urban living, over 1,500 years back! This archaeological finding is another addition to the subcontinent's rich treasures of history. In this context, I feel that archaeology should be a part of our history syllabus, at least at the HSC level and not just left as a paragraph or chapter as such. I believe archaeological findings are important

links between the gradual transformation of civilization and the mode of governance from our past to the present times. In my opinion, archaeology should be a subject by itself, in the normal syllabus at graduate level; as well as a special subject at master's level of studies. I profess my ignorance, but not curiosity on the matter though being a graduate in engineering from the then Faculty of Engineering under the Dhaka University, after East Pakistan came into being. **Engr. S.A. Mansoor**
Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

Different treatment

We see here a biased treatment. When the Shibir leader Noman was killed the government did not launch any combing operation to arrest the BCL culprits. But now when a BCL leader is killed the government with its combined power of police and party men are killing Shibir men and vandalizing their offices. **AS**
One-mail

Saudi strategy

It is encouraging to learn through the Press that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has recently launched its solar energy programme with a view to stabilising future power and water supplies in the country. Fortunately, the kingdom is naturally blessed with year-round sunshine to harness solar energy. Emphasizing the importance of harnessing solar energy, Prince Dr. Turki bin Mohammad, Vice President of King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) said -- "The solar energy programme will reduce the cost of producing desalinated water and of generating power". This solar energy programme is a timely step and will surely bring welfare and prosperity to the people of KSA. Meanwhile, I would like to draw the reference of Saudi oil reserve. As known to everyone, the KSA owns nearly 30 per cent of the world's total petroleum reserve. And Saudi Arabia's economy is oil dependent. Recently, I came across some western publications wherein some energy experts claimed that Saudi Arabia's oil reserves are a fraction of what they have been claiming. It has been said that after Saudi Arabia took over the oil fields management into their own hands from Aramco, they started

keeping everything secret pertaining to oil reserves and production. Well, for some sensitive factors including safety and security of the oil fields and installations, the Saudi authorities might have started keeping everything confidential. There are visual evidences which confirm Saudi's huge oil reserves. This oil resource of KSA has made the country a prominent figure in the arena of international politics and diplomacy. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not alone enjoying the benefit of their oil reserves but generously sharing their income with both developed and developing countries. The Saudi King and the Royal family are contributing a huge sum of money to various international humanitarian and philanthropic activities. In order to put the file up-to-date, it is strongly felt that the KSA should take note of the above mentioned propaganda and review their own situation. Some reports on oil reserves should also be made available to the international Press to dispel confusions. To get back to the beginning, time has come when all the countries around the globe should follow Saudi Arabia in adopting appropriate programmes to harness solar energy from sunlight. Solar energy is pollution free and environment-friendly. **Professor M Zahidul Haque**
A faculty member
SAU, Dhaka

Chaotic politics

It is getting clearer every day that the two mainstream political parties are locked in mudslinging and spreading rumours never supported by facts. I am constrained to mention one political incident in Manikganj aired by the ntv. It was sheer madness to destroy or burn the house of the brother of a killer of the Founding Father. The government has a responsibility to inquire into the incident

because it has been reported that the people who were involved belong to the AL. I am sure the AL is behind the judgment and the execution of the killers of the Founding Father of the Nation. But this type of incident in Manikganj will just raise question about the unruly behaviour of the AL activists. I am further constrained to note that there could be provocation from the non-AL men from the area or outside. Therefore, this needs to be inquired into. **A reader**
One-mail

Save garment industries

In rising to the challenge today, the path we follow must necessarily be a different one. Besides boosting investment in garments, we need to make more efficient use of manpower, chemical inputs and natural resources, and focus more on the needs of small stakeholders. The Textile and garments sectors achieved foreign currency investment to the tune of \$ 126.36 million in 2008 and also more than that in 2009. But there is lack of discipline among the workers. They are not happy with the treatment meted out to them by the management. The parties concerned have to address these issues. **Advocate M Saiful Alam**
Anandapur, Savar, Dhaka

Traffic jam

Traffic jam is one of the most awe-inspiring problems of Dhaka City. The situation is deteriorating day by day. Nowadays we have to spend 2-3 hours to travel two kilometres. If this terrible situation continues, in near future, no option will remain open, other than walking on foot. I sometimes get bewildered, why is our govt. unable to take some fruitful steps to assuage this predicament? In different TV talk shows, we see, experts incessantly sug-

gesting how to mitigate this crisis. But it's a matter of regret that our govt. is not doing much. As a general citizen of Dhaka city, I would like to urge our govt. to take the initiative to ease commuters' lives. **Md. Shahadat Hossain Rajib**
MBA, Dhaka University

Should we continue this way?

Bravo, to my friend Mr Rahat if nothing else, one must give him full marks for his consistency at being inconsistent on the question of banning rickshaws from Dhaka immediately (DS 20 Nov)!!! A few days ago Mr Chisti of Lalmatia had voiced something similar and I have already sent off the rebuttal to DS. If that letter is printed before this, Mr Rahat should find most of the answers, if at all he is looking for an answer for our jams. Also he can refer to my summary of the findings of the authoritative BUET/JICA Traffic Workshop, and Transparency Int. article "Facts and Figures" already printed in the DS.

The problem with Mr Rahat is that while we all are trying to cope with traffic problems in Dhaka in 2009, he is living in an Utopian Dhaka of 2029 with all those freeways, metros and other lollipops at hand!!! Mr Rahat's reference to Ittefaq's 6 Nov photo of a traffic jam at Dainik Bangla is laughable. The photo clearly shows that all modes of vehicles, rickshaws, CNGs, cars, buses are present. The question is, which mode is more convenient, easily available, safer, occupying less road space and carrying more passengers at a lesser cost to the public rickshaws undoubtedly!!! So, Mr Rahat, judge for yourself who is obstructing whom? And for good measure, I can refer you to ten pictures of gridlocks on the so-called unconstitutionally named VIP roads, where NOT ONE rickshaw can be seen!!!

Thank you Mr Rahat for grudgingly admitting that a) "Dhaka's roads do not have the capacity to hold such huge numbers of Gas Guzzling Monstrosities (GGMs) and b) a 50 kg bag cannot hold 100 kg of anything, so is it not practical to support and increase the vehicles that serve the larger masses of Dhakabashis than those that inflate the egos of a few privileged persons? **Sikander Ahmed**
Niketon, Gulshan-1
Dhaka

Learn from Mahatma Gandhi

When Mahatma Gandhi launched his non-violent movement to end the British colonial rule in India, he made it clear why he rejected all calls for leading a violent freedom struggle: "If Indians take up guns to kill the British, given India's great religious and ethnic divisions, they would still be using the same guns to kill each other long after the British had gone. If India makes violence her creed, I will not care to live in India."

Although Gandhi gained India's freedom non-violently, India erupted into violence between Hindus and Muslims on the eve of independence. The issue was partition of India. India's Muslim minority wanted a separate state composed of areas where they would be a majority. The Hindu majority, on the other hand, ada-

manly opposed any break-up. The result was a blood-bath. Gandhi appealed to Hindus and Muslims to stop slaughtering each other. He said: "I non-violently convinced the British to leave, why can't we do the same with each other?" When the appeal failed, Gandhi went on a hunger strike to death unless moderate Hindus and Muslims stepped in and stopped the massacre. Within a week, the killings stopped. Gandhi, with a broken heart, accepted partitioning of the country into India and Pakistan.

Today, Pakistani extremists are slaughtering their fellow Muslims in the name of their version of Islam. Majority Sunnis are slaughtering the minority Shias and the Shias are striking back. Extremists belonging to Taliban/al-Qaeda have been bombing schools, hotels, hospitals and even mosques.

And yet, most Pakistanis blame the West for this slaughter of Muslims by fellow Muslims.

Gandhi urged Hindus and Muslims to form joint committees to stop communal violence. Similarly, Sunnis and Shias should form joint committees to stop the slaughter of Shias by Sunni extremists.

Mahmood Elahi
Ottawa, Canada

Book Fair

With due respect to the valiant martyrs of the '52 Language Movement, I strongly feel that the venue of the Ekushey Boi Mela should be shifted to Agargaon at the site of trade fair. The bookstalls as well as the number of visitors have multiplied manifold. There is a mad rush almost every day. The calm, serene ambience usually associated with the Boi Mela is absolutely lacking.

The traffic congestion as a result is simply horrendous and chaotic. Many stalls have spilled to the main road. The Trade Fair may conclude a few days earlier and the same stalls may be allocated for the bookstalls in time for the Ekushey Boi Mela. This would also be a cost effective exercise. However, the traditional inauguration and closing of the historic Ekushey Boi Mela should continue at the Bangla Academy premises.

Dr. Shamim Ahmed
National Programme Officer
Vitamin A Supplementation
The Micronutrient Initiative
Gulshan 2, Dhaka

Sports and war

Did you know that the Nicaragua-El Salvador war, in which 20,000 people were killed, started over a football game? In fact, Ernest Hemingway, the world famous writer, who spent so much of his time in Latin America and Spain, said you could eliminate most Latin American wars and their causes by simply banning football or soccer. Those games get them so worked up into a frenzy against each other that nothing but a total all-out war can truly satisfy the spirit of it.

The ultimate fulfilment of sports is war. War is the ultimate fulfilment of the competitive spirit: the destruction of others for self-preservation. Sports are war in disguise, and the Olympics disguised all this under the totally false and contrary theme song of "Peace". That's their theme! Isn't that something. So they speak peace while war is in

New education policy



FIROZ GAZI / DRINKNEWS

Education is the backbone of a nation. Schools are the best seats for learning. But some educational institutions of our country do not pay any heed to the principles of the National Educational Policy. They run the schools according to their sweet will.

Students are the main elements of any school. But their expectations are shattered as inequity starts from their school life. There is discrimination in some of the well-known schools in Dhaka as well as in the main cities. Good and weak students are divided into groups every year. They (the schools) show lame excuse that they want to nurture some good students and they will keep the name of the schools always up with good results. All the weak students are placed in different sections. All good students are placed in other sections. Weak students cannot do well. The students feel shy and humiliated to tell the names of the sections they belong to. They suffer from inferiority complex. They lose heart and can never enter into good group (science or commerce group). So they lag behind in the merit race. This

impedes their progress in the whole life. They cannot do anything. Their parents also feel dishonoured.

Teachers who teach in the weak sections cannot teach the learners up to the mark as the students in those sections are of inferior quality. Teachers also feel discouraged. The present government is against such discrimination and is working for Inclusive education. Training on 'Continual Professional Development-Teaching Quality Improvement-Secondary Education Project', under the Ministry of Education is going on. The government has taken a mammoth task to train the secondary school teachers of Bangladesh. The main theme of the training is 'Inclusive Education'. According to the theme, there would be no disparity among the students. There would be a threat-free friendly environment.

Every student has to pay fees for the schools. The guardians send their children to school with high hopes, dreams and aspirations. Their hopes should not end in smoke.

M.I.I. Khan
One-mail

their hearts, and they talk peace while they prepare for war--prepare their bodies for war.

It's the spirit of competition and pride, proving you're better than the other guy. But the world just loves it. And even if they don't play the game themselves, they get into the same spirit by rooting for one team or the other. It's a thrill and high for them if their team wins, and a real low if their team loses. Just look at the results of some of these losses or delays or problems even with the broadcast of some of these sports events. People riot and get violent. Businesses close so they can watch the event on TV. It becomes big news.

It's just that spirit of winning and being the best, coming out on top and being better, and getting paid for it. Pride and money, success and fame--pretty powerful tools. But Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers..." **Ted Rudow III, MA**
Menlo Park, CA 94026

Ministers' performance

The DS carried a news report on the performance of ministers. I think it is good to have some routine and regular reporting on half yearly basis. A group of different media experts can be pulled together for the purpose. Media's perception should cover the performance of the ministers and members of the parliament, both treasury and opposition. The only aspect I would ask for inclusion is popular perception, positive or negative, in the media study report.

I think the PM should focus on the impeding reform programmes using parliament. **Faqrul USA**

Life

The victor in Sunday's Super Bowl was not limited to the New Orleans Saints but to "life" thanks to the game's "pro-life" TV advertisement featuring Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow of the Florida Gators. It is both refreshing and encouraging to see top athletes living up to their great responsibility of being authentic role models for the many young people who look up to them. Tim Tebow's very existence makes one wonder how many other "miracles babies" would have been here for the whole world to enjoy had their mothers also chosen life over abortion as did Tebow's mother Pam. Life is beautiful! **Paul Kokoski**
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

Road accidents

Road accidents have become a common phenomenon nowadays. Despite the government's relentless efforts to bring back traffic congestion under control, there is no improvement in the situation. A few months back, the government had introduced automated-traffic signalling. Traffic sergeants were also employed at critical intersections along with the three-lane system but the condition is still worsening.

The mass population dwelling in the city have to carry on with their usual busy schedules coping with the chaotic roads, bustling with mindless vehicles in shabby conditions and run by irresponsible drivers without proper license. Their dare devilish stunts often take lives of innocent pedestrians.

Let us consider the reasons why the traffic situation is so horrible nowadays:-
1) Narrow lanes insufficient to accommodate the big buses and cars.
2) No effective plan in mind for additional road construction.
3) Unlimited access to new transportation companies to launch their buses on the roads when there is no room for new vehicles.
4) Lack of proper implementation of traffic law and order. Even if rules are made, no one is there to make sure that they are implemented accordingly.
5) Lack of civil responsibility e.g. careless jaywalking on busy streets putting lives at risk, illegal parking here and there etc.
6) Overpopulation--probably the most important factor behind all major problems in our country.
7) Construction of foot bridges in wrong places taking up much space on the roads.

I would request the government not to import the additional 800 buses in the city because it would never clear off the traffic mess, rather will result in more havoc. The government should at first replace old run-down buses that are unfit for commutation and then think about taking new steps.

The situation, however, cannot improve unless and until immediate actions are taken to construct new roads. **Naome Syed**
Mohammadpur
Dhaka

Amor Ekushey Boi Mela

This year a new item has been added to our Ekushe Boi Mela. A webpage has been developed ekusherboi.com. From this site any visitor can search for a book by title or writer's name and get all information about the book. Latest news and pictures of events are uploaded into the site immediately. It is a very good idea. **Rahad Ahsan**
BBA
Jagannath University



AMADULL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

The language movement was a nationwide endeavour. Young college & university students took part in this fight. **Rahad Ahsan**
One-mail