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Lake recovery?

The front page photograph and Ali's article alongside, published on March 3, tells the tale of Gulshan Lake. Sad for many, but glad for many too!

The facts are all there, but facts unfortunately get trampled under the acts perpetrated with the blessings of the powers that be. While you talk about recovering the lake, they are busy recovering the land from the lake! This recovery is most attractive for them where money matters!

For them, the lake is a waste of potential land, waiting to be recovered, the land that brings gold as land values rocket up. Why leave it to the fishes, when wealth beckons! For them, "The more they get, the more they want". All said and done, that is the reality in this ugly lust for the lucre! Who are you and we to stand in their way?

Court directives are irrelevant for them. As far as they are concerned, these are but words on paper. Between the words, and the realities on the ground, these are far apart and they believe that no court can bridge this gap!

For them, DLRS and Rajuk are poor players with only some pawns on the chessboard, while they hold the Rooks, Knights, Bishops and the Queen!

One move and the pawns are gone, for they have no rook, knight, bishop or queen in support. Pity the solitary pawns!

Should any one meddle too much, they will give him/her a piece of the lake, all filled up and a legitimate owner to boot! That, ladies and gentlemen, is the name of the game! Take it, or leave it!

Old Gulshan resident
Gulshan, Dhaka



TANVIR AHMED (DIPNIEWS)

Words are not enough

February 25 is an excruciating day.

No word seems to be soothing enough to console the families of the army personnel that lost their dear ones in Pikhana carnage. We can only understand that the agony is inconsolable.

So, there's nothing left to say. Nonetheless, except delivering words (or speeches?) what else have we done so far?

It's a shame that it's been a year and the real culprits behind the massacre have not been found yet.

Cantara Wali
One-mail

Gaddafi's call

Libyan leader Gaddafi has called the Muslims to boycott Switzerland in connection with the recent Swiss vote against the building of minarets that are integral parts of the mosques used by Muslims for praying. This is a direct interference in the right of a community to observe its religious rituals by a country that probably believes in secularism. France has also forbidden veil or hijab, a mandatory dress for Muslim women. What other non-Muslim countries/nations are doing against Islamic faith is well known and being manifested in the form of "clash of civilisations". But there is no Muslim country in the world

that has put any such prohibition on the religious rituals of any other community living in that country or anywhere else.

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has rightly pointed out that "Muslims need to mobilize in all the Islamic countries of the world and refuse to allow Swiss planes to land, their ships to dock or allow Swiss products enter their countries."

In His Holy book Al-Quran, Allah says, "O ye who believe! Take not My enemies and your as friends (or protectors) offering them (your) love even though they have rejected the Truth that has come to you and have (on the contrary) driven out the Prophet and yourselves (from your homes) (simply) because ye believe in Allah your Lord!" It is obligatory for all Muslims of the world to abide by this order of Allah for their benefit in this world and salvation hereafter.

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur RIA, Khulna

To the PM...

We are watching foreboding black clouds gathering over the horizon, we are afraid that in no time the whole sky will be covered, it is an ominous sign for the country. We are passing days in a very perilous condition, peace has become an elusive word.

The Hill Tracts are in a volatile condition, Home Minister Sahara Khatun said that army would be re-

deployed there, but our question is why in the first place army camps were removed?

Wrong decisions seems to be the root of all evils.

The re-naming of Zia International Airport is another gross mistake of the Awami League government, it has become the talk of the country. We have learned that the renaming will cost Taka 1,400 crore.

This is our money, we protest vehemently. The government has no right to squander public money. We hope the government will come to senses and refrain from renaming the airport.

Only a year has passed, already the Awami League government is losing its hold. I think that among the people who are surrounding Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina there are many who are not her well-wishers.

They are giving her wrong advices.
Nur Jahan
Chittagong

GM foods

This refers to my article entitled - "GM Foods" recently published in your daily. It is gathered from one of my former students and present junior colleagues Dr. Naheed Zeba, Associate Professor of Genetics & Plant Breeding, that her learned Professor in the USA and some members in the profession expressed their disagreement with my observation concerning the

GM foods' negative effects on humans. According to some of them, my article lacks accuracy and detailed account.

Well I am not a specialist on the subject but with my meagre professional knowledge, I am convinced by some proven facts and figures that GM foods are not that much (at all) safe for human consumption. Of course it requires more research and observation to get the actual status of GM foods confirmed. I think, those who are more knowledgeable on the subject may please write to newspapers -- Why people should lift their doubts regarding consumption of GM foods?

Meanwhile as this is a human welfare oriented issue, I would stand by my suggestion which I made at the bottom of my write-up under reference that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) of the United Nations should form an international research team comprising agricultural scientists, medical specialists, nutritionists, and other related professionals to conduct both field and laboratory oriented research to ascertain the real impact/effect of genetically modified foods on humans plus environment.
Professor M Zahidul Haque
Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System
SAU, Dhaka

In response...

Mr. Fakhruddin Ahmed's Feb 22 rant "Winter Olympics is not an Olympics", is too outlandish to warrant a response, but I will give it a shot.

The author states that the winter Olympics has no Asian athletes, "except Japan, South Korea, and China". That's quite an exception. Last I checked, those countries account for nearly 2 billion people!

The author then argues that northern countries enjoy an unfair advantage in the games because of their cold climates.

Would the author then argue that people from coastal or lake regions be excluded from swimming competitions because their abundant water represents an unfair advantage? Should African countries be excluded from marathons because their history of armed conflict gives them an unfair advantage over peaceful countries?

He then argues that developing countries should be allowed to vote on the existence of the Olympic games. In the developing countries, that would only lead to bloodshed and corruption. The various sides would probably end up trying to covet bribes from the Olympic Committee.
Edward Sone
London, UK

Coal supply mystery

We are going to import coal for our new electric generation station (press report). Why import coal when we have about two billion tons of usable untapped coal deposits in Bangladesh?

Barapukuria could meet to a large extent our shortage of natural gas; but mysterious agitations are going on there

for decades. The government has to explain to the masses clearly the reasons for not encouraging coal production. Open pit mining is not a new technology. In national development projects, displacements and movements are a norm (for better facilities); but here we find a mindset to oppose any type of change (due to political lethargy). The official PR (public relations) is poor; causing misunderstanding of the official policy on the deliberate slowing down of coal production.

The media is full of political news; and the technical aspects of projects are not explained to the readers in popular technical language. Of course political pressures are there, both internal and external. We have the inset tendency to oppose anything new--we love to live in the past, and our political development is negative.

Today, due to energy shortage, and lack of political consensus at the national level, the attraction for foreign investment is declining. Besides, we are living in isolation with our neighbours--there are no development plans for regional trade (or it does not work [SAARC or SAFTA]).

Our political thinking lacks depth and long-term goals. Are we content to lead only in the LDC field? We talk glibly about growth rate above seven per cent, but politically fail in field work and technical consensus.
A Mawaz, Dhaka

'Black Gold'

This refers to a news item under the caption 'Australian Company Back For Exploration Licence' published in a daily on Feb. 17, 2010.

Earlier the offer of the Australian Company for mining and export of valuable minerals in exchange of payment of some royalty to the Government of Bangladesh was turned down by our people's elected government for cogent reasons.

We oppose handing over our national wealth worth billions of dollars to any foreign company or country.

Ninety nine per cent people of our country are totally unaware of the availability and use of the valuable minerals which were actually found four decades ago.

We urge upon our Ministry of Energy and Minerals Resources to kindly let the members of our public know about our valuable minerals and invite quotations from them for exploration, mining, commercial use and export of the valuable minerals 'Black Gold' in the greater interest of the country.

These valuable minerals are very costly and used in making the body of the airplane, picture tube of TV, paint, paper, leather and ceramic products.
O.H. Kabir
Dhaka

Confrontation ahead?

We are so scared of what is in store for us in the very near future as the BNP while in the very day it was trounced in the election of 2008, apart from making sweeping accusations and allegations against the

A fantastic cricketer

The reason for my e-mail is the frustration I am feeling within myself on the state of Bangladesh cricket with the World Cup round the corner. I am fortunate enough to have seen international cricket in this part of the sub-continent grow from day one when INDIA visited PAKISTAN in 1954-55 and the tour opener was played in Chittagong. Ever since that day, I have lived all these years with cricket in this country and have known most of the players at the national level.

The recent hype with Ashraf's form has been blown out of proportions by all & sundry throwing doubt on the mind of the player on his potential and has made him tentative in his approach & his body language has changed.

Ashraf is a highly talented player and demonstrated his potential for world recognition but of late his dreadful run of form is the cause of worry for all. A bad patch is always there in the life of a cricketer but only time can heal it and one good knock will put him back on the road to glory.

We must build a sense of security in the minds of our players. Look at Rahul Dravid of India. They persisted with him in spite of his failures. Look at Kevin Pietersen of England. A total score of 49 in last 6 innings, but they cannot think of a batting line up without him. They know he can deliver. We have seen players falling like nine-pins at sweet will of our selectors and this has resulted in

uncertainty in the minds of some top performers.

We must build a sense of security in the minds of our players when he is called upon to don national colours so that he can have a different mindset.

Please allow Ashraf to play his Natural game and get into his groove instead of putting him under pressure. Ashraf's are born, they can never be made!

Nikhil Ranjan Das
Iqbal Road
Patharghata, Chittagong



AL-led Mohajote government, called for mid-term election as according to it, the AL led govt. was persecuting its activists, was failing to deliver and was not releasing the scions of Begum Zia. In a dispassionate observation, they are too harsh and born out of political vendetta, though the AL has in some sectors glaring failures to draw flake. But BNP leaders have been saying all these in their party office and at other forums without caring a damn for their moral obligation and commitment to the nation.

The people, however, well understand their anguish of being out of power but they would not put their hubris aside to soul-search about their misdeeds or follies and frailties.

The recent visit to India of the prime minister and the accords clinched by her made the BNP more vitriolic. BNP Chairperson Begum Zia has in her read-out statement before the journalists threatened that her party with the country's people would launch a movement to stop implementation of the accord as according to her, Sheikh Hasina has given out everything to India, instead of gaining anything from it, more specifically she has sold out the country (Bangladesh) and its sovereignty to India.

The opposition has every democratic right to oppose the accords, but preaching against the accords outside, instead of deliberating on them in the House of the Nation, may mislead the people. The BNP while in opposition in 1996-2001 did undertake a long march to thwart implementation of the Peace Treaty with the Shanti Bahini which, though acclaimed by the world, was left out in the cold by the BNP while back in power in 2001. In fact, the BNP is now crying wolf.

It is well apprehended, as in reply to BNP's claim and blame, the hanging of the killers of Bangabandhu, bringing the culprits of August carnage (August 21, 2004) to justice and trial of war criminals are the few disquieting issues that have gravely upset the BNP and its allies.
Ahmed Niaz
Shekherat, Mohammadpur
Dhaka

Gas supply

Nababganj and Dohar upazilas in Dhaka Sadar Dakkhin (South Dhaka) are only thirty and forty kilometres away from Dhaka, but the people there are left to cry for gas. Keraniganj upazila gets the supply through pipeline from Dhaka city. Even some districts of North Bengal have been brought under gas supply and the Jamuna Bridge has made it possible. It is not understood why such places near Dhaka do not get supply of gas. Will the authorities concerned look into the matter?

Dewan Hafiz
Auliabad, Dohar
Dhaka

Trafficking

Women who have been trafficked are often vulnerable to being so again. Creating awareness, changing mindsets and removing stigmas towards survivors, is also crucial in preventing the



More baby-taxies needed

The city dwellers in Metropolitan Dhaka, especially the middle-income group, find it very difficult to move from one place to another. Private sedan is out of their reach for financial reason. Taxicab service is not easily available and is also very costly. When a family likes to join in a marriage ceremony, it needs a low cost vehicle to go to a community centre. When a patient has to be shifted to a hospital, an affordable baby taxi is needed. If a family wants to go shopping to celebrate a festival, a baby-taxi is required. To appear in a public exam hall, a student needs transport service of a baby-taxi. It is the reality in Dhaka metropolis that affordable transport is not easily available. The baby-taxis that are plying go to garage just in the evening. On the other hand, one cannot move to all desired destinations by available bus service in Dhaka Metropolitan. It is very difficult for females to travel by bus owing to limited service, too many passengers and uncivilized behaviour of a section of male passengers. But it is unfortunate that in the past, the governments ignored the acute need of city dwellers. In the name of traffic jam, rickshaws are not allowed on many roads. Then how will the general people move?

We urge the elected government to withdraw all sorts of financial and administrative restrictions on import and registration of CNG driven baby taxi. Definitely, it would facilitate the movement of middle-income group people as well as movement of patients.
Mohammad Ashraf Hossain
Ramna, Dhaka

ONLINE VOICES

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10 minutes' shock at JS

AL, BNP lawmakers trade vulgar words, come close to fist-fight over remarks on Mujib, Zia (March 4, 2010)

Fantastic use of time in the House, I must say. Mujib and Zia are far more important than the chronic load shedding and the traffic gridlock which have made the Bangladesh capital the second worst place in the world to live in. Bravo!!
Shabbir A. Bashar

When will our leaders finally get over the Mujib-Zia obsession and have the passion to do what they're paid for?
Emon

This is the state of our democ-

racy. Nothing has changed since 16 December, 1971.
A reader

Whatever they talk and/or do on the floor, at least we are lucky to see both the groups in parliament! If they are regular in the house one day they might learn what to talk about and/or do, we know these are the 345 people who make the laws and/or norms for 150 million people to follow.
Saleh-Rahim Ahmed

BNP lawmakers have exceeded

the limit. It's very unfortunate to see the lawmakers using abusive language against each other.
Afsana

I am really disappointed with our political culture. Thank you for publishing this news.
Borhan Shafi

Its been over 38 years and they are still bickering.. When will we grow up and move on?
Student

I am flabbergasted why the parliament speaker allowed the MPs to trade vulgar words on Mujib -Zia during the thanksgiving speech. I hold responsible our speaker and deputy speaker in this regard. Had our speaker at the very beginning stopped the AL deputies, the BNP MPs would not have the courage to do the same thing. Utilise the taxpayers' money in the right way, please.
Nasirullah Mridha

I am sure that these character-

istics will not be changed in the next 50 years. There are many things in Bangladesh that do not depend on educational degree, it needs special training.
Kazi Firoz

With due respect to the politicians of Bangladesh, I ask this question: Did people elect them to fight over these matters or to speak about the welfare of people they represent in parliament? Seems like they think parliament is their house where they can speak and do anything they want to! Disappointing.
Rafael

Why is this incident a shock, DailyStar? Isn't this Bangladesh whose national character has degenerated? Sorry, Daily Star, Bangladesh lost its future a long time ago.
Robin

This is outrageous and shameful. They are wasting our time and resources. They should not forget why they are sitting in parliament.

They should apologize to the people. They need to remember the oath they took and show respect to the elected seat and understand why they are sitting in parliament. Shameful indeed!
Shahreen

This is a joke in the name of parliament and democracy...its been more than 38 years of independence and we still cannot get past the debate...I do not understand why this has to come up in parliament at all.
Tahera Ahsan

Will the politicians ever realise how far they were and they are from democratic norms. The Almighty says, "I send bad leaders to a nation when I want to punish them."
Dr Islam

Please neglect such news. Just imagine, no one covering the news, then they will naturally calm down themselves.
Habibul Bari Shozib