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Averting road accidents

The number of deaths in road accidents in our country is increasing rapidly. Most of the times, the plain cause of the mishap is reckless driving, especially by the drivers of trucks and buses. Though the ways to avoid these terrible accidents have been discussed time after time, I still want to put forward some of the schemes that are, in my opinions, most effective.

1. The govt. must play the key role to ensure safety on the roads. Proper implementation of rules and regulations is the only way to lessen occurrence of road accidents.

2. The number of traffic policemen in different posts is just about enough, if not less. But their honorarium is certainly not adequate. If traffic sergeants have to fight to keep their heads above water, they are bound to get involved in corruption. The govt.

should take this matter into consideration.

3. The business tycoons will have to remain satisfied with a little less profit. This should allow them to continue business with fit vehicles.

4. All the drivers, including rickshaw pullers, should abide by the traffic rules.

5. Above all, the general people should be more careful while travelling, either on foot or by a transport.

Let us all try to avert road accidents, starting from our individual level. It should become easy if we only believe 'Life is more important than Time, and so much more than Money'.

Shahriar Kabir
Eskaton Garden Govt. Officers' Quarters
Dhaka

Child bearing

These days you see professionally successful woman are having babies in their forties after they have achieved the pinnacle of their career. Women lose their natural ability to conceive with age. Egg formation process called oogenesis begins before a girl is born during the prenatal development of the ovaries. In the Embryonic Ovaries the number of eggs cells are determined. Biologically speaking at birth a girl baby is born with two million eggs. During puberty only 3-400,000 eggs remained alive. In case of male, sperm production is continuous since the diploid mother cells that give rise to primary spermatocytes continue mitosis through out life. However sperm count become lower with age in man. Sperms are freshly generated by spermatogenesis compared to the egg which started the process before birth and set the number at early stage of meiotic cell division. Set numbers of eggs during prenatal development in girls continue to die and get aged with the passing of time.

A 38 years old woman ovulating an egg is 38 years old which began Meiosis 37 years ago. During that period of time the egg was exposed to different conditions of the body. As a result there are chances of DNA damage to aged eggs. The increased risk of birth defects in older mother may be related to the aged eggs.

Time is very crucial for a woman to have a baby. Modern professional women should not wait to build career and then make a family. Time is not on their side.

Dr. Shazib Chowdhury
One-mail

The hallowed month

The Arabic word Ramadan is derived from 'Ramad' which means - to burn or to destroy something by fire. The holy month of fasting is called Ramadan, as during this revered month the Muslims as a whole blaze all sorts of sins including jealousy, evil propensity, bluffing, hostility and so on.

The holy month of Ramadan is, of course, a unique occasion to make oneself not only self-restrained but also a devout Muslim with stable Iman i.e. firm faith in the doctrine of "Tauheed and Resalat". On the contrary, the fasting in the eye of Islam stands for abstaining from eating, drinking and sexual acts from Subhe Sadique (the dawn) until the sunset.

It's, indeed, such a precept of Islam through which Allah tests the patience of his beloved creation for the sake of religion as well as teaches them self-restraint and self-purification. All Muslims around the entire world are to observe the fasting as it is an essential element of Islam prescribed by Allah.

The Holy Quran says, "O you who believe! Observing the fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become God-fearing." In accordance with the directive of the Holy Quran, the motive of the fasting is to make the Muslims pious, virtuous as well as self-restrained.

M Faisal Saleh
Chunati Hakimia Kamil
Madrasa
Lohagara, Chittagong

Teaching methods

The Bangladesh government ratified the United Nations' Convention of the Rights of the Children in the early 90s. Twenty years have passed, the children of Bangladesh have not got the benefits of this declaration.

Still there are 10% school-aged children out of enrolling in schools, 75% children are deprived of early/primary education, 40% children drop out in their first two years' education and 50% children have completed primary education; of them only 2% children achieved the attainable competencies, and finally only 18% children fill up their SSC exam forms. This dismal scenario of education reveals the burning wounds of the nation's youngsters.

Awareness of child rights will assist proper development of children. For establishing child rights in family, school and in community, it is the first task to make people aware of the rights. The school management committee, teachers, parents, government officials and non-government organizations have to do this to make the people aware through different activities.

Children's participation in cultural activities also makes a friendly environment in schools that help the children to learn and to stay in schools. So, the school children may be encouraged to organise different groups to perform different developmental activities.

S. M. Masudul Islam
Programme Manager,
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Power plant

Report appeared in newspapers and electronic media recently that Bangladesh government owned enterprise, Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (PGCI), a subsidiary of government of India, had an understanding to form a company in Bangladesh jointly to set up and operate coal based power plants. Each of the two partners, BPDB and PGCI, would subscribe 50% share of the paid up capital of the joint venture company. It is expected to be a good example of co-operation between the two neighbouring countries in South-East Asia.

The news also stated that the company will be managed by the PGCI representatives and the positions of Chairman and Managing Director (Chief Executive) will also be filled by representatives of PGCI from India.

Bangladeshis have been operating and managing all power plants in Bangladesh. Those are based on natural gas, liquid fuel and hydro power. Two power plants based on coal are also operated by Bangladesh nationals since a decade.

The 50:50 share basis company if only managed by foreign partners, it would be ridiculous and out of natural justice. The power generation plants of the company intended to be set up in Bangladesh territory, preliminarily at Chittagong and at Khulna. The generated power is to be transmitted and distributed in Bangladesh market. The fuel, i.e., coal for the power generation plants would come from coalmines of Bangladesh.

Considering all those factors the company should be managed by both the major shareholders on check and balance authority basis. That is, the board of directors should be constituted with equal number of directors representing each partner. The position of Chairman of the board should be from Bangladesh national and representative of BPDB. The chief executive of the company, Managing Director should be an experienced management professional. He or she must be selected and appointed by the board of directors for certain time with compensation package and be Ex-officio director of the board. Preference should be given to Bangladeshi nationals as the area of main operation of the company will be in the territory of Bangladesh.

Formation of the joint venture company is at an initial stage. The Power Division of Bangladesh government and BPDB should not compromise on the above check and balance status of the management authorities of the proposed joint venture company. All concerned should keep in mind that according to the prevailing Companies Act, 1994 all authority virtually is vested on the board of directors of the company if not determined early and provisions are made in the Memorandums of Association and Articles of Associations of the company and registered

with the Registrar of Companies and firms, Bangladesh. Once the company is formed and majority authority is given to PGCI representatives, change would not be possible even if desired by BPDB later as the share of the partners supposed to be equal and in the event of difference of opinion no decision of amendment of Memorandums of Association or Articles of Association would be possible.

Md. Ashraf Hossain
Central Bashabo, Dhaka

School based assessment

The government has recently taken a lot of initiatives to ensure the quality of education. With a view to bringing qualitative changes in education the ministry of education introduced School Based Assessment (SBA) of students as a part of creative question system. Generally, in the secondary schools, the examinations focus on assessing students' ability to memorize what they have been taught. But to ensure a quality education, proper assessment is needed along with an effective syllabus. So, the government asked the schools across the country to carry out SBA of students of class VI-IX, instead of the existing evaluation system that depends solely on examination. With the introduction of the new assessment system, students' promotion to the next class level will depend not only on examination results but also on their performance throughout the year and on their personal development. Some essential qualities such as oral presentation, leadership, tolerance, co-operative attitude, school behaviour, co-curricular activities, and social values are included in the assessment system. But it is a matter of great regret that many a school does not follow the rules of the SBA. There are some teachers in every school who are not at all willing to implement it. They are habituated in traditional lecture method, rather than participatory ones. That's why the students get bored and try to whisper in the classroom. At times, the teachers become emotional and are compelled to give corporal punishment to the students. If the SBA is properly implemented, no student will get chance to waste his valuable time and won't be bored with the learning method.

I would like to request the authorities concerned to address the issue.

Md Jalal Uddin
Assistant teacher
Natore Govt. High School
Natore

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

Wasting gas

The gas is a priceless asset, which is being wasted each and every day due to the negligence of some housewives, who do not realize the value of it. If we observe then we'll see that, they keep the oven on only to save a match stick. Can't the govt. introduce meter system in all furnaces? Though I don't know how much it will cost, but surely the benefit will be huge.

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

Shamsur Rahman

If Tagore was the last poet in the Bengali tradition, Jibanananda Das was the first of a new breed. And this new breed, in the trend of Bengali modern and post modern poetry, has been unarguably continuous with the powerful contributions of Shamsur Rahman.

Shamsur Rahman emerged in his time as the most popular poet of modern Bengali literature. Popularity apart, Shamsur Rahman had distinguished himself as an extraordinary poet presenting a paradigm hitherto best chosen. It is a fact that his most familiar poetic diction, choice of words and thematic preferences took not much time to reach the heart of the readers. Today it can be said without exaggeration that the poetry of Shamsur Rahman has become the defining essence of modernism in 21st century Bengali poetry.

Shamsur Rahman was born on 24th October 1929 in Dhaka. He studied at Pogos High School [matriculation in 1945], Dhaka College and Dhaka University. Shamsur Rahman wrote most of his poems in free verse, often with the rhythm style known as Poyaar or Aakhsharbritto. It is popularly known that he followed this pattern from poet Jibanananda Das. He also wrote poems in two other major patterns of Bengali rhythmic style, namely, Matrabritto and Shorobritto.

Of Bengali modern poets, poet Shamsur Rahman was equally popular in both Banglas. Surely, his early poems



bear the influence of Jibanananda's and some other poets like Satyendranath Dutta and Buddhadeb Bose. However, before long, he thoroughly overcame all influences and created a post modern poetic diction. However, as his style and diction matured, his message appeared to touch urban hearts. In fact, he gave huge attention to liberal humanism, human relations, romanticised rebellion of youth, the emergence of consequent events in Bangladesh, and opposition to religious fundamentalism in his poetry and writings and these were considered mostly comprehensible. His poetic talent has reserved a crown for him in Bengali modern poetry.

Bengali literature received a big blow with the death of Bangladesh's poet laureate Shamsur Rahman in 2006.

Mohammad Shahidul Islam
A tourism professional

Obama

Recently, Obama's bold claim regarding the rights of the Muslims proved his greatness once again. It would act as a lesson and inspiration for any secularist of the world. His activities prove his greatness. If all the world leaders act like Obama, then the world will be definitely a better place to live in.

In America, some people became too busy to find his religious identity. It is a meaningless pursuit I do not care whether he is a Christian or a Muslim. I just love him because he proved himself to be a true secularist and humanist.

Saagar Ratan
A humanist

Why this behaviour?

8th August, 2010, I went to Aarong for Eid shopping and something happened. I was taking a look at "girl's panjabi". A foreigner was also there. She took a panjabi out and asked the sales girl that where she could get a pant. The person who has been asked the question did not understand her as she does not know English. The foreigner asked her the same question by saying "pant, I want a pant, do not you have a pant with this?" The sales girl failed to understand her again and was really ashamed of her as she could not speak English and started feeling inferior. She, restlessly, called another sales girl to help her out. This sales girl also found the language difficult, which annoyed the white American, and replied "sorry no pants". The American lady, I came to know by her accent, was really

amazed with this and said "WEIRD, NO PANTS BUT DISPLAYED SHIRTS. YOU BANGLADESHIES CAN'T EVEN SAY A PROPER ENGLISH SENTENCE". The scene was going on in front of my eyes but I did not give much attention to it until her two words choked me "weird" and "you Bangladeshies". I was so furious with these words that I could not stop myself talking to her and said in English "May be I can help you. I am a customer just like you and a Bangladeshi. What you have just wanted is not 'pant' we call it 'pajama' and this is not 'shirt'. We call it 'panjabi'. These are our customs. We do not know your language as we are not bound to know. It is not so important for us to speak English as we have our own Bangla language.

Have we taken it for granted that white people are better than us and we are born to be suppressed?

Tasnuva Sharmin
One-mail

Animals in danger

Many animals are in danger in the world nowadays. Everyone is just mad to get a pet. Therefore, they are capturing birds, cats and other animals and selling them. This must come to an end.

Samaha Raida
The Aga Khan School, Dhaka

Rohingyas

Last 11th August, 5 Rohingyas along with 2 Bangladeshis were caught red handed from Ashkora of the capital. This is alarming news for the country. Myanmar pushed thousands of Myanmar citizens into Bangladesh and our government is fostering them with the help of some NGOs but these infiltrators are creating anarchy and a crime network all over the country, especially Cox's Bazar, Bandarban and Rangamati districts.

Many Human Rights activists talk in favour of them. But they are perhaps not considering all the aspects of the issue.

Akter Hossain
Dept. of English
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Over-publicised ruling

Over the last few weeks, I have read many over-enthusiastic articles in this paper on the Supreme Court ruling on the Fifth Amendment. Some writers told us what a historic event it was while others went on and on about how all beautiful things are now going to happen in our beloved Bangladesh. Well guys, excuse me while I laugh!

Tweaking around with constitutional amendments is not going to strengthen our democracy or prevent military coups. We have not forgotten the political atmosphere that existed in the country just before the infamous 1/11.

Lawlessness gripped the whole country, universities and colleges were closed, prices of essentials were

unbearable, corruption was the highest in the country's history and, thanks to the daily gun battles between the BNP and the AL, our people felt too scared to go out. We have not forgotten those days. These were the reasons why the military took over, not because of some ancient amendments in the constitution. Besides, when was the last time you saw a political party in Bangladesh giving a hoot about our constitution?

And the same goes for involving religion in politics as well. You can't form big coalitions with religious parties to win elections and then ban religious parties from politics! It is hypocritical to force reform on madrasas while at the same time providing weapons and money to your lovely "secular" college and university students. You can't have it both ways.

If our politicians want to prevent military takeovers and keep religious fanatics out of politics then they must provide more than just a lip-service to the democratic system that already exists in our country. While bragging about democracy, the ruling party does everything in undemocratic and dictatorial manners. Our MPs shamelessly collect all parliamentary perks and salaries but they never attend any session. This is not how you strengthen democracy, is it? Finally, not running "our" country as your family business will definitely help strengthen democracy (I know I am asking for too much here!).

Azad Miah
Oldham
UK

Urban farming

Urban farming is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around (peri-urban) a village, town or city. Additionally, urban farming can also grip husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry and horticulture. These actions also take place in peri-urban areas.

Urban farming is usually exercised for income-earning or food-producing activities though in some communities the main impulsion is recreation and relaxation. Urban agriculture contributes to food security and food safety in couple of ways: first, it enhances the amount of food available to people living in cities, and, second, it allows fresh vegetables and fruits and meat products to be made available to urban customers. A frequent and competent form of urban agriculture is the bio-intensive technique. Since urban agriculture promotes energy-saving local food production, urban and peri-urban agriculture are normally seen as sustainable practices.

Thus we can start implementing urban agriculture in Bangladesh with a view to ensuring food security and a good source of employment for many.

Shohag Mostafij
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Genocide

My dictionary defines genocide as simply "The act of killing a whole group or race of people". How, when or why they do it, is not relevant. Therefore, if any 'act' results in the death of a group or race of people, then that act is "genocide".

In Bangladesh today, many people, usually for profit, indulge in acts of instant or slow killing of groups of people, openly, without remorse and usually without any fear of retaliation or punishment, such as:

1. Massive adulteration of most food items with chemicals, pesticides, fertilisers, brick dust, sand, pebbles, metals etc, causing death, disability, disease and debilitation to 'that idiot, the common man'.

2. Some drugs and medicines 'makers' using cheap and harmful chemicals that cause death, disability and paralysis to the self-same idiot. Many children are already dead, how many deaths went unreported is anyone's guess.

3. Unlicensed & fake drivers, unregistered and unfit vehicles haunt the roads of Bangladesh killing and maiming thousands of 'idiots' every year.

4. Unfit launches, barges and boats,



AMDADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

without licenses or approved blueprints of sea-worthiness, overloading, without proper lights or navigation aids and other devices for safe journeys, flood our water-ways, sinking and drowning thousands of "idiots" every year.

5. Poisoning our land, waters and air by every conceivable way to make profits, include grabbing wetlands, destruction of forests and habitats and mass killing of marine life, fauna and flora has become a national pastime. Thus contributing to the early extinc-

tion of the "idiot" race-GENOCIDE?

The above is only a partial list, so the question arises, why have those who condone/assist and are directly responsible for this sorry state of affairs, not been prosecuted for genocide and crimes against humanity? They should be very easy to find with plenty of evidence against them!

For thousands of years, those in power have resorted to "spectacles" to keep the "idiots" busy, when they were about to ask awkward questions. The "Games" of ancient Greece and the "Gladiatorial" contests of the Romans are two of the prominent ones. Today, it seems the authorities here are resorting to the same "Tamasha". Only this time the venue will be, not the Coliseum but special courts. The weapons hurled will not be swords, lances, tridents or nets but writs, injunctions and decrees. In the end, perhaps after years, at heavy cost paid by the 'idiots', even if the bearded four get their just deserts, it will clean just a little bit of only one side of a very dirty coin. The other side is, of course, just as dirty! Pandora, where is your box?

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