

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.

## Golf champion



The whole world recognizes us as a disaster-prone country, rather than applauding as an industrious and brave one. A few brave-hearted and noble men have shown our indomitable spirit. Noble Laureate Dr Yunus, Avest hero Musa Ibrahim are among the few names who spread the news of average Bangladeshis' pride.

Now once again, Siddiqur Rahman, a golfer, has made us proud.

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

## Errors in exam papers

The preliminary test of 30th BCS was held on July 30. There were three sets of questions. The set number 2 was full of errors. But on August 01, the Public Service Commission (PSC) claimed that it was not their mistake and they would be careful about students' rights. There were more than 50 thousand students who answered the questions of set number 2. There was no trace of creative questions in the question paper. We don't understand why PSC is wasting our time. They are too careless to think about 148 thousand candidates.

PSC should take the preliminary test again as soon as possible.

Usama Khalid  
One-mail

## Pakistani flood victims

Heavy monsoon rains triggered a devastating flood in Pakistan. More than two thousand people were reportedly killed and there occurred widespread destruction of houses, bridges, schools, roads, railway tracks and communication networks. Outbreak of cholera and other waterborne diseases made the situation even worse. Pakistan government appealed for help from the international community.

Due to one of the complex water management systems in the world and the negligence of the then government, floods and cyclones used to devastate East Pakistan regularly. In the years 1954, 1955, 1956, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1970 and 1971 flood situation was severe in East Pakistan. However, the sufferings of East Pakistani people drew no positive response from the common people of West Pakistan or from the central government in the capital Karachi/ Islamabad. Prior flood/cyclone warnings were deliberately delayed and foreign aid were diverted and utilized in West Pakistan. In the eyes of average West Pakistanis, East Pakistan (Bengal) was associated with

flood, famine, unemployment, backwardness, etc. and often people in the West amused themselves by jeering at the people of East, saying 'never-ending Bengal floods' etc.

In 1971 Bangladesh earned independence after a 9-month-long bloody liberation war. Over the years the situation gradually changed. Independent Bangladesh is now better prepared for controlling floods. The country is almost self-sufficient in food and almost all major socio-economic indicators are positive. On the other hand, terrorism, civil war turned Pakistan into a failed state. It is obvious that Pakistan alone cannot cope with the current flood and post-flood situation. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina should send emergency aid for millions of Pak flood victims as a good gesture from Bangladesh.

M. Emad  
Oxford, UK

## Trial of war criminals

The ruling party has started the trial of war criminals. We appreciate this very much. But, are all war criminals involved with just one particular party? Then, why did the Awami League work together with the Jamaat-e-Islami to oust the then ruling party (BNP)?

Samsunnahar Sheuly  
Fultala, Khulna

## History of BP

The history of the company we now call BP over the last hundred years has really traced the arc of global transactional capitalism. The Anglo-Persian oil company, guaranteed itself, or won the right to own, all of Iran's oil. So, nobody in Iran had any right to drill for oil or extract oil or sell oil.

Then, the British government decided to buy the company. So, Parliament passed a law and bought 51 percent of that company. And all during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, the entire standard of living that people in England enjoyed was supported by oil from Iran. So, that became a

fundamental foundation of British life.

After World War II, when the winds of nationalism and anti-colonialism were blowing throughout the developing world, Iranians developed this idea: "we've got to take our oil back." It was Mosaddegh's desire, supported by a unanimous vote of the democratically elected parliament of Iran, to nationalise what was then the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

The British and their partners in the United States fiercely resisted this. And when they were unable to prevent it from happening, they organised the overthrow of Mosaddegh in 1953. So that overthrow not only produced the end of the Mosaddegh government, but the end of democracy in Iran, and that set off all these other following consequences.

Ted Rudow III, MA  
One-mail

## Export ranking

A report on the subject published on July 25th in your pages appears rather confusing, because of the use of the word "followed by" in the sentence which I quote: "Bangladesh secured the fourth position in terms of value followed by (!) China, EU-27 countries and Turkey, said the report."

Properly constructed, the sentence should have had the word "preceded", rather than "followed", to clarify that Bangladesh was fourth from the top! For correct interpretation, it becomes clear only after you read the next sentence, which gives the export values in US dollars.

The expression "followed by" usually refers to a lower ranking in that context.

S.A. Mansoor  
Dhaka

## Philosophy of change!

Hats off to Mohammad Badrul Ahsan for presenting the real-life philosophy in a very lucid manner (The Daily Star: July 30/10). However, to me it's not the Slot Machine Philosophy. As a matter of fact, it's the Philosophy of Fate. No one knows why a rich man becomes poor all of a sudden despite his hard labour coupled with intelligence and capability; no one also can explain as to why a poor person without even much effort becomes affluent almost overnight. Of course, "Behind every riches, there is a crime." But no riches are permanent. If the father and the grandfather are rich, there is no surety that their descendants would be as rich or they may even be reduced to stark poverty. You may also call this the philosophy of change and in the cosmic perspective, it is said that "the change is always better."

Hafeezul Alam  
One-mail

## Tourism in Bangladesh

We have got the largest sea beach in the world. But the number of tourists visiting is very few because of lack of modern facilities, and most importantly, lack of advertisements. The Sundarbans is one of the largest mangrove forests in the world which is enriched with 334 different species of trees. This is another hot spot for Bangladesh to earn huge amount of money. Kuakata is blessed by the Almighty,

where the sun rise and sun set can be seen from the same place. The Saat Gombuj Masjid is a masterpiece and a brilliant example of old architecture. There are many mosques, temples and old castles which need renovation and preservation. These places should be made attractive for the tourists.

Md Mahbubur Rahman  
An old town resident

## Ground zero mosque

The initiators affirmed that they have undertaken the project of building a mosque near the Ground Zero site as a part of the Cordova Complex with a noble intention to improve Muslim-West relations and to promote integration, tolerance of differences and community cohesion.

The Ground Zero mosque construction plan has sparked a strong debate among the New Yorkers putting them in divided opinion streams, one in favour and another against.

According to the opponents, execution of the Ground Zero Mosque construction plan will interfere the peace and the healing process of the shock and pain the Americans had sustained following terrorist attack on twin-towers in which so many innocent people were killed.

Meanwhile, some important personalities including Michael Bloomberg have reportedly defended the project while Sarah Palin together with many others opposed construction of the said mosque.

Well, one of the strongest and basic foundations of American democracy is the religious freedom. The Initiators of the Ground Zero Mosque construction project have noble intentions which is based on the ethical values of Islam, a religion which urges the followers to put maximum emphasis on maintenance of peace in the society through ensuring peaceful living with the followers of other religions. Islam never supports cowardly act of terrorism and killing of innocent people. Islam is explicit about one thing, that is, there is no compulsion over choosing one's religion, it is one's own choice.

It is sincerely hoped that the dispute will be resolved through a peaceful dialogue. Professor M Zahidul Haque Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University Dhaka

## Auto bike

A few days ago I read a reader's letter about the "auto bike", electricity powered tricycle, in DS. It focused on the environment friendly aspect of "auto bike". Indeed, it is neither environment friendly nor energy efficient. On the other hand, it is increasing our electricity problem. I am a little worried about it as its number is increasing very rapidly because of its low price and subsidised price of electricity.

Masud Rana  
Program officer of Appropriate Technology Research Centre  
Menonite Central Committee  
Bangladesh  
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

## Dhaka-Aricha road

Sudden death of an able and earning member of a family brings not only endless sufferings to the concerned family but it also causes a great economic loss to the nation.

# Combating corruption

Corruption in Bangladesh has assumed such large proportions and variegated forms that large numbers of the public have come to believe that it is impossible to get rid of this malaise. In such an atmosphere of pervasive cynicism, one of the things that the guide repeatedly emphasizes - and quite correctly - is that the scourge can be managed or controlled. Other countries have been notoriously corrupt in the past but have succeeded in tackling the problem through a mixture of administrative and electoral reform. But in a country which struggles under the gigantic burden of corruption and struggles to find a way to overcome its oppressive weight, any step towards giving the still-nascent

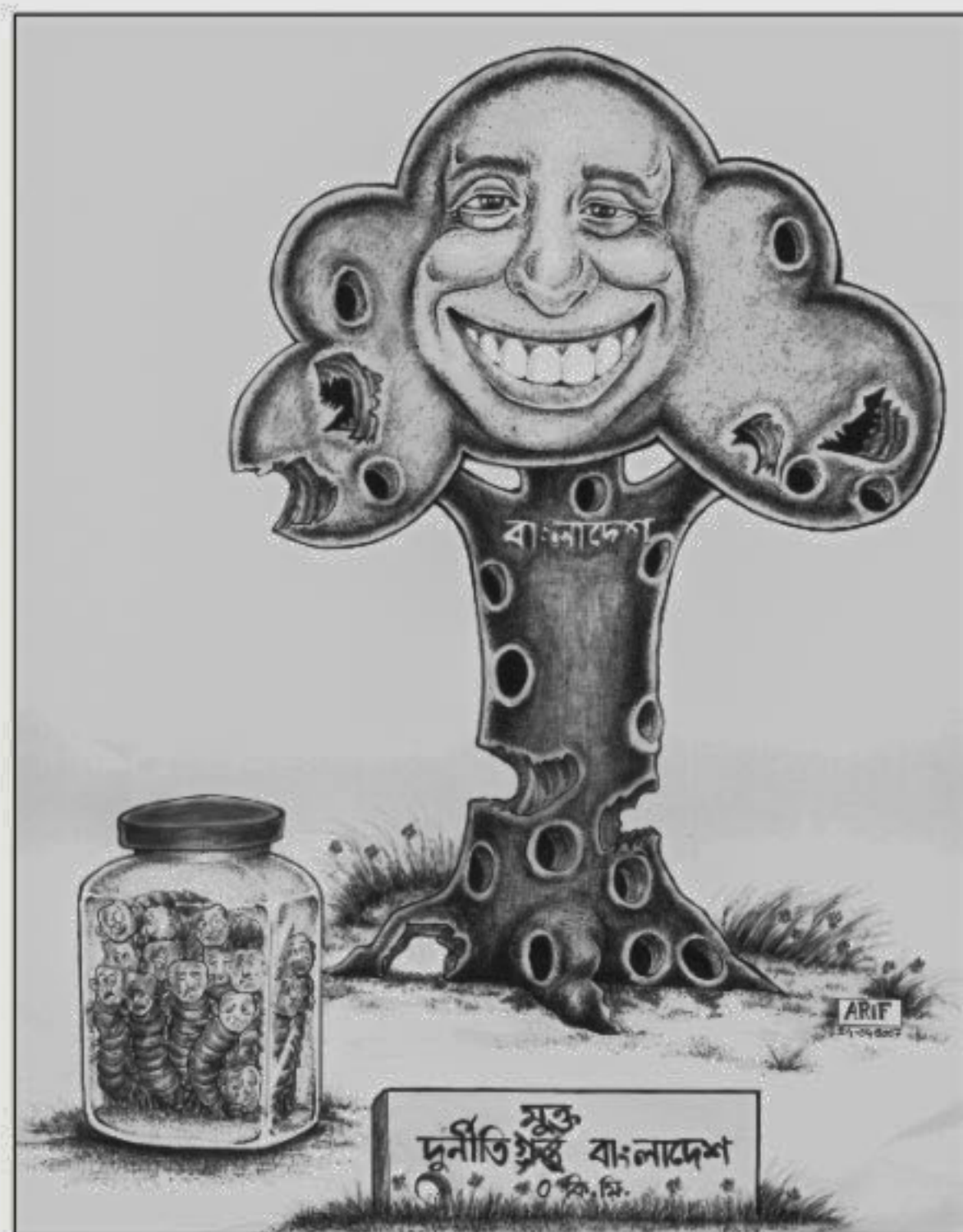
anti-corruption movement a fillip deserves to be warmly commended. The media reports and editorials acknowledge the need for a variety of strategies to fight corruption, ranging from general measures such as the simplification of rules and procedures and the application of information technology to specific steps such as trapping corrupt public servants. While agencies such as the ACC can play a vital role, any comprehensive strategy to combat corruption would have to involve other bodies such as NGOs and the print and electronic media.

Wide publicity should be given to it and copies must be made available to the public on demand. It is shocking to learn that India is one of the most corrupt countries in the world; more corrupt than Somalia and Afghanistan. At the other end of the scale was Somalia, which barely qualifies as a nation given its non-stop civil wars and economy based mostly on spectacular acts of piracy.

Corruption is a fixture in countries like Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco and Pakistan, where 60% of executives surveyed reported having been solicited for a bribe. Transparency International figures bribes consume an estimated \$20 billion to \$40 billion a year worldwide, money that could be used for productive investment and jobs.

Although it may hurt the pride to admit it, Bangladesh is one of the most corrupt countries on the world map. The latest Corruption Perception Index conducted by Transparency International, a Berlin-based NGO which conducts an annual survey which attempts to aggregate perceptions of corruption within countries, ranks Bangladesh a lowly 139 out of a list of 180 nations. The war against corruption is formidable and not going to be easy to win. Wherever government money is spent or collected there should be tight scrutiny.

Gopal Sengupta  
Canada



Moreover, the passengers become reluctant to move through two way roads jeopardising economic activities of the country including tourism. Rough statistics show that more than 10,000 people die in accidents in Bangladesh every year. Most of them are able and earning persons. Only the economists can figure out the national loss of the country out of their immature deaths. Since long, Dhaka Aricha road has been marked as a death trap.

However, after opening of the Bangabandhu Bridge the number of incidents on the road has diminished as the pressure of traffic has been reduced. But the recent accident which took the lives of two top bureaucrats (Mrs. Razia Begum, Secretary to the government and Mr Siddiqur Rahman, Chairman, BISCIC) jolted the whole nation. We have seen that the number of accidents from Gabtoli to Savar has come down because of the road divider. Many hoped and demanded that the whole road be marked by a divider, but it did not happen. If there had been a divider on the road, we might not have lost our two top bureaucrats (of course, God is the only saviour).

Md Abdul Matin  
Trishal, Mymensingh

## Accounts of political parties

Every organisation needs money for conducting its activities. Political organisations/ parties need a huge amount of money, no doubt, for different functions and activities.

We hear that our political parties live on donations / subscriptions from the members and other wealthy people. Is this money legal in the eyes of our law and ethics? Many people complain that

they have to pay such money out of fear. And so, they do not disclose it in public.

All political parties get a huge amount of money but they do not maintain the records properly. So, there remains the question of transparency. Do the donors show these money in their tax files?

The Election Commission has framed a rule for submitting the 'Receipts and Expenditure Account' of all parties by the end of July every year. This year many parties have submitted their respective account with the EC. But I think mere submission of a statement will not produce any fruitful results. All political parties should maintain their Cash Books, Ledgers etc and they should be audited properly. The responsible person(s) of parties must be fined and/or jailed for any major irregularity.

Rashid Harun  
Dhaka

## Foreign managers

This is in response to a letter published in 1st August issue of The Daily Star entitled "Foreign Managers" by Syed Intiaz Ali. Mr. Ali stated that most large MNC's operating in the country have foreign managers at the top level of management. He also was surprised that local business schools aren't producing good managers who are at par with their foreign peers. It's true that we have foreign staff at the helm of most of the big multinational corporations and consultants operating in the country. Before I begin I would like to state that I have completed my business degree in one of the reputed private universities and internship in one of the large telecom companies.

Analysing and studying various business journals, articles and the profiles of top

CEO's, CFO's, financial analysts and managers, during my course work I would like to shed some light here. First of all, our education system is not capable of producing graduates and managers to run, operate and manage large corporations as we see in the US, Europe and the developed world. What will you expect from students who come from different educational backgrounds who can have their MBA's completed in our universities without having any work experience, English proficiency, and leadership qualities? In reputed business schools around the world these are very important admission criteria for students to get enrolled in their MBA programs and other professional courses. I have seen students from social science, English and other non-business background in their bachelors not to mention poor English language proficiency doing MBA's, ACCA and other professional courses. What can you expect from these students in the long run? I know we have relaxed rules due to our social, cultural and financial reasons. It's sad yet true.

Our managers and graduates simple don't have that kind of expertise, experience, knowledge and integrity to be at the helm of these global corporations. Our managers and graduates don't have that kind of knowledge and business communication techniques to deal with these corporations and the outside world.

Let's face it, we will not have the opportunity to see a locally educated, trained and experienced CEO to lead a Fortune 500 company in near future. I would like the readers to comment.

Al Mamun  
Chittagong

## Reckless driving

I was a passenger of Volvo AC bus that departed from Cox's Bazar on 31 July 2010 at 12.15:pm for Dhaka which reached Dhaka at 2.00am on 01 Aug 2010. The driver drove the bus recklessly and roughly throughout the whole journey. His driving was threatening to other smaller vehicles and even pedestrians on the highway. His overtaking of other vehicles was dangerous. Many times he crossed the middle line demarcation and drove the bus on the right-hand side track of the road. He compelled the other vehicles coming from opposite direction to go out of the road while he was overtaking others. He always put us at a vulnerable situation and at life risk. He raised my heart-beat. The supervisor did not prevent him from reckless driving even after repeated requests. Once I requested the driver also, but he did not comply.

The most dangerous part was that the driver drove an AC bus to Cox's Bazar the night before and after one or two hours of sleep he was again assigned to drive another trip to Dhaka. This is stressful even for a professional driver. Moreover, they dropped one passenger in the middle of the highway somewhere near Mirsarai and spent much time to offload his luggage. This created a temporary jam which was annoying for traffic on both ways and the passengers inside the bus.

We prefer to travel by Greenline at a high cost because of safe driving by experienced drivers and latest good quality AC buses for their security and comfort. As such, I would request the company to investigate the matter, observe such drivers, and strictly prevent them from reckless driving. Frequent refresher training of drivers and supervisors, strict vigilance, and giving at least 18 hours rest before night duty will enhance service quality and our security and comfort. HS Ahmed, One-mail

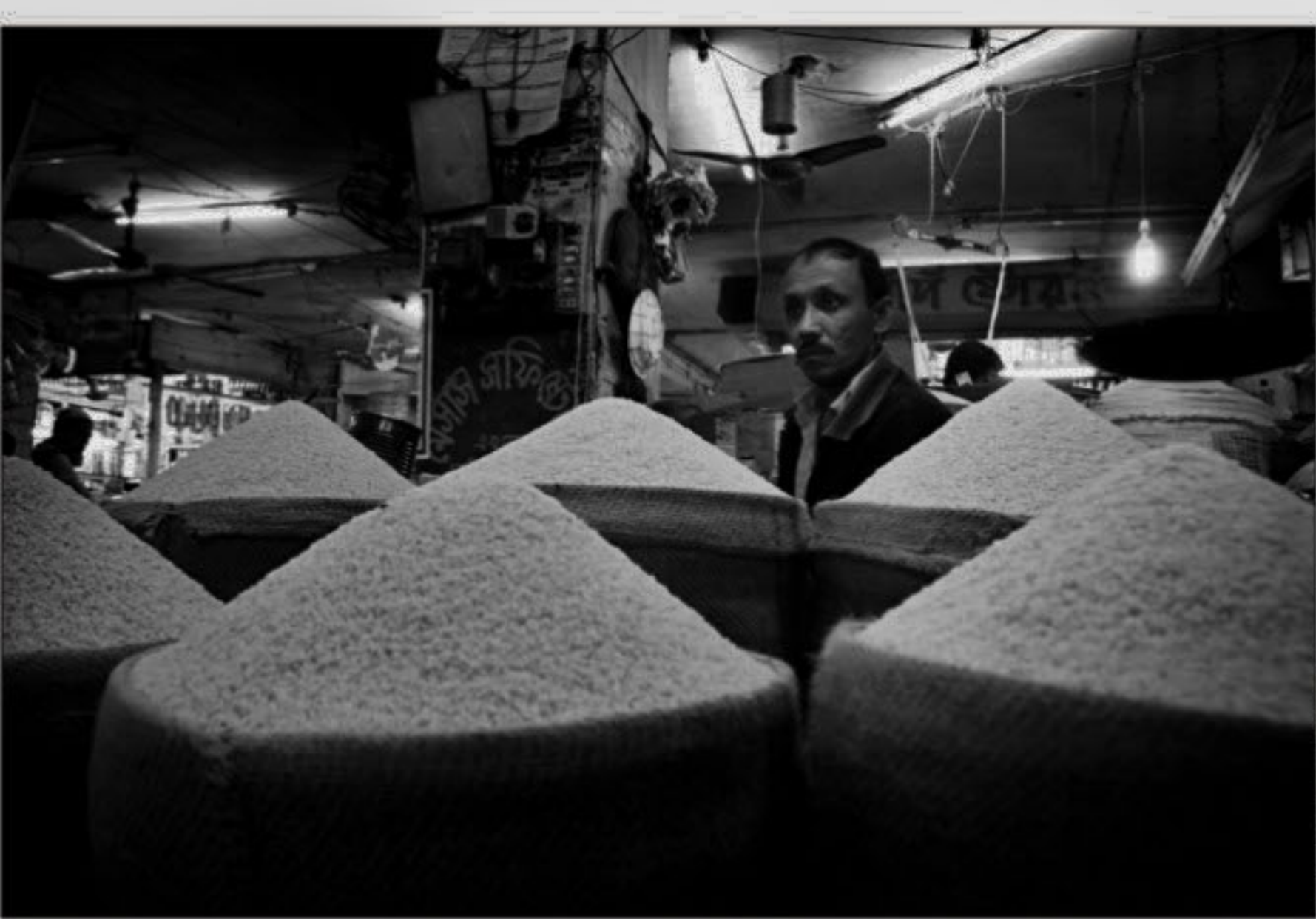
## Flawless planning needed

It has been found that Traffic Congestion causes Tk.19,555/- crore loss a year, besides mental and physical sufferings of the people. We have forgotten that there was arrangement at Natore town for the seating of parliament. There is no more time to waste in starting genuine projects to free Dhaka of traffic congestion.

The foremost need is flawless planning for right projects and proper, quick & economical execution of those by suitable persons. Not only traffic jam, crowd is everywhere, causing national wastage of time, money and energy. The root cause is just a single one: reluctance to learn, giving rise to unwillingness to work and indifference to birth control, consequently the population explosion, causing all problems.

An old inhabitant, Dhaka

# Prices of rice



While I was browsing some Bangla dailies on Aug 2, I found a headline reading "Khaleda demands Tk.10/- per Kg rice during the month of Ramadan for the people. This call from a popular and a compassionate leader like her has got wide media coverage. I believe people of Bangladesh must have been very happy to see her compassion for them. I also thank her for her sympathy to the people during the fasting month and also her religious feelings. My thanks to her are pre-judged and may not hold good if her call is not found genuine and has not been done out of real feelings for the people.

The world has changed a lot. The people of Bangladesh have also acquired a lot of knowledge on

politics, democracy, election and their rights as a citizen. Old thoughts and old words are not workable any more in the Bangladesh market. Now the politicians should speak something from ground reality. I think, Begum Zia has not done that. Before making this demand, I believe, she did not survey the ground and possibility of her demand being fulfilled by any government.

Let me give a brief survey. I have lot of relatives and old friends who are directly involved in agriculture. May be the BNP men are not well aware about the present situation but my relatives who are directly involved in growing rice and other agricultural products know very well the cost involved in producing

a kilogram of rice in rural Bangladesh. A day labourer costs Tk.150.00 to 200 per day. Then come irrigation, fertilizers, ploughing, carrying, husking and marketing. According to them, a kilogram of grain before husking costs the farmer Tk.16/- to 18/- and a complete kilo of coarse variety of rice at the mill gate costs taka 20/- plus. Let us forget about the imported ones, a miller cannot sell his rice at less than taka 21/- per kg.

So, according to my judgement she has not put her demand out of feelings for the people, she has put it simply for politics. Now I have a good suggestion for her to earn people's support.

Shafiqul Islam, NY