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Sustainable population

This crucial matter needs to be seriously taken up. The government must have pragmatic plans and actions to contain the population explosion. Earlier, a significant population control programme was successfully implemented with total commitment and hard work and personal supervision by the (late) Dr. Ibrahim, founder of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, as the then, Health and Population Planning Adviser under Zia's military rule in the 1970s. Something like that is needed now.

Among many options; sterilization of males and females in rural areas may need to be adopted if other steps fail. These un-educated, poor and deprived men and women are saddled with unnecessary children, that remain under fed, under nourished and a bur-

den to the poor household. If needed, financial incentives may be also considered; as on a national basis it may be cost effective. This needs to be taken in hand, the sooner the better; as family planning is no longer getting the government's attention and effort that is continuously needed in rural areas.

Another important aspect which I believe has not been considered is multiple marriages in rural society, which naturally encourages population growth. This must be stopped. Similar efforts only with more effectiveness is also needed for preventing child marriage which is also fairly common in rural areas. These are important steps that need to be taken up: NOW!

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka



The fullness of a patriot

It was a pleasure to read Syed Badrul Hossain's piece on Dr. Kamal Hossain (July 14). Arguably, Bangladesh has never produced an internationally reputed lawyer of Hossain's calibre in contemporary times. While I have never had much sympathy for the Awami League's philosophy, the former foreign minister of ours is one Awami League stalwart whose scholarship, cosmopolitanism, and erudition set him in a class apart.

However, the fact remains that he was responsible, as the key author of the Republic's earliest Constitutional amendments, for dismembering the very democracy he had fought so hard to create in 1971-1972. Our first derailment from the path of democracy happened not in August 1975 but long before that when, as Law Minister and Constitutional adviser, Dr. Kamal Hossain penned and piloted in parliament the black amendments that, successively, destroyed the independence of the judiciary, centralized state power, criminalized dissent, and shut down all newspapers.

Dr. Kamal Hossain is a great man and a patriot, no doubt, but he is hardly without blemish.

Esam Sohail
Wichita, Kansas
USA

cerned to take the steps needed to save the Bangshi from pollution. Otherwise, this river will be contaminated fully soon like Buriganga. It will be a disaster.

Sohel Rana
Mirpur, Dhaka

Symbols of Islam

At present due to the virulent propaganda of international media against Islam, the religion of peace and its symbols are considered as threatening by some ignorant people who do not know about the beauty of Islam. I'm discussing just two symbols out of many--- beard and cap. These two are very important symbols by which one can easily identify a Muslim. But now if anybody has a beard and wears a cap can't get a good job in international organisations even in Bangladesh, in spite of its being a Muslim majority country.

The question is how come a cap be a symbol of fear? It can't harm even a fly, let alone men. Some errant fellows with bearded face and wearing a cap are creating mischief in the world due to which some so called media outlets are highlighting these religious symbols as symbols of fear. Can't those so called media outlets highlight that no religious identity can be a symbol of fear?

Md. Nazrul Islam
MBA (Marketing)
University of Chittagong

Garment workers

Where is the conscience of the entire nation? When a factory owner spends thirty to forty thousand taka for a dinner for his family and friends (I have witnessed that in Bangladesh), how can he refuse to pay a mere Tk 3,000 for an entire month of 12 hours workdays for a worker? We have become as bad as the Pakistani oppressors.

I have seen many countries in the world but I have never seen so much greed of the bureaucrats and the businessmen.

Iqbal Mahmood
One-mail

allowed to thrown off course, before producing a conclusive outcome, then an invaluable opportunity of asserting the supremacy of law will be lost. That will be drawing a big blank."

While I was a college student I used to travel by bus. In some buses there were some written sayings. I remember one such saying "baboharey bongsher parichoya" meaning one's behaviour is the index of quality of the family he came from. I think the bus owners used to write these sort of notes just to tell the passengers to be nice and disciplined or avoid quarrels in bus on seat occupation.

I do not know much about the particular MP who man-handled the policeman for no visible faults in his duties, nor do I know the background of the gentleman but his behaviour has spoken a lot. Though I do not know backgrounds of many politicians of my age and how the present high profile politicians have been elevated to such positions now but I know a few who were student cadres during youths, some were area commanders of local mastans (muscleman) who used to work for some parties just for a little fame and money. Many of them gradually rose to the high positions. In course to time, they amassed money and became eligible for nomination from big political parties. I had a few opportunities to visit the offices of some such leaders for assistance to get my land vacated from illegal occupiers through their pet cadres.

Breaking law is the law of the land in Bangladesh. One feels insulted if he is asked to follow queue in lifts, gets angry if the traffic sergeant stops his car for non-compliance of traffic signal lights, if asked for identity before entering into an office of a big official etc. In the civilized world things are much more different. I fully endorse the DS views. I hope the present government will at least start some procedures through this case to educate our people to respect law. It will set an example for all.

Shafiqul Islam, NY

been different had the two leaders been gentlemen (accent on 'gentle').

One reason for this stale situation is that both the Begums were initially mere housewives, before joining politics; and had been catapulted from position zero to number one, in one shot. It takes decades for a person in the public or private sector to reach the top position in an organisation (age, maturity, knowledge and experience). This short-cut process has ruined the proper development of this young nation from the start.

Then there are restrictions due to the dynasty rules prevailing in our political culture. How long is this situation going to last? In the USA, we saw a sudden (but quiet) revolution--the rather sudden appearance of Barack Obama as the elected President of the United States of America.

Dynasty rule weakens the internal discipline of a political party. The disintegrating forces are built-in; they gradually build up, waiting for the proper catalysts, to trigger. A political volcanic situation thus starts building up. When such a volcano erupts, none can control it.

The political future of Bangladesh is rather unpredictable; and is thus a cause for concern for the common man. It is unpredictable like our Kalbaishakhs.

Alif Zabr
One-mail

Eve teasing in Khulna

During the summer vacation of my college, I had to take my son to his school for some days and during his school hours I used to wait a park named 'Bandhan' situated just beside the Khulna passport office and near the 'Morning Bell School' where my son is enrolled. When I used to wait in that park, I witnessed what eve teasing is and how many kinds it has.

There is a school named 'Khulna Collegiate School' near the park and during starting of the school when girl students go to school, some boys aged between 15 and 22 start throwing bad comments and often show various vulgar body languages. The stalkers do not seem to be school or college goers.

One day I became stunned to see that they teased a girl who was escorted probably by her mother. One of the boys tried to stop others saying that her mother was with her. But others continued their bad comments, whistling and obscene gestures. Often I used to see one or two boys rushing out of the park and following the girls up to school gate.

Every day when the school starts, a group of ten/twelve youths arrive in the park and do the same thing. The law enforcers can go to the park in plain dress on any school day and observe their activities. The boys usually gather around 9.30 and stay up to 11 or 11.30am.

My wife was with me for a day or two and observed and inspired me to write something on it. We are really helpless. When the administration is in deep sleep, what can we do?

Santosh Das
Khulna

Dangerous chemicals

Recent newspaper reports have shown how Dangerous Chemicals are being used extensively to ripen various types of local and imported "Fruits". People are taking these fruits every day all over the country and are contracting deadly diseases. Unfortunately, the authorities have not taken any tough action but have allowed the culprits to get away lightly.

As a citizen, I would request our government to take urgent measures to amend our existing "laws" and award due punishment the dishonest traders.

Saima Begum
Dhaka

Good decision

First of all, I would congratulate the prime minister for taking the decision to stop private practice of the government doctors in private clinics. This is a good step which will play a vital role in improving medicare services in the country.

In this connection, I would further request the prime minister to stop massive private tuition practice amongst the school teachers in the whole country, especially in the Dhaka city. In this way the teachers are becoming the so-called teaching-businessmen in society and they have totally forgotten their moral obligation to teach their students wholeheartedly in the class. Most of the teachers of the renowned schools in Dhaka city are earning on an average Tk.100,000 per month.

Now it's time to stop the malpractice.

Md.Zahidul Islam (Milton)
LLB final year
Bangabandhu Law College
Dhaka

Undemocratic provision

After winning independence from West Pakistan in 1971, we started our democratic journey. Our constitutional journey started on 4 November 1972. The journey continued based on the rule of law, fundamental rights, personal liberty, etc before the 4th amendment was made in the constitution. Our constitution followed the British Constitution and it is known to us that all developed countries such as UK, the USA, Japan framed their constitution based on the rule of law, fundamental rights and liberty.

"A person elected as a member of parliament at an election at which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he resigns from that party or votes in parliament against that party."

This Article 70 is the violation of fundamental rights of a citizen.

Because of Article 70, no dissenting opinion can be voiced by members of parliament.

Ferdows-Al-Hasan
Department of Law
University of Dhaka

Women leaders

Is Bangladesh under a divine political curse (since its birth in 1971)? The young nation is being denied the correct political leadership at the national level (no political consensus).

It appears that the two powerful Begums of the two major political parties cannot live without each other; without mud-slinging at all stages, and at all times. If one were absent, the other Begum would be floating rudderless, losing concentration. The static situation might have

Expulsion of Bhuiyan

The condition of expelled secretary general of BNP, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is critical. He is on life support at Square Hospital after his return from Singapore and kept in the ICU in "unconscious and breathlessness condition". He is in fact in a coma and provided with artificial life support. Now he is not even in a condition to breathe naturally. He could not be served with chemotherapy due to such health condition.

He has been suffering from lung cancer and was under treatment at Singapore National University Hospital.

His physical condition is still grave as learned from media quoting the physicians. Different political leaders of different parties including the BNP have visited the ailing veteran leader at the hospital. BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain has also visited his predecessor and wished his early recovery.

He was expelled from his post and primary membership by the party chairperson Khaleda Zia just before she was arrested by the then caretaker government in September 2007. His expulsion raises many questions as it was not done according to the rules and discipline of the party. Even he was not served with any notice or asked for any explanation. He was not given any opportunity for self-defence. It contradicts the principle of natural justice.

However, some of the BNP leaders have shown their anxiousness about their former leader's health condition and proposed the party chief to withdraw her decision. The BNP should be generous to Bhuiyan considering his contribution to the party for a long time.

Ferdous Rahman
Coordinator
Media for Development

Vawal Express

The Vawal Express starts from Kamalapur Railway Station at 11:00 pm for Dewanganj via Mymensingh and Jamalpur town. Late running of this train has become a regular feature nowadays. Many service holders go to Melanda, Islampur and Dewanganj upazila by this train. The train becomes over crowded every day. The helpless passengers complete their journey with great difficulty. The most problematic thing is that the passengers who collect tickets have to travel without seat. No TC or TTE are seen in the train. If they do their duty the passengers with tickets could make their journey with comfort. On the other hand, the government could get a lot of revenue from ticket selling.

The Bangladesh Railway authorities should address the issue.

Md. Masud Hassan
Dewanpara, Jamalpur

Save Bangshi

The river Bangshi, situated in Savar and Dhamrai, plays an important role for the areas concerned. Many people depend on this river for their livelihood. But it is a matter of great regret that this river is being polluted by toxic industrial waste. This poisonous water, which emerges from garment factories, is a serious threat to this river. The river's water has turned blackish.

The fishes of this river have died. Due to toxic water, the production of crops has been hampered. Yet, the necessary steps have not been taken to save the river. I would like to request the authorities con-

MP sued

The Daily Star carried an editorial on 11 July under the headline "An MP sued by police sergeant". The paper called it 'unprecedented' maybe, but fully justified'. The editorial was concluded saying that "If the case that has been lodged against the MP is

Speculation

Just a joke. Do not take it as any political story. Just assume that the WC final was between

Veil and Islam

To say something about the veil system of Islam we should firstly know where it is mentioned and know in detail about it. The Holy Quran speaks about the veil for women in Sura Al-noon, verse 31, which is, in a nutshell-- all body should be covered, the only parts which can be seen are wrist of the hands and face, even face can be covered if anybody wants, though it is not mandatory. And the reason of the veil for women is mentioned in the Holy Quran in Sura Ahzab, in the verse no 59, where Allah, who knows best which things will be best for human being, says that, it, the veil, will protect them from being molested. Veil is also mentioned in the Christian scripture, Hindu scripture, and many other religious scriptures.

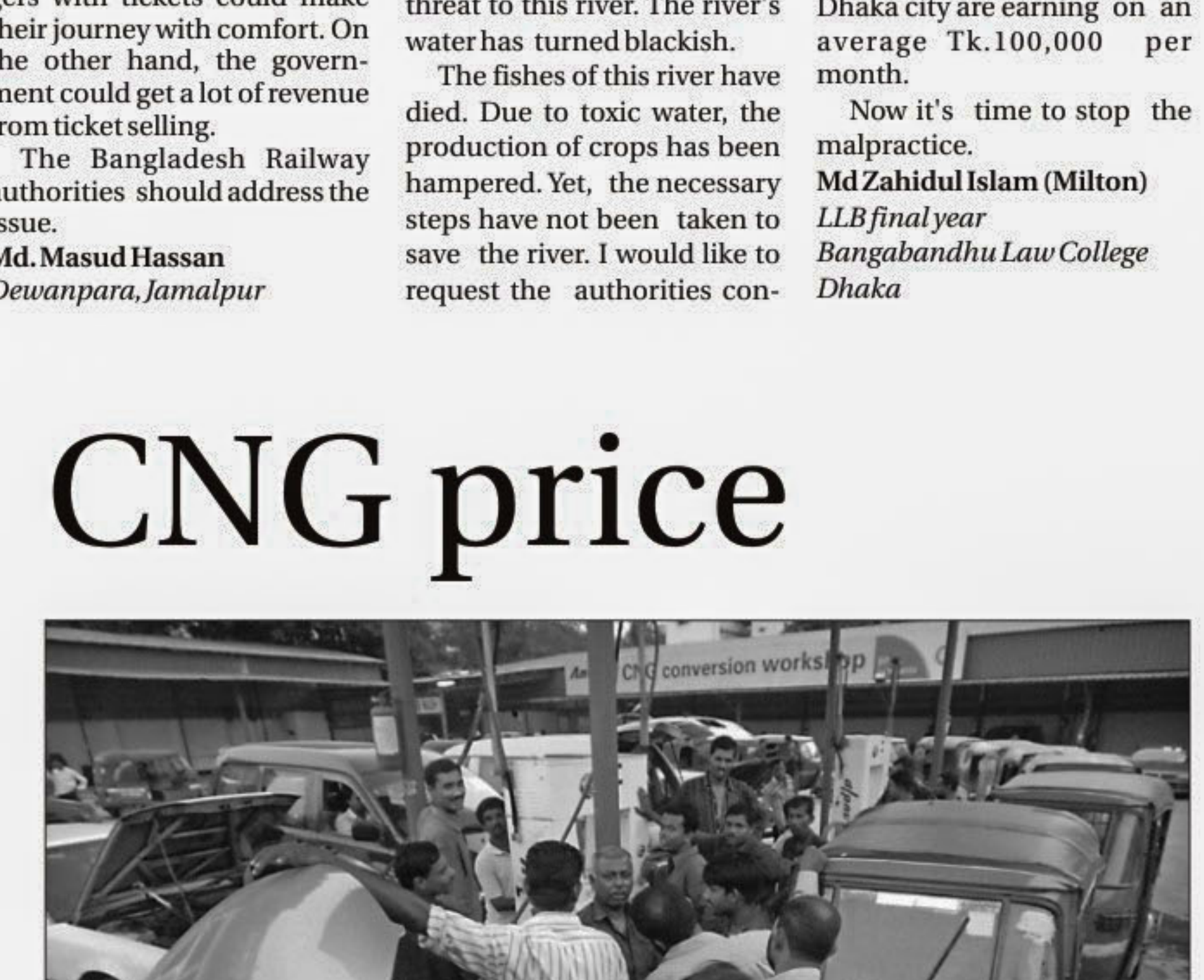
Veil is one of the commandments of Allah and for a true Muslim woman wearing a burqa is a basic human right. Veil which protects women can never be an obstacle to progress.

Md Nazrul Islam
Jr Executive
Sales & Merchandising
KDS Garment Industries Ltd.
Chittagong

Stop eve teasing

It is a matter of great regret that the anti-social activities are going beyond control. Especially, there has been a sharp increase in eve teasing. Already, the authorities have taken some steps to contain it, but those are not enough. So, the government should think in terms of tough action against eve teasers.

Md. Naseruddin
Dhanmondi, Dhaka



Polybags & environment



In 2002, the government banned the production and use of polybags in our country. Unfortunately, polybags are being widely used again everywhere. Now, we are using a huge amount of polybags daily and then throwing those into drains. Polybags block the flow of drain water. So, the drainage systems of our big city like Dhaka and

Chittagong are blocked in the rainy season due to polybags. Polybags are also a threat to our environment and agriculture.

We can use recyclable paper bags.

Md. Tanvir Rahman
Dept of Management Studies
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The government is thinking of doubling the present price of CNG. If the decision is implemented it would be extremely detrimental to environment of Dhaka metropolitan city as well as a bad sign for investors. Environmentally, CNG is known as a cleaner fuel. In order to save Dhaka Metropolitan city from the menace of environmental degradation, CNG was commercially introduced in 2001. The job was not easy. It took RPGCL, a company of Petrobangla, about 20 years of relentless efforts to popularize CNG in the country. A lot of concessions like low price of CNG as an automobile fuel, 100% duty free import of equipment of CNG stations, allotment of government land etc were given by the government to attract private investors in this sector which was hitherto controlled by the government. The sector grew at a faster rate with the active participation of private investors. More than one billion dollars of investment has been in the sector which is

now established on a sound footing. The result is a cleaner environment of Dhaka city which we could not imagine had not CNG been introduced as an automotive fuel. The economic benefit was also tremendous. With the consumption of about only 100 mmcf of gas per day as CNG in the automobiles (which is only 5% of total gas consumption in the country) more than 1 billion dollar worth of foreign exchange is being saved every year in terms reduction of import of liquid hydrocarbon fuel because of use of CNG. Our government is also conscious about environment and it is hard to believe that they will take any decision which will encourage people to go back to use of liquid fuels to run automotive vehicles at the cost of such a hard earned cleaner environment of Dhaka city.

Engr. Abdul Wadud
Former MD, RPGCL
Dhaka

CNG price