

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.

Rainwater drainage

A front page lead report, on this important matter was published in a local English daily on June 29. It very rightly highlighted the need for an urgent solution to the illegal land encroachment that has jeopardised the natural rainwater drainage system of greater Dhaka.

Today, most of these shallow low-lying natural water-bodies draining rainwater to the rivers have been filled and built up by greedy landowners and builders. This is rooted in many evil partnerships of concerned people; mostly from LGRD and Land Records and greedy land grabbers, who have jointly connived to do this great harm to our environment, particularly due to serious water-logging during heavy rain.

Wasa cannot solve this fairly involved problem by itself. The government must collectively act with concerned departments and public bodies like Wasa and Rajuk, to restore all these illegally grabbed land.

These may have even been subsequently legalised through motivated clearances from related departments and ministries of the government over the years. All these past land files and deeds must be un-scrambled; sorted out, and the proper natural drainage route established.

It is not an easy task, for a lot of records need to be scrutinized and evaluated. Once the drainage channel is established, all illegal, quasi-legal or even legal lands will have to be repossessed. Where needed, land should be officially acquired in the overall national interest without any let or hindrance from any quarter; including interested government and public bodies if any.

Establishing and restoring greater Dhaka's natural storm water drainage, must be done on top priority basis. Where it has been illegally occupied, the cost of restoration to earlier (unfilled) level must be recovered from such illegal land-owners!

The work must go ahead on top priority basis, and the public be made aware of its need, for the drainage of rainwater, for everyone's benefit. Once this is made clear to most people, and the work taken up, it will not be possible for successive governments to stop or hinder it, even if there are subjective interests behind it. The government should issue an executive order so that Wasa, Rajuk and LGRD Ministry jointly take up this work, which may even be monitored by an independent 'Citizens Committee' to see that the work proceeds without any delay anywhere!

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka



Noise pollution

Once beautiful Dhaka is facing lots of challenges and myriad problems. Noise pollution, beyond any doubt, is a matter of great concern as it has already exceeded the tolerable limits.

The city has become a place of extreme sound. Jarring sounds from the construction areas, political gatherings, miking and hucksters voices are very peculiar in outdoor sites of Dhaka. Disgusting sound from dragging furniture to and fro, people clearing their throat, gagging, loudly spitting, mostly common in abode and workplaces, are also giving a dimension to sound pollution. Reckless whistling of prohibited hydraulic horn in most motorized vehicle is now in extreme condition. It is an irony that violating the rule, state patronized BRTC vehicles are also indiscriminately using banned hydraulic horns.

Now the noise level of any busy street in Dhaka, with the sound of vehicles, is estimated at 95 decibel (dB). According to WHO, generally 60dB sound can make a man deaf temporarily and 100dB of it can cause complete deafness.

It is high time for the individuals and authorities concerned, the media, the NGOs and the government to work together to reduce noise level for the sake of city dwellers.

Yeahia All Mamun

Dept of Soil, Water and Environment
University of Dhaka

World Cup 2010

It was perhaps worst day for the Bangladeshi viewers watching Brazil going down to Holland. The referring looked good but not above controversy if you look at the equalizer by Holland. The second match between Ghana and Uruguay was a classic football drama to watch. It was nerve wrecking for the players and the viewers all over the world. In this match too referring was not beyond controversy.

Look at the replay, it was very clear that the Uruguay player pushed the ball out of the goal net by hand when it

already crossed the goal line. I am not a football referee. But was it not already a goal and a dead ball which had no action left. But a penalty was given counting it a deliberate hand ball. I need not repeat the tragic story to hurt the feelings of millions of African fans and others.

In my judgment, this WC of 2010 has laid a foundation to improve the standard of refereeing and to introduce the electronic gadgets in deciding crucial issues as now done in cricket. FIFA has already voiced its concern and suspended 4 referees and might be thinking for a third eye view. If that was already in place, the England team, Ghana and even Brazil could still prevail in the WC 2010.

Faqrul Quadir
California, USA

The two women

More than a year ago a picture that was published in all major daily news paper focused on Madam Khaleda Zia wailing at the bedside of her politician son---Tareque Zia at PG Hospital where she went soon after her release from the confinement. Tareque Zia was there under treatment for his injury that was inflicted upon him, as claimed by Madam Zia due to political rivalry. A mother's natural sympathy forced her to cry openly and she pleaded that Tareque was sick and he would not be in politics again until he recovered from the sickness. Tears rolled down her cheek. It was painful to see.

A disturbing picture was published in your daily where a mother was wailing over her non politician son's dead body who died due to the burn injury inflicted upon him, as claimed, by pro-hartal activists on the night before hartal and after fighting for life for four days he left this planet. The picture shows a wailing mother at the side of her deceased son with her near ones who lost his life for no reason at all. Place the two pictures side by side and ask Tareque Zia's mother and mother of Farooque to answer the million dollar question: WHO IS TO BE BLAMED for this? One mother has an answer and the other has it but won't give it because dirty

politics forbids her to answer.

Dr Shameem
New DOHS, Mohakhali
Dhaka

Let's be sensible

Two very pathetic incidents have hugely shaken our society. One is the suicide committed by a mother and her two children and the other is obviously the killing of a little boy.

But the way some newspapers of our country deal with the matters and publish news items obviously cross the acceptable limit of nicety. Surely it violates the norms of fair journalism and falls into the vulgar category.

Nabila Raisa
Muhamadpur
Dhaka

Access road

This is to bring to your kind notice that "Rayer Bazar Buddjibi Smritisoudha" remains out of sight to many potential visitors due to its having no good access road though it is located in the vicinity of the Sangshad Bhaban complex.

You are well familiar with the fact that anti liberation elements assassinated over 200 members of our national intelligentsia including Professor Munir Choudhury and many other teachers of the University of Dhaka on the eve of independence in 1971 at Rayer Bazar. Prior to their heinous killing they were brutally tortured at the Physical Training College concentration camp and later assembled them under a Banyan tree at Pulpar which is still alive as a living history.

The Physical Training College concentration camp, the old Banyan tree and the Rayer Bazar Smritisoudha are three parts of the history of our liberation war and hence need to be protected for visit by our nationals and foreigners as well, some of whom do take much troubles to reach the sites often.

A road needs to be constructed from the Physical Training College to the Rayer Bazar Buddjibi Smritisoudha.
Kazi Zillur Rahman
Zafraabad, Dhaka

Mobile phone

We know there are many advantages of mobile phone nowadays and there is no doubt about it.

Though mobile phone has many advantages, it has some disadvantages too. We have to face an embarrassing situation when we get unwanted phone calls. Sometimes it's annoying when we stay in our class or workplace, if our phone keeps ringing. Besides, pornography is spreading by mobile. Teenagers, even young people, visit pornographic websites by their mobile Internet.

Sabbir Hossain
Karatia, Tangail

Colonial concept

Since ages the concept of leadership has been colonial in south East Asia, more so in Bangladesh. With the passage of time over the years things have changed but this concept of leadership continues. Though democracy is in vogue but the colonial concept of leadership remains. The son of the king becomes the king; this concept is very much deep rooted in the minds of the people. So long this concept remains in practice, Bangladesh shall not achieve progress in the true sense of the word.

We all are aware about the change that has taken place here in the United States. It was almost unthinkable that a man of a black origin would ever grace the position of the President of the United States. Here in America the son of the king does not become the king in the name of democracy. One has to prove his worth to the nation to become the President of the country. Back in Bangladesh it is only the children of the leaders who are deemed fit to become their leaders, no matter whether he or she is worth the position or not.

Since majority of the people of Bangladesh live below poverty line and are unlettered, there should be an impartial competency test for all those aspiring to become leaders of the nation. I am very hopeful that if this competency test is carried out in the form of ISSB conducted for intending defence officials, the country shall be blessed with good leadership which is badly wanting. Let there be a change in the concept of leadership and herald in a new era of progress and development in Bangladesh.

Saleh M Ayub
Houston, Texas, USA

Building complete, function zero

A news item in The Daily Star (July 2nd, 2010 Page 12, Column 1-4) says, that a four-story building at MAG Osmani Medical College in Sylhet was

lying idle for more than three and a half years. This building was intended for the ICU unit and a large casualty ward. For the functioning of the building two other components were necessary, i.e. the urgent need for the medical supplies and the instruments, and the doctors and nurses and ancillary staff, down to the cleaners. For the success of the above project, there had to be necessary co-ordination, for all the three needs. Failure of co-ordination is a complete waste of our own very scarce resources. The above instance can be found in hundreds of our own projects. What is the remedy? A good management team is not enough.

Shahbuddin Mahtab
Gulshan, Dhaka

IPO refund warrant

I have been applying for IPOs for some time but unfortunately I am so far unsuccessful in all my attempts. But what is causing me pain is the manner in which the refund warrants are issued in cases where the amounts could not be credited to the account online.

In one case, all my refunds were to be collected from a courier service office. After reaching there I found the office located in the sixth floor of a building which has no elevator. I paid money to a person to climb up and get me the refund warrants which he did as a fine gesture. I am over 70 years old and it is not possible for me to climb six stories. However, to my great dismay I found that in one warrant the name of the bank was not mentioned correctly. So I have to pursue the matter once again.

My question is if the courier companies are not able to deliver the mails then why they are called so? Will our authorities consider the matter and take appropriate action to rectify the faulty mechanism?

Mozammel Hossein
Old DOHS, Dhaka

Killing by police

Recent deaths in police custody particularly in Dhaka city are highly disturbing. A suspected drug dealer was tortured to death in front of his minor son. It was not only inhuman, rather sadistic in nature. Another small business owner was arrested from his own rented house and later killed in a so called encounter. In both the cases there are allegations of demand of bribe. The media has rightly highlighted the incidents. The authorities instituted inquiries. But recurrence of such incidents is shaking public faith in law enforcing agencies. The government's image is being tarnished. It appears that the chain of command and disci-



World Cup and octopus!

With the sad and humiliating exit of Brazil and Argentina, World Cup football has, to a certain extent, lost its flavour in certain parts of the world and Bangladesh in particular.

However, it is now the duty of their respective think-tanks to search for the loopholes in their playing strategy that let the opponents play havoc and eventually pull them out of the event so ruthlessly.

Amidst all this, however, the foretelling Octopus in Germany has already stunned the Germans in particular and the world in general with its power of choosing the German team against its

opponents in so far as three games that turned out to be correct. Many people, in their split opinions about this living mystery, have points of varied kinds. Some are of the view that it's no more than a modern superstition, while others staying on a safe side think that if this soon-to-be-worshiped-fish with its all worth of telling future boosts up the morale of the German players then it's worth it --- it has fared well for the Germans!

How we should react to such phenomena, one wonders!

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

pline in police is on the wane.

Political leadership in the ministry appears caught in the bureaucratic entrapment legalising all the misdeeds. Perhaps a major shake-up is necessary.

M.S.Huq

Uttara, Dhaka

MRP

I'm a Bangladeshi national living in Italy. I have resident permit for Italy which will expire soon. But now Italian immigration department is not receiving any application to renew resident permit with the hand written Bangladeshi passport. Currently, they accept only Machine Readable Passport.

I have contacted the Bangladesh Embassy in Rome but they told me to go back to Bangladesh for getting a new MRP passport. As I know the present government's vision to build Digital Bangladesh, so how come I need to go back to Bangladesh for a simple passport?

Why can't I get it from the local embassy?

Ishtiaque Ahmed
Rome, Italy

AL government

A careful look at the political state of affairs in Bangladesh will substantiate an argument that the Sheikh Hasina regime is a continuation of the military-backed interim government that had ruled the country for about two years, before her party came to power. Sheikh Hasina and many of her party people were jailed and tortured during those two years, and she claimed that there had been an attempt on her life through mixing poison with her food. Her statement in this regard can be interpreted in two ways: 1. She made the statement to gain public sympathy, which explains why she is not taking any action against those who wanted to kill her 2. Her statement is true, but she is unable to take any action, as she is not in command of the affairs of Bangladesh.

I find it morally more comfortable to believe the second interpretation. Sheikh Hasina receives dictation about how to run the country and about who to punish; and according to that dictation, the misdeeds of the military-backed interim regime are forgiven. The primary target is those people who constitute the biggest obstacle to the realization of a political and economic hegemony of a regional power. It is that neighboring country of ours that wants to exploit Bangladesh in every way possible, which the BNP and the Jamaat refuse to tolerate.

Shimul Chaudhury
One-mail

Price of electricity

The Finance Minister Mr. A.M.A. Muhith has hinted that price of electricity will be hiked. This has created panic in the industrial sector. The textile sector is already hard hit due to price hike of yarn in the recent months.

The spinners have increased the prices of their products for gas rationing and load-shedding.

The RMG has already started importing fabrics of both shell and pocketing because the prices of locally manufactured fabrics have increased. The price increase of electricity and gas will add fuel to the fire. I heard that one of the country's biggest composite textile industries has been closed down recently due to loss of price competitiveness with imported fabrics.

Sitting out of the country, we do not really visualise the near affects of price hike, but can imagine, if really the FM has seriously meant it, I am sure the textile sector which reportedly earns 80% of

country's forex will soon earn nothing and our RMG and Knit Wear factories will have to close down. I have some friends and that is why I could apprehend this fall from hearing from them.

The FM has cited examples of other countries' price levels. While he was talking he must have forgotten the imported cotton, load shedding and gas rationing. He must have also forgotten the bank interest in Bangladesh. Our so-called cheap labour services are eaten by those sheddings road jams. How can a manufacturer in Bangladesh compete with other countries' manufacturers who enjoy the good services of above infrastructure, although they pay a bit extra to their labourers than ours?

The people have started talking that this government is not a business friendly government.

Sudden increase in prices of gas and electricity, while the people are already fed up with load-shedding, will only bolster their belief. We are not economists but as a commoner, I am sure the step will bring slide in popularity of the present government.

May be the Hon'ble Finance Minister has hinted it keeping in mind the implementation of his recently passed Bangladesh's ever biggest budget. Where will he collect all that money from if he does not allow the taxpayers to earn and pay?

Shafiqul Islam, NY

Laws on national flag

I feel happy to see that the government is going to amend laws in order to uphold the honour of the country's national flag which is the symbol of our nation. Very often it is noticed that our flags are hoisted atop many buildings without following any norms.

Sometimes, it is observed that a flag has been kept hoisted for days together even for a month on top of a building where the flag gets discoloured, disfigured, torn and finally dumped. Sometimes, flags made without following the appropriate measurement, are used by people in their houses, cars, etc.

Even sometimes, the colour combination of red and green is not maintained as per specification. I would, therefore, hope that the government will give proper guidelines and directives regarding the above aspects of our national flag in the amended laws.
M. Rukanuddin
Dhaka

Ensure uniformity



In schools, it is the uniformity of dress, shoes, belts, ties, etc., that creates an atmosphere of oneness among children, irrespective of the background they hail from. Once in college, all hell seems to break loose with children of rich families flaunting their wealth that includes wearing expensive and fashionable dresses, using costly mobile phones, and spending lavishly in the canteens. This hurts the feelings of the not-so-rich, leading to factionalism, ill-will, and unhealthy competition.

Bangladesh must think of uniform quality education than thinking about all peripheral things related to education. This is the first in priority. With uniforms and no quality education or quality education to the affordable rich alone will be leading Bangladesh to dark age. All must think of this first. So how should a student come to school or what should a student's parents be or how should a classroom be designed etc are less important compared to the quality of education given to all students of Bangladesh.

When someone thinks of uniformity at all Bangladesh level, there are lots of unanswered questions. Will the educators and policy makers think deeply on them?
Gopal Sengupta
McGill University, Canada

improvement in the academic environment.

Bangladesh must think of uniform quality education than thinking about all peripheral things related to education. This is the first in priority. With uniforms and no quality education or quality education to the affordable rich alone will be leading Bangladesh to dark age. All must think of this first. So how should a student come to school or what should a student's parents be or how should a classroom be designed etc are less important compared to the quality of education given to all students of Bangladesh.

When someone thinks of uniformity at all Bangladesh level, there are lots of unanswered questions. Will the educators and policy makers think deeply on them?
Gopal Sengupta
McGill University, Canada