

Dodgy doctors

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, while inaugurating the World Breastfeeding Week-2010, issued a warning that the government would take stern action against the doctors who would not attend duties at the rural hospitals regularly. In this regard she also said, "All government servants get salaries from the taxes paid by the general mass and hence cannot ignore the common people's rights".

The prime minister is very right in her statement and this is what everyone expects. But to say something in an inaugural ceremony is not enough to make it happen. We regularly see and hear the prime minister and her high profile Ministers telling big things in the media and hardly find those words reflecting in deeds. This is true from easing traffic jams to control prices of essential commodities. Now a days, finding that nothing tangible is happening, the high judiciary is giving direct orders to government functionaries to do specific things for public interest such as marking the rivers boundaries around Dhaka, cross-fire killings, environment related issues etc. But the general people notice with extreme worry that even the High Court's

instructions are probably falling in deaf ears.

Prior to issuing any instruction to correct any non-compliance, the authorities should look into the root causes. Say, in this case of dodgy doctors, the concerned ministry and directorate should find the reasons why the doctors are not attending their duties in village hospitals. I know some cases of the recently appointed medical officers on ad-hoc basis. My daughter who hails from Shibpur upazila under Narsingdi district has been posted



WAHID AHMAN / DRINKNEWS

in Kashiani upazila under Gopalganj. Her husband works in a multinational bank having no work-station outside Dhaka. My daughter has no objection to serve in upazila level but her present posting has become a big challenge for her. I know two other doctors who are husband and wife and have been posted in two upazilas apart from each other by 300 kms. What is the rationale behind such postings of the new appointees?

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur R/A, Khulna

School fees

Thanks to our government, especially our education minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid for taking the initiative to cut down VAT from private university students. This is indeed a great relief for their parents who find it quite difficult to defray their educational fees in most of the cases. I would now request our government to monitor the fees in English medium schools as they are charging fees at high rate with additional VAT. There is no policy amongst those English Medium Schools and as a result everybody is charging fees as per their wishes. Adding to this headache another additional cost is bus fare. Many schools have moved to Uttara, Ashulia and other distant places which have allowed the school authorities to charge a handsome amount as bus fares. Schools are charging full bus fare even when the school is open for 5/6 days in some months. I, as a parent, am finding it quite amazing to see that nobody is monitoring this increased fees and fares. Education should not be a business. I hope somebody will pay heed to this problem.

Hasib
A concerned parent
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Parliament and politics

From the beginning, the activities of ninth parliament have been paralysed on one ground or the other. Initially, the opposition stalled the proceedings over the issue of controversial attitude of the ruling party or the speaker. The hallmark of an effective parliamentarian now seems to be the ability to shout and disrupt proceedings. The practice is to completely paralyse any discussion in parliament if the opposition is agitated about any particular subject. The practice of repeatedly obstructing the proceedings in parliament is most regrettable and defeats the very purpose for which the legislature exists.

Under our constitution, the three pillars of the government are the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary. The Legislature is perhaps the most important branch; it makes laws and guides the destiny of the country. The Executive implements the laws, while the Judiciary interprets them. Badly drafted laws lead to administrative chaos and generate avoidable litigation. It is vitally necessary that important enactments are

discussed in detail before they become the laws of the country. Similarly, government policy, howsoever controversial, requires dispassionate debate and cold facts, and logic must prevail over emotional rhetoric.

The leaders of the respective political parties are squarely to blame for the pathetic state of affairs. If they want to make the coming session of Parliament, beginning on August 16, a meaningful one, they must completely prohibit walkouts, shouting or any disruption of the House proceedings. Paralyzing parliamentary proceedings does not solve any problem in the long run, it will only affect the credibility of parliament as an institution.

It is also high time that the Speaker exercises his power to suspend unruly members so that some dignity and decorum is restored. The running of parliament casts a heavy burden on the taxpayer. The legislators must conduct themselves in a responsible manner and discharge their constitutional obligations. It is fervently hoped that the coming session will be a witness to a new era where skilful debates and meaningful discussions replace the shouting and walkouts that marred

the earlier session this year. The Speaker should ensure that members of parliament maintain the dignity and decorum expected of them. The legislators must also conduct themselves in a responsible manner and discharge their constitutional obligations. Looking at the parliamentary proceedings of present times, it appears that our parliamentarians believe in the principle of 'survival of the loudest'.
Gopal Sengupta
Canada

'Digital' Bangladesh

It has been a tradition of leaking question papers, delay in response from govt. employers, errors in question papers, taking more than a year to set question papers and hold recruitment exams, publishing results etc. But the concerned ministries and the ministers pay very little heed in this regard so far. The recently postponed Secondary School Teacher recruitment is an example. How long does it take the experts to set a question paper? I think the more time they take the more chance of leaking and corruption increases. Some public banks advertised in 2009 i.e. Sonali Bank, Ansar VDP Unnayan Bank and we applied as usual still we see no sign of taking exams. It has been more than two months that Rupali Bank exams were held for Officer and Senior Officer Recruitment. Though their process was much easier than other public banks but the result is yet to be published.

Will anybody look into the matter?
Nurul Aziz
Chittagong

Thanks to BTRC

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has finally decided to reduce the charge for the SMS services of the mobile service companies (Star Business: 6.8.10). We would like to thank the BTRC and the government for this step in the interest of the 58 millions users of the cell phones. The cell users generally prefer to use SMS mainly for privacy and facilities of sending the same message to myriad receivers. I know some people who use SMS for documentation for future references. The decision of reducing the cost to as little as Tk. 50 is a timely step, indeed.

The government at the same time decided to ask the operators to explain the cryptic "conditions applied" to any new packages. It is surprising that the operators used to advertise any new lucrative packages but never advertise when they cease the facilities. The BTRC may think of introducing the system whereby the operators will have to announce/advertise when any packages are closed.
Nazia Afrin
Shekhertek, Muhammadpur
Dhaka

Private car

This is in regard to a letter on the issue written by Mr. Md. Mahabubur Rahman. He reasoned his article with a simple solution that dwellers of Dhaka city should opt for private cars instead of travelling like a chimpanzee on the bus and risk their precious lives. I do agree with the writer but I would also like to remind him that he may have forgotten the per capita income of the people of this country and also the living pattern, financial ability and spaces that are needed to keep these private cars. I would therefore request our road transport authorities to introduce more private buses on the roads in order to alleviate the sufferings of the general public and improve the traffic problems of the city. It is also important to mention that the government must adopt a policy such as "one car one family" instead of having 3/4 car per family and if this policy is properly maintained the influx of private cars will minimize substantially on the roads, or, otherwise, very soon the country will be running out of the much needed gas.

Humayun Hyder
Zigatola, Dhaka

Hypocrisy

Everyone knows very well what this word means. None of us like this, we all detest it. Yet, we are no exceptions. We say we love animals and then we take away their home and build a big mansion where we probably will never live. When we do we may be branded as hypocrites. The word doesn't sound very nice, but it's true.
Tasnia Zaman
Dhaka

Strengthen local government

To consolidate democracy, it's very much necessary to exercise it from the grassroots level like Union Parishad and in this regard the government should strengthen the local government through democratic activities like election which should be guided and governed in the name of the political parties. So, in all walks of life people can participate in the political process in order to practise democracy.

The recent declaration by the minister of the respective department as well as the General Secretary of Awami League Syed Ashrafur Islam is very much significant and timely too that in future all local elections will be held in the name of the political party. People will be politically educated and they will be more conscious to cast their votes observing the roles of the candidates.

In this case, I need to emphasize the qualification of the upcoming local elections candidates and I would request the authorities to take the necessary steps to fix up the minimum education for the Union Parishad Chairman, so that the honest and educated people will be interested and they can put their best effort to strengthen the local government process. In this case, the election campaign system should be changed to blunt the clout of money.
Md Zahidul Islam
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Three-lane traffic system

Re-launching of three-lane traffic system by Dhaka Metropolitan Police has again bogged down with more traffic jams.

This is not surprising. In a country where the majority of drivers are uneducated and the educated ones do not also have any common sense, it is a futile attempt to introduce three-lane system without any concrete plans.

What DMP should do is erect concrete dividers about knee high on experimental basis on lanes on a stretch of road, say, from airport to Banani. All vehicles should enter these lanes as per instructions displayed before the entrance in lanes.

I think this is the only way left to teach the silly and dumb drivers. If these lanes with dividers are kept for a couple of years the drivers may develop the habit of using lanes.
Ziauddin Ahmed
Gulshan - 1, Dhaka

Clinical pharmacy

In general, the responsibility of a doctor is to identify the exact cause of disease and prescribing drug to treat the disease. After that, the responsibility of clinical pharmacist is to check drug interaction, any prior hypersensitivity to prescribed multiple drugs, giving instructions on when & how to use drugs and advising on safe & rational use of drug. Although, in our country doctors do their task properly but the patient cannot get proper instructions of above mentioned from a graduate (registered) clinical pharmacist. So, inappropriate use of drug causes the treatment failure in our country while the same prescription of drugs in other countries results in cure of disease. In my practical experience, a physician prescribed flucloxacillin 500mg tablet (Generic name) 4 times a day without mentioning the time of taking drug (because he is busy identifying disease). As usual, patient took this drug after meal & there was no benefit from this drug because the absorption of flucloxacillin is almost zero if taken after meal (it must be taken at least 30 minutes before meal). These types of situations including drug interactions & hypersensitivity occur in silence due to no job facilities of graduate pharmacist in hospital or clinic.

The government should take necessary steps for establishment of clinical pharmacy practice to ensure better healthcare.

Md. Abu Monsur Dinar
Department of Pharmacy
BGC Trust University

Video piracy

Video piracy has become a common issue that frequently affect the film as well as music industries. While we walk along the road we see some people busy selling a large number of CDs, DVDs to the passers-by. Naturally the question arises in our mind whether products are pirated. Historically, we the Bangladeshis are fond of film and music since the inception of 1971 when these contributed to a lot of to inspire the people to lay down their lives to snatch away the red sun of freedom. But today it is a matter of great regret that piracy has grabbed the whole film and music industries to such an extent that these industries are passing through a critical time to survive. There are many film producers who are making outstanding works with their talents and skills. But when piracy obstructs the way to commercialising the films, they lose all hopes and aspirations. Similarly music industries are being victimized by some unethical groups who are running their business countrywide destroying the growing future of music industry. It is acknowledged that some people freely download the audio or video file on the Internet. Afterwards, they produce many copies without



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An incredible player

Sri Lankan spin wizard Muttiah Muralitharan, the planet's leading wicket taker and one of the finest exponents of spin bowling, lately announced his retirement from Test cricket, bringing an end to a dazzling career spanning 18 years.

He is the first bowler ever to take 800 wickets in Test cricket. Although World's leading wicket-taker and champion spinner Muttiah Muralitharan has decided to retire from Test cricket, he will continue playing in ODI.

There is no denying that Muralitharan is one of the most successful bowlers in the history of the game but controversies were an integral part of his successful career. However, his performance goes beyond everything. What a player the cricket world has witnessed!!

Shohag Mostafij
MBA (Strategic & International management)
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authorization. As a result, genuine consumers don't feel encouraged to go for the genuine products. Meanwhile the ministry of information and technology has taken up some steps to stop this practice. But there is no fruitful result that has yet come. I want to draw the attention of the respective authorities to take stern action against the culprits.
Eng. Md. Mehebab Haque
BUET

Disgraceful

A young woman-- captured during protest against tuition fee hike-- hemmed in by some police, being roughed up by truncheon mercilessly, while some other policemen are watching and grinning from afar! What a disturbing and abominable picture we had to see (The Daily Star: 3.8.10) in a country we love to call civilised!

Raisa
Shekhertek
Mohammadpur
Dhaka

Rickshaw issue

My old friend, Mr Rahat of Malibagh has once again resurrected himself (DS 2/8/2010) after a long time, but as in numerous other letters before, he has nothing new to say except repeating his old bias BAN RICKSHAWS.

He is "outraged and appalled" that I had the temerity to appeal to Their Lordships of the Supreme and High Courts in my letter in DS on 17 May 2010, to intercede on behalf of the 3 lakh rickshaws (providing livelihood to 20-25 lakh rickshaw related families) that carry about 50 lakh Dhakabashis every day. They are illegally denied access to the so-called VIP

roads. Will their Lordships be "forward looking" or will they uphold the law when the constitutional rights of so many people are being infringed? If only the rickshaw associations were more organized, the judgment on a PIL suit would surprise Mr Rahat.

I will not say anything against his precious private cars and other Gas Guzzling Monstrosities (GGMs) that of course float in the air (as most roads are mostly potholes) and have no hand in the endless gridlocks that choke the life out of the national economy!!!! Being only a layman, I am not trying to "confuse" intellectually superior beings by "complex statistical data". I have only quoted verbatim, the views, facts and figures of experts -- Urban planners, University Professors, BRTA, DMP etc. Most of all, I have been writing the plain truth (73 letters in 3 years), that is evident to all Dhakabashis who keep their eyes open when they venture out onto Dhaka's roads.

Mr Rahat is evidently banking on the promises of free-ways, highways, metro, underpasses, over-passes, digitalized traffic control that will be in place in 10-15 years and will result in the natural death of rickshaws!! Good for him!! Unfortunately, the era of fossil fuelled transports will also begin to end at about that time unless massive new oil and gas reserves are discovered before that (Nat Geo Documentary "AFTER OIL"). So Mr Rahat with all those lollipops in place by 2020 (?), you might well be forced to put your car into a museum/junk yard because fossil fuel may not be available.

Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Gulshan 1, Dhaka

Labour unrest



NOOR ALAM / DRINKNEWS

The news that has captured the headlines of all national dailies is labour unrest in the garment sector. No doubt, that is a big threat for our garment industry. From the very beginning of this industry, we have been experiencing the virulent crisis that is getting worse with the passage of time. Though the government with the help of the employers tries to get to a proper solution to this so called labour unrest, it still remains a long way to go.

It is very much reasonable to say that labourers of our garments sector are

really exploited by the employers who enjoy unlimited profit by using the cheap labour as a competitive advantage of the industry. Our labour forces raise their voices against the exploitation, and we are right beside them. We want the authorities to look into the matter both by enacting separate labour laws for garment workers and by practicing corporate culture in which good relationship between employers and employees exists.

Farhad Kabir
Abanker



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