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AL and BCL

A news item recently published in an English daily mentioned that fifteen teachers of Rajshahi University on April 26 urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to sever all direct and indirect links between the AL and the BCL, expressing their deep concern over the activities of the BCL across the country, particularly in the educational institutions. They also urged the government to take initiatives to hold Chhatra Sangsad elections in the educational institutions.

Now our questions are: (1) What roles are the teachers playing in this regard? (2) Why don't/can't they themselves prevent their students from indulging in heinous activities?

Violence begets violence. All of us hate crimes. We also expect that the real criminals, no matter what party they belong to -- AL or BNP, will be given due punishment.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
One-mail



Saarc summit

The 16th Saarc summit was over with note of good hope as usual. Now the most critical time is coming for implementation. Let us wait as usual and see what is achieved. It is very difficult to guess the role the BNP might play to enhance the status of Saarc said to be the brainchild of the former president Ziaur Rahman when they would assume power again.

The "charter of democracy" adopted in the Saarc summit has enraged the anger of the BNP. The remark of its SG is devoid of any diplomatic discipline or culture. I cannot diagnose the level of anti-Indian allergy of this political party.

Ironically, our friend Pakistan has turned out to be the breeding ground of terrorism for taking the faulty political path right from the day it was born.

Pakistan also deserves appreciation for taking recourse to law recently to stop military takeover and some other fundamental principles to set up and strengthen democratic culture in Pakistan. We only wish they will follow the same in letter and spirit; and their military Generals will respect

democracy. May be Bangladesh will learn from Pakistan how to stop military rule by direct or indirect takeover; and learn from India how to preserve democracy and enlarge the values in the Saarc member countries.

If one hears the talk shows on TV channels, one may or may not agree with me that we need to import knowledge and system from India to adopt in running the institutions of democracy. So far we have failed to set up good record to run our major democratic institutions like the Election Commission, Human Rights Commission etc.

Quadir
California, USA

ACC

The decision of the present govt. regarding the ACC in the cabinet meeting in presence of the prime minister has made the ACC inactive, like in the past regime before the caretaker govt. of 2007. Again it is proved that it is nothing but a constitutional body having no power to launch an anti-corruption drive.

However, it is true that the role played by the ACC after coming to power in 2007 was quite controversial. The ACC

had filed many cases against many politicians as well industrialists and businessmen as a part of the anti corruption drive following the set of rules to uproot corruption from the country. But it was quite impossible to solve this problem overnight because this had prevailed since the inception of Bangladesh.

That said, the step taken by the present govt. regarding ACC is questionable. The most difficult part of the thing is that they would have to take permission from the govt. to file any case against its officials. According to the experts, the ACC would again lose its momentum of work as well as independence to take stern action against the corrupt politicians and bureaucrats.

Eng. Md Meheub Haque
BUET

QED to IPL

M.J. Akbar's write up, in your pages, on IPL's financial misdeeds, is the dirty 'tail' of the tale which finally emerged! Very much like the old saying: "You can fool all the people for some time, and some people for all the time, but not all the people for all the time!" It was time out for

IPL and their towering 'six' of a financial deal was caught at the boundary by agile fielders of the 'tax' team!

It reminds one of the other old saying: "Although murder has no tongue, yet it speaks!" All the 'Tamasha' of the galaxy of players hitting 'sixes' galore cheered on by scantily clad colourful cheer-leaders and the vast arena full of spectators, it all came to naught for the promoters--the behind the scene cunning businessmen out to make money out of the "Greatest Show of Cricket on Earth"!

What a sad and dirty ending to all the fun and frolic. The latest Indian opposition party slogan too is allegorically appropriate and I quote: "Government belongs to IPL, while opposition is concerned with BPL (Below Poverty Line)!" Cynics have metamorphosed the Hindi saying from: "Dal mein kuch Kala hai" to "Kala mein kuch dal hai"!

Betting on games' results, match fixing, even talks of bribing players, all conceivable misdeeds are suddenly crowding the 'air waves'! The Cricket Control Board of India, must be laughing up their sleeves, for IPL was set to bring them to heel! Now the inter-state 20/20 competition under ICCB, will be the prime 'Halal' event! Although ICCB, too, is facing a tax investigation, the fallout will be tame, compared to IPL's monumental misdeeds!

Cheer-leaders aside, who will now beat the drums for the behind the scene IPL's organisers who started with a bang and are now fading away "unwept, un-honoured and unsung"!? Now the people who conceived IPL are all becoming "Instantly Perishing Liabilities" cricket-wise at least.

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Sirens

Three types of moving vehicles use different types of sirens for emergency use: the Police; the Fire Brigade; and the Ambulance services. The codes for the Police and the Fire Brigade are well written for centuries to avoid any confusion.

It is difficult for all citizens to recognize the siren sounds easily enough. The numbers of ambulance vehicles have increased lately, especially in the private sector. Regular monitoring is necessary to enforce the regulations. Sometimes the ambulances not on emergency duty use the siren on the crowded roads, for priority passage. The misuse of sirens should not be allowed.

AMahasen
Dhaka

Security of life

For people, the most lovable thing is life. But now in our country the security of life is threatened. If we take a look at everyday newspapers, we find out the unprecedented examples of life's insecurity in all parts of our motherland. In broad daylight a police inspector was killed by criminals, the kids are murdered for not getting ransom, the girls are committing suicide after being teased by stalkers.

So, we have to pass the days amid anxiety. As a result, those who are rich enough to go abroad are leaving Bangladesh for the secured life of their children. How long will this continue?

Budu Das
Department of English
Govt. City College, Chittagong

Importing films

In 1972, the government of the newly independent Bangladesh banned all foreign movies in our cinema halls. The objective of that decision was to protect our Bangla movies and artists. That decision played an important role in the development of our movies as well as our national economy.

Md. Belal Hossain Riad
Sir Salimullah Medical College
Dhaka

Green power

Green power means both solar power and windmill for the generation of electricity from sunlight using photovoltaics (PV), or indirectly with concentrating solar power (CSP), where the sun's energy is focused to boil water which is used to provide power. In Bangladesh, the air is rich in water vapour. Sunlight and water vapour for CSP to produce electricity are available and it may be more efficient for solar power. Solar power had the

potential to provide over 1,000 times total world energy consumption in 2008, though it provided only 0.02%. The largest solar power plant in the world is the solar thermal plants producing 354 MW but recently multi-megawatt photovoltaic plants have been built. The 46 MW Moura photovoltaic power station in Portugal and the 40 MW Waldpolenz Solar Park in Germany are large photovoltaic power stations. Recently, scientists proposed much larger ones, such as the 100 MW Fort Peck Solar Farm, the 550 MW Topaz Solar Farm, and the 600 MW Rancho Cielo Solar Farm.

Solar energy is not available at night, making energy storage an important issue in order to ensure continuous availability of energy. Both wind power and solar power are intermittent energy sources, meaning that all available output must be taken when it is available and either stored for when it can be used, or transported, over transmission lines to where it can be used. Wind power and solar power can be complementary, in locations that experience more wind in the winter and more sun in the summer, but on days with no sun and no wind the difference needs to be made up in some manner.

Therefore, solar power plants can face high installation costs, but its technology is very simple, compared to other sources of energy.

Md. Mozzammel Haque
France

Role model

I am not sure about the Islamic schools like madrassas etc, where the young learners are imparted the knowledge of their role model or not, besides memorizing the Holy Koran. Nevertheless, I have high regard for these Islamic schools, that are frantically fighting for their existence in this hostile environment.

I am quite sure, if each and everyone of us had known who is our role model, then there would have been no chaos in the world. The Creator Almighty has verily pointed out in His Holy Book that the moment you forget your role model, you are in deep trouble. Very unfortunately this has become the order of the day, almost all us have forgotten who is our role model.

Quite interestingly, go to any Mashjid in North America and ask those who have come to offer their salat who is their role model. You will hear their reply Muhammad (Pbuh). We go to the Mashjid, offer our salat, perform Hajj and sacrifice animals in the name of the Almighty but very few of us do know for sure who is our role model.

It is imperative that all educational institutions impart this knowledge to the students for the welfare of the humanity.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Kalabagan, Dhaka

Good manners

"My boy" a father advised his son, "Treat everybody with politeness, even those who are rude to you. Remember that you show courtesy to them not because they are gentlemen but because you are one."

The above was published in the Alabama Times and is one of my favourite sayings.

Whenever I see a person losing temper and showing inordinate anger, he/she instantly becomes smaller in my eyes.

"Manners" said Ralph Waldo Emerson, "are the happy ways of doing things". And he added that people are always watching your manners and awarding or denying you prizes accordingly.

I think parents must teach their children from early childhood how to deal with people courteously, because it has been learnt that in the first five years of life, 85% of the brain is developed. It will be easy for the young minds to learn how to go through life with a warm and friendly attitude. It will be very rewarding indeed.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Absurd democracy

A three-member team of Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) switched off the transmission of Channel 1 on 27th April at around 6:30pm. In a democratic country, violators of the law must be brought to book, but approximately one thou-

Aliens and we!

Stephen Hawking, the scientific authority of our generation, has advised us to avoid trying to seek out aliens from space. This news item was published in almost all local English dailies at the end of April. Hawkins believes that there is every possibility that aliens exist somewhere in our planetary system! His reasons for avoiding our contacts with them (aliens) is based on our inglorious history of the so-called civilized West, when they discovered the two American continents. It was a saga of exploitation, butchery and inhumanity shown by these adventurers and subsequent settlers.

It is a historical fact, that the white sailors and the subsequent settlers from (civilized?) Europe with their technical superiority overcame the Red Indians, the original settlers, when they crossed the Atlantic to discover the Americas! In contrast, they are historical evidences of the African and Asians too who may have crossed over to the American continents.

However, there is no record of their behaviour and interaction with the natives. They possibly did not loot their resources; or try to exterminate them like the (civilized?) Europeans later, based on their weapon and sea transportation superiority.

If 'Aliens' on coming to Earth, follow the same trend, and if they are technically superior to us, then may be we are looking into possibilities of harsh and very violent times ahead.

Like the usual interac-

sand journalists and employees who are shedding tears for their survival, are innocent even if they are ignorant of violation of the law.

Akter Hossain

Dept. of English

JNU, Dhaka

Electronic resources in universities

This is in response to the news entitled "Private Universities run without fulfilling the criteria" published in your daily on 4 May 2010. May I bring to your notice that contrary to the news that only one private university maintains online databases, there are many other private universities which subscribe numerous electronic/online journals and books and have access to latest electronic resources.

In fact Independent University, Bangladesh led the way to the utilization of electronic resources in the library for facilitating academic work of faculty and students way back in 2000 and then a year or two later it started online subscription of journals through JStor. Moving ahead, the university then started subscribing Emerald Full text and ABI Global of ProQuest. In fact IUB till now is the sole subscriber of ABI Global database, which provides IUB students and faculty access to current journals.

Meanwhile, IUB is also a member of Bangladesh-INSAP-PERI-Consortium which coordinates electronic resources access to Ebsco Host, Wiley InterScience, Wiley-Blackwell, Springer Link, American Chemical Society, Cambridge



tion between dis-similar civilizations and social orders or races, where there is every possibility of subjugation, conflict and eventually peaceful coexistence. Colour, racial and religious differences are even today patterned along these lines. Racially, we have blacks, whites, yellow and various skin and structural variations and their combinations showing distinct levels of differences in their mental and physical developments. We on Earth, living sometimes in conflict and more often in peace and harmony, have Asians, Caucasians, Europeans, Eskimos and other divisions based on socio-geographic characteristics.

Even on Earth, there always was and still is exploitation of resources, and uncalled for wars and conflicts for grabbing natu-

ral resources. Prime examples are; the historical British Empire born out of exploitation and subjugation, and now living as the British Commonwealth in peaceful harmony. The American misadventure in the Middle East today; though garbed in political terminologies and based on misleading lies and propaganda costing thousands and thousands of lives, is all centered on the need and greed for oil and other unexplored mineral wealth, and nothing else!

May be the Aliens will come and size up the mighty and powerful nations, and make them eat humble pie! They may possibly resolve the present conflict and confrontation of the East and West, both visible and invisible!

Worried Earthling
Dhaka

would affect the natural discharge of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna river system. Diverting water from the natural courses of so many great rivers is bound to have serious environmental impact on the regions as a whole.

This project needs to be halted immediately and all co-riparian nations (China, Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh) should be consulted for a proper management of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin.

Nuruddin Azam
Australia

Biman's pilots

We have come to learn that Biman plans to favour a group of pilots aged about 57 by keeping them on contract basis for its Boeing 777 and the obsolete DC 10 aircraft, violating its agreement with BAPA and depriving the regular pilots.

According to an agreement between the Bangladesh Airline Pilots Association and the Biman, the airline can not give any further training to a pilot who cannot give service to Biman for less than one year, as the age of retirement is 57 now.

Biman is planning to give conversion training to its Airbus 310 pilots to DC 10. In that case, the national flag carrier has to give conversion training for B-777 to the same pilots in 2011.

In total, Biman has to bear the huge costs of two conversion trainings as each training costs about 40 lakh per pilot, sources said.

Such steps for keeping the retired pilots would destroy the whole career growth of the younger pilots of Biman.

Jesmima Shanta
Dhaka

Multidisciplinary research

It was encouraging to see the ministers approve of the idea of establishing the concept of research and research funding for improving agriculture, health and industry in our country in a programme organised by NTV at Sonargaon Hotel. Innovation is the key to success of all countries and research is the stepping stone to innovation.

A pro-research government would mean a lot in terms of solving existing problems and creating the environment for research and innovation. One of the major hurdles obstructing agricultural and medical research in the country is the rule of procurement of research perishables and chemicals as well as

problem. For example, molecular sciences like Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology are contributing in a big way to Medicine, Agriculture as well as Industry. It is the true partnership between these sciences that will lead to major milestones in improving Health and Agriculture for prosperity of the country.

Most Agricultural Universities and Medical Colleges have their major thrust on Agriculture and Medicine respectively, which is essential. This means that the students of Agriculture and Medicine learn Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Molecular Genetics only in their final years. This consequentially is too

Universities offering the subjects of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Genetic Engineering, Microbiology and Biotechnology have assigned 4 years of these specific disciplines and students thoroughly learn the basics. So, Agricultural or Medical research institutes should ideally hire multidisciplinary teams of scientists from all areas to address specific problems facing the country.

Examples of collaborative research in Agriculture and Medicine are rare in the country and whatever exists is due to personal initiatives. The latter have however proved to be mutually beneficial and these models need to be encouraged and institutionalised by the government. In neighbouring countries like India, integration between the different disciplines has been brought about a Ministry called "The Department of Biotechnology" and it provides funding in a problem oriented approach and identifies scientists from different disciplines who then work on the research problem in a coordinated way.

Professor Zeba I. Seraj,
Ph.D.
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
University of Dhaka



equipment. Another is the lack of multidisciplinary approaches for solving a

meagre for proper utilization. On the other hand, Dhaka University and most other General

Power cuts

In Delhi city itself, they have power cuts for six hours daily. A country with such high record of development has a serious power shortage still in rural areas as well big cities like Kolkata even. However, it is going to export power to Bangladesh. Bangladesh exports rice and vegetables and huge quantity of fish to the mid eastern countries when we are

having shortage of it. The seven sisters of India have power that they can export but it is more expensive for them to pass it to far away states of theirs where there is shortage than Bangladesh which is adjacent to them. And believe it or not, the reality is this that Yangon has only two hours of power daily. The situation is horrible in

Pakistan too and in some provinces they do not have power for days particularly in northern part but that is mainly due to the political situation prevailing over there.

The present AL govt has taken a step to solve the problem and that will be their acid test.

Dr Shameem Hassan
New Dhohs, Mohakhali
Dhaka