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Vuvuzela!

The World Cup at South Africa has introduced a new musical (or noise making) instrument to the world audience! The games may be forgotten in the days to come; but the Vuvuzela will remain-- the popular and ever-present symbol of the games in South Africa! Viva-la Vuvuzela!

The South Africans love it, the crowd enjoys it, and interestingly, the South African players want it! Their goalkeeper Khune, reportedly said, which was published in the international news reports in many dailies, all over the world, and I quote: "We want more sup-

port and louder Vuvuzelas!"

May be to confuse the attacking opposite team players?

It is an interesting and cheap plastic horn with a long stem; generating more decibels of noise than a drum or even a chain-saw! The only things that can beat it are possibly bombs and cannons! World Cup spectators, particularly from abroad, have split opinions over it, and split ears from it! This World Cup, will be remembered; "for the Vuvuzela, by the Vuvuzela, and from the Vuvuzela"; no mean achievement for a simple toy like thing. The crescendo of noise will long remain, while all else recedes

from memory.

As reported, it seemingly unnerves some footballers not used to it. To that extent, it naturally is a home advantage for the African teams--support-wise and noise-wise! Let us see how many of them reach the quarter finals to justify the role of the simple and humble Vuvuzela! I am sure most visitors will carry back home this cheap and simple instrument as a souvenir of their trip. The little plastic horn, has a come a long way; thanks to the World Cup!

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Football festival

The whole country has worn a festive look with colours of Brazil, Argentina and other favourite football playing nations flying on rooftops, bamboo poles, huts, shops and even vehicles. T-shirts and stickers of those flags are selling like hot cakes. Youngsters have shown their loyalty to the favourite nations by vandalizing vehicles on their failure to watch the games because of load shedding. Some BUET students blew their future for WC by making the authorities close down the highest seat of education in our country. My wife won't watch any Bangladeshi programmes on TV. She prefers refined acting in refined Bengali of West Bengal to Bangladeshi low comic drama serials in local dialects. Should I blame my wife? Should I point finger to the youngsters for their showing emotional attachment to the countries that have made neatness and transparency their guiding principle? So to make our youngsters proud of our flag that we achieved in return of blood and tears, first we have to ensure good governance characterized by benevolence, austerity, honesty, accountability and diligence on the part of every citizen.

Abdus Subhan
Lalpur, Natore

We firmly believe that the government should amend the existing law of polythene use which is a menace to the ecology.

Engr. M. Helal Uddin
Eastern Refinery Limited
North Potenga, Chittagong

What's wrong?

We have bigger problems in the country. So let us not just irritate the football enthusiasts by criticising them pointlessly. During the World Cup season people of different cultures become one. It's a phenomenon, not that we can have such phenomenon every day! It brings us all together in a global festival. We dance, sing the same song. At this point of time, there is no difference.

Flags of different countries look good together! It looks like a huge international carnival is going on across the country, and what's wrong with that? Everybody seems to be so excited about the matches! They wait so eagerly for this. And what's wrong with that? Football is not a game only, it's a passion.

Cantara Wali
MBA, International management
University of Dhaka

Private universities

With reference to the editorial published on your newspaper on June 13, 2010 entitled "Vat proposal on private universities be withdrawn", I would like to thank you on behalf of students and guardians, for your positive perception on this issue and producing the write-up.

I thank you even more for mentioning the two common misconceptions of private universities in our country that 'private universities are high charging institutions catering to elitist demand for education and they are highly commercialised organizations indulging in skimming profits'.

Being a student of a private university, I too acknowledge that mushrooming of private universities indeed creates questions in people's mind about education quality. However, these private universities do produce a huge bulk of working individuals both male/female who graduate in due time with their desired qualifications. I appreciate that you acknowledge the calibre of the students of private universities and how they are being used in the private sectors.

In a private university, young minds of today are getting education that they normally would get abroad at a comparatively lesser price. However, yet it is much more than the state universities. Although, there are scholarship and other tuition waivers, still many find it difficult to cope up with the amount. If the vat is imposed on the private universities it is only the students who will suffer.

I also acknowledge with you that the government has all the right to monitor a university that is not state owned and put agenda to maintain education quality. But if the vat is imposed on us then not only us, the upcoming batch will also feel discouraged.

Farshid Alam
Independent University,
Bangladesh (IUB)

Bank pay scale

This is the recent news that the nationalised banks i.e. Sonali Bank Limited, Janata Bank Limited & the Agrani Bank Limited, including Bangladesh Bank, are going to have a separate pay scale. Already, the banks have submitted their proposed pay structure to the Ministry of Finance. I think that this a very good & effective step of the nationalised banks, because the private bank pay structure is much higher than the nationalised banks. There should be a balance. Our neighbouring countries like India, Pakistan & Sri Lanka have separate pay scales for the nationalised banks.

Md. Rezaul Haque
Officer
Sonali Bank Limited

Land developers

The housing ministry had called a meeting to discuss about the Detailed Area Plan (DAP) of Rajuk with Rehab and Bangladesh Land Developers Association (BLDA). In this meeting, the state minister of housing faced an impolite behaviour of a businessman.

A lot of allegations are there about land developers, but no steps have been taken against them so far. So, we hope the government will address the issue in right earnest.

Md. Ozaed Ali
Mirpur2, Dhaka

Import of used cars

All the countries in the world have made our country a dumping ground of old cars which they do not want to keep in their own country. You must impose immediate ban on the import of used cars.

Our suggestion is to build elevated railways or underground tube train on priority basis in Dhaka city. Developed countries like the USA, UK, Japan, China, South Korea, have got the funds, technology and manpower and with their cooperation it can be done within 2/3 years time.

We must not waste our time only in talking. The government should give the investing countries the required guarantee to get back their money within 10 to 15 years time.

To raise money, the government should levy 5% to 10% tax on the price of CNG, petrol and diesel sales.

Initially, we may improve our existing railway system and build tracks to run high-speed trains in an efficient way. We must not forget to start fast commuter trains between capital and the suburbs. There should be flyovers on all the level crossings inside the metropolis and all over the country.

Jafar Zaidi
Nikunja-2, Airport Road
Dhaka

Health for all

The 1978 Declaration of Alma-Ata described health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Health is a "fundamental human right." Attainment of the highest possible level of health is a very important world-wide social goal. By 2000, everyone should enjoy "a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life." Achieving this aim would necessitate financial and community expansion. But primary healthcare, "based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology" made universally accessible to individuals and families, was supposed to be key to attaining the target. By 2000, there were significant health improvements, with increases in life expectancy in 163 of 184 countries for which data are available (between 1975 and 1995). Expenditure on health has also risen, with global spending on health accounting for approximately 8 percent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). However, there are massive disparities in the health status of rich and poor countries and the goal of "health for all" has clearly not been met.

Mohammad Rajja
Gono Bishwabidyalay
Gsumc, Dhaka

Tragic

Recently, a woman reportedly committed suicide in the city's Jurain area with two of her young children. It's really regrettable that some children are not safe even in the custody of their parents. I think marital conflicts of adults must not victimize children. The entire incident represents the sickness of the insensitive grown-ups that children endure in our society. I can understand that the woman had to bear the intolerable traumas of a broken relationship and she had to put up with the alleged abuse by her husband and in-laws. I really sympathize with her for her ordeals. However, that doesn't make her awful act of persuading her own children to commit suicide justifiable. She should have had some compassion for her children. She shouldn't have made them the victims of her own misfortune and emotional turmoil. Instead, if she had raised her children with resilience, someday her children might have proven to be her ultimate strength in life.

Kh. Asef Safa Kabir
Muhammadpur, Dhaka

Power generation in Sylhet

The present capacity of the running power stations in Sylhet zone is about 500 MW including 15 & 3 years rental and small IPP. These plants are run by gas and gas is also available there. The present peak hour power demand of Sylhet zone is about 250 MW. The balance 250 MW cannot fully be dispatched to other areas where there is shortage of generation due to limitation of transmission facility. As a result, the Sylhet zone remains surplus in generation and suffers no load shedding.

Another scenario is that the contract for Sylhet 90 M.W. combined cycle power plant (2nd unit) construction work was signed between PDB and M/S Harbin Power Engineering co.(HPE) China on 12.09.05 with completion date on 02.01.08.

It is learnt that HPE completed the execution work and started the trial run operation by early Aug. 2008. But the unit could not be put into commercial operation till now even after more than two years of its contractual completion date, despite severe power crisis prevailing in the country.

The situation demands better handling.

Md. Delwar Hossain
East Rampura, Dhaka

Untrained drivers

We the city dwellers travel by bus. It is part of our daily life. Bus is our essential mode of transport as it is the cheapest one. However, day by day buses are getting overcrowded and noisy. The situation has been worsening fast. I need to travel by bus from Kakrail to Baridhara to attend my office. The drivers and helpers not trained properly.

This is indeed a hazardous situation which the traffic managers must look into.

Benjamin Gomes
Kakrail
Circuit House Road
Dhaka

Alcohol

If humans want something, they will do anything to get it, it's human nature. It's the same with alcohol--some people drink because they say that some drinks are good for health and some people drink for pleasure. It is a sad fact that an estimated 6.6 million children under the age of 18 live in households with at least one alcoholic parent. As a result our future generation will repeat the same thing as we always follow our parents.

All alcoholic drinks contain ethanol. This is what makes people drunk. Taking more alcoholic drinks can cause many ailments such as alcoholism, high blood pressure, obesity, stroke and other problems like accidents and suicides. It can also cause stomach ulcers, cancer of the digestive system. So, we should all be concerned about the matter!

Shafeen Mahmood
Little Jewels School
Chittagong

Menace

The buses in Dhaka city are a great menace.

Something has to be done to contain this menace to make Dhaka a good place to live in.

Rowshan Ali
Student of a private university
Dhanmondi
Dhaka

Who is responsible?

The other day I was passing through the Mohakhali fly-over. Traffic was terrible! Vehicles were bumper to bumper. On my left was a heavily loaded mini truck. What caught my attention was the way goods were tied up to the body. It was so carelessly tied up that it seemed it might fall down any time and cause an accident. I was thinking what if the goods fell down on a car! I asked the driver why he tied the goods that way. He reluctantly said, "It's perfectly alright. It will never fall down." I asked what if it fell down. He said, "Then it would be an accident. And nobody has control on accident." Then I told him I had taken a photo of his truck. He grinned and said, "I don't care at all."

My question is who has to take care of this carelessness; the driver or traffic police?

Khandaker Zia Hasan
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

BUET closure

BUET, the highest seat of technical education in the country, was closed sine die on such a trifling issue that we cannot but feel worried. It appears that junior students thrashed up their seniors to close the university to facilitate viewing World Cup football matches. Nothing can be more shameful for this traditional institute. The authorities should take tough actions against the rogue students to keep the BUET image high.

M. Sanaul Haque
Uttara, Dhaka

AL in disarray

It seems that the AL is ruining itself. The party has lost focus in every field after the huge election victory. This is characterized by:

1. Its lack of organizational activity. The party leaders have become disconnected from the public. The party supporters at grassroots level need to be kept motivated by constant engagement through meetings and consultations.
2. Its neglect of senior experienced leaders. It is reported that the division within the Chhatra League is due to the division among the

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I bought a plot in 2005, no registration yet. If the govt implements DAP what will happen to our plot? We don't know.

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The great woman

June 19 was the birthday of Aung San Suu Kyi, a living legend. Her birthday was observed all over the world with tremendous enthusiasm. The whole world loves her. But where is she? She is under house arrest.

People say that Suu Kyi is the icon of democracy. I would like to add that she is the icon of humanity. The house arrest of Suu Kyi is nothing but an assault on humanity.

The Junta must realize that arms can never subdue the progression of humanity.

Suu Kyi is now for all peace-loving nations. Her sacrifice and suffering remind us of the patience of the great men. Suu Kyi's sacrifice would get duly rewarded today or tomorrow.

I don't understand why the Junta feels afraid of a woman who believes in non-violence. I think it is more afraid of Suu Kyi's philosophy than the person. The military government must take lessons from history. It should also accept the reality that house arrest has given a new dimension to Suu Kyi's



popularity. The international community must take more effective steps for her liberty.

Pradip Das
Lecturer
BHPI, CRP

ONLINE VOICES

Readers' instant comments on The Daily Star Online reports. Log on to thedailystar.net to leave your comments.

DAP now official

All recommendations find place on gazette notification; fate depends on implementation (June 24, 2010)

Congratulations! This is a move towards the right direction to save Dhaka.

Talat Islam

Light at the end of the tunnel! Let us all contribute to a liveable Dhaka again.

Md. Mustafa Hasan

It is a great initiative. DAP implementation will save Dhaka from an impending disaster. All rivers around Dhaka and all canals and

Congratulations.... If possible ask the Japanese government to help us to install super expensive underground G-tanks (which hold floodwater). Clearly divide commercial districts from the residential zones. SNH

In the first phase, rescue lakes and canals inside the dying city. We do not want to see Dhaka going under water again.

Rabbi

Hopefully, this comes through on the ground! Implementation and impartial, ruthless enforcement remain key challenges.

Riaz

How soft is a soft stance? How many years will it take the government to implement DAP plan? Is there any time-frame associated with DAP plan? How will a common man claim his money back from these powerful developers? I really wish all the best and must

say it is a very good initiative from the government's side.

Mohammed A. Alam

I have been working on DAP since 2004, as far as I know, the given private housing abandoned list is not perfectly all right. Please check this and reconfirm the list from Rajuk.

Subrata Talukder

Its a good initiative by the present government as they have already approved the DAP for Dhaka city. Considering the flood zone region, this plan would be helpful to avoid the risk Dhaka inhabitants are exposed to. We already know that many land grabbers have sold govt land by their name. I think this initiative would be a good solution to restore the govt land.

Eng. Md. Meheub Haque

I have never voted for the Awami League, if the govt achieves success on DAP, I will vote for them.

Enamul Hoque