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Market magic

"We need to find out some ways to reduce the gap", said the Honourable Food Minister, while talking to reporters on 11th October on the subject of high price of rice at the retail market, reported in your pages on 12th October. The gap stated, was between the wholesale and retail prices. So far so good, but will the finding out be done, and the reasons identified and steps taken to contain it?

That is the crux of the matter! The time frame is critical, and your guess about the gap, will be as good as mine. Hopefully, the 'finding out' will be done soon. But the reality could be surprising! After all, as the wise man said, "Slow and steady, wins the race." However, I wonder if this is valid, when it is a race against time?

The reporter, however, on the absorbing and important subject of price of imported wheat, which gov-

erns its retail price in the market, did not provide any real data in support of his argument. I am sure, given your valued publication's sources and contacts, this could have been obtained. The ideal would have been a factual breakdown of cost to the wholesaler, based on last season's imports vis-à-vis the current import cost, and analysing the differences. Then the opinion would have had teeth, and been really effective, rather than a broad opinion.

The reporter, however, stated that the price gap for rice was (42-30) i.e. Tk. 12 per kg (hopefully, as unit was not specified). This is a 40% increase in one month or so, and is really staggering. On this matter too, backing up with figures would have been really effective, otherwise it only appears more as an opinion than reality.

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Enemy at home

Who is the worst enemy of the Awami League? BNP? Jamaat? No, Awami League itself is its worst enemy. The vile activities of the Chhatra League and Jubo League are harming the government's image. All the good work of the govt. would be overlooked because of these heinous activities.

The recent unpleasant incident in Natore that took the life of an upazilla parishad chairman reminds me of the dark age of the BNP's regime, when leaders like Shah AMS Kibria, Ahsanullah Master, Manjurul Imam and Ivy Rahman were killed. If AL chooses to follow suit where shall we go?

No one talks about the bold actions of the education minister; people only talk about the misdeeds of the Chhatra League. People will forget all the good work of the govt. if stern action is not taken against the Chhatra League and Jubo League.

We are eagerly waiting for the trial of the war criminals. We voted for Awami League because it was our Hobson's choice.

Solaiman Palash
East Jurain, Dhaka

Save Anamika's life

This is in reference to the report published on 7th October 2010, titled "Poverty dims ray of hope for little Anamika." Thanks to the editor for running the report. It would be great if such reports were published more often to inform us about the needs of the poor.

Many of us are vocal about what is right and what is

wrong. This is an opportunity for us to translate our words into action. We are in need of humble citizens who practise what they say. Contribute a minimum amount of Taka 1,000 for Anamika and her family, volunteer to buy food and medicines, or at least, pay a visit and share their grief in a heart-to-heart conversation.

Ayesha Memorial Hospital might be far away from home for many and hence inconvenient given the inclement weather, congestion and scarcity of transport, but wouldn't you brave all these to meet a dear family member? Is she not worth your attention and time? Her family needs your support, both financial and emotional.

I hope to see a follow-up report soon narrating how the benevolence of some people saved a life or at least gave some comfort to the afflicted one.

Monica Islam
Dhaka

Inspiration from teachers

A teacher's inspiration is very important in a student's life. But we notice that they are fond only of those students who are doing well in exams, but those who are trying to improve do not get any inspiration from their teachers.

Teachers should treat all the students equally; his inspiration can change the life of a student.

Ferdawsahmed
Dept of English
SUST, Sylhet

A historic rescue



PHOTO AFP

The rescue operation of the 33 Chilean miners will go down in history. The credit goes to the Chilean government, the rescuers and the miners themselves. The perseverance of the rescuers, the patience of the trapped miners is awe-inspiring.

After 17 days of the collapse at the San Jose mine, the trapped men were able to send a note tied to a drill probe to the outside world announcing their miraculous survival. The whole world was holding its breath and praying for the miners, and it paid off. All the miners came out safe and sound. It is indeed a miracle.

Mehraab Anwar
On e-mail

The rescue operation of the trapped miners was a unique event in human history. The entire world had been glued to the television sets, computers, mobile phones and all other forms of communication devices to keep track of the day-to-day development of the rescue operation.

The rescue operation was undoubtedly a wonderful piece of technological feat.

Himel
Dept. of Business
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Woes of govt. officials

During the last tenure of BNP-Jamaat rule, the policymakers appointed their cadres in three tiers- at secretary/additional secretary level, joint secretary level and also deputy secretary level. Many of these officers, who are die-hard BNP-Jamaat cadres, have been identified and have been removed or retired. Many of the BNP appointees have become neutral. But a good number of them are masquerading. They are obstructing the government's development works in subtle ways, helping BNP in indirect ways. Their main objective is to bring the present government into disrepute, slow down developmental works and pave ways for BNP-Jamaat to come to power. But it will remain a distant dream if the AL-led grand alliance plays the cards deftly.
Dr. SN Mamoon
One-mail

Demolishing BGMEA building

Why do we need to pull down the BGMEA corporate office while it is not harming anybody's interests, public or private? A post editorial in The Daily Star described the logic of pulling down illegally built buildings, though I am slightly of a different opinion. There are a good number of illegally erected buildings in Dhaka city. The caretaker government tried to identify such buildings to demolish. But for some unknown reasons, those plans were not accomplished except for the Rangs Bhaban near the PM office.

The BGMEA building is an operational hub of an organisation that is bringing in our main remittance, which seems to be the lifeline for our economy. It is not a personal property of any individual. No individual is reaping benefits from the building.

On the other hand, the building is so spectacular that it is not harming the beauty of the city. The lakeside skyscraper is eye-catching. Demolishing this structure will also cost a huge amount of money, which in a country like ours, should not be encouraged. The govt. can impose a heavy fine or on the organisation instead.

In Singapore, if anybody commits any wrong, the govt. fines him or her heavily, instead of sending the person to jail or inflicting any other punishment. That's why they call Singapore sarcastically "a fine city." The govt. may consider the proposition. Both it and the organisation can be benefited from the proposal.
Ahmed Munir
Purana Paltan
Dhaka

Political killings

Killing a human being for political gains is nothing new in this part of the world. Our memory is very short-lived, pretty soon people will forget the brutal killing of late Sanaullah Noor Babu, as we forgot the killing of the Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly Late Shahed Ali, who was beaten to death on September 26, 1958.

Since then many secret and open political killings have taken place for vested interest, and more might follow, please refer to the recent speeches of our political leaders, which appear to be supportive of such heinous acts.

I am an avid watcher of documentaries on National Geographic Channel and other such networks. Never have I seen anything like these. It only happens in Bangladesh. Hence, it can be fairly concluded that we are, unfortunately, the most savage people on earth.
Saleh Ayub
One-mail

Continue doing good

Our dearest Rasul (pbuh) has pointed out to us some signs of the 'keyamat', which will be occurring gradually just before the destruction of this world. The premature death of good people, various disasters like earthquakes and cyclones, increase of heinous activities are some of them. All of us should, therefore, keep on doing good work.
Habibur Rashid Ismail
Chittagong

War criminals

This Awami League government had promised that they would try the war criminals. It is a matter of shame that our country became independent 39 years ago, but those culprits have not been punished yet. I urge the government to speed up the process of the trial of war criminals.
Ahnaaf Ahmad
The Aga Khan School
Uttara, Dhaka

Street kids

You can see them walking bare feet on the streets. Their clothes are all torn and tattered. You can see their hair in tangles. You can also see the smile on their face when you give them money, no matter how small or big the amount is. When I see these kids smile it brings tears to my eyes. We should do something for these street kids so that they can have a better life.
Tasnia Zaman
Dhaka



HISHAM SARSOUR / DRIKNEWS

The Middle East impasse

It was almost a foregone conclusion that the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks would reach a stalemate after a few rounds of preliminary talks. With the Israelis insisting on building new settlements on the occupied West Bank lands along with the peace talk, and the Palestinians rightly refusing to do so without halting of the construction work, this impasse was inevitable.

The vital point in this case is if settlement goes on unabated there will be no land left for the Palestinians to have a state of their own. Israel does not say whether the current constructions would be the last one. In such a situation, the Palestinians have no option but to boycott the talks.

We are told that under international law such constructions in occupied lands are illegal! But does Israel care? The mild objection of the

US to these construction works neither deter the Israelis nor benefit the Palestinians in any way. Israel has the possession of more than 78% of Palestine, and the major part of the remaining 22% is under Israeli military control. The Palestinians cannot move around without facing numerous checkpoints. Yet before the talks had started, both the US and the Israel were urging the Palestinians to make sacrifices for the success of the negotiations! Is it not ironic?

In these circumstances, the Middle East is not likely to see peace any time soon unless the US government is prepared to withhold its veto over implementation of the UN Resolution 242 without any reservations. But that seems quite unlikely in the near future.

Abul Mohsin
Siddheswari Circular Road
Dhaka

Make early education interesting

Tahiti, my 6-year-old daughter, doesn't want to go to school regularly. She doesn't like her school at all. She says her teacher doesn't love her very much. She has to read 11 books before a student of nursery. The situation is alarming. It is ridiculous that the kindergartens want to teach the students everything to fulfil the demand of the conscious (!) guardians. Parents want their children to read more and more from the very beginning of their educational life.

Tahiti is learning English, Arabic and other difficult subjects when she even doesn't speak her mother tongue clearly. She is learning Arabic translation. What is the use of Arabic language in the nursery class? Why is she asked to write '537' in Roman figures in her exam? I asked the principal of her school. He replied that it was the

demand of the guardians. Parents are much more worried about their children's education than the school authorities.

Today's mothers are struggling madly to admit their kids in good schools. Being a teacher I can't do this, though some of my colleagues are doing the same. I don't want my daughter to be a specialist in everything before learning the basics. The teachers should teach the kids in an interesting way. If they do so, children will go to school willingly.

I don't want to weigh down my daughter with more than 22 books right now. I want to see her happy while going school.
Zafar Alam Bhuiyan
Shanto-Mariam University of Creative
Technology
Dhaka

Pabna to Natore

For the last few days I was just contemplating to express my feelings as a general citizen about what happened to the Pabna DC who is now facing departmental action for violating the service rules by publicly expressing his helplessness and asking justice from the locals.

A cabinet division official even said that the concerned DC failed to discharge his duties with courage and in compliance with the service rules. We feel that the said DC invited his misfortune by demonstrating enough courage in not bending to the unjustified demands of the local political power, more specifically, the ruling party adherents.

As expressed by many, the Pabna episode will go a long way in damaging the relationship between the ruling party and the administration, a prerequisite for proper implementation of government policies and development ventures. Before the Pabna chapter could come to a close, another incident occurred in Natore where the Boraigram upazilla chairman was killed by his political rivals while he was leading a peaceful procession. Thanks to the media which made it possible for the public to see how mercilessly a man was beaten to death in broad daylight, reportedly, before the eyes of the law enforcing agencies.

The upazilla chairman is supposed to be a distinguished person in his own upazilla. But in this instance we saw none even from his own party come to his rescue, and his profusely bleeding body was lying on the street for an hour until his wife came to take him to the hospital only to find that she had lost her husband forever.

No one can say whether the

killers, who can be easily identified from the video footage, will be caught and punished. But the failure of the government to do justice would open the door wide for the criminals to commit such horrible crimes, which, although may appear to be in favour of the ruling party, might eventually act as a boomerang for them.
Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur, Khulna

Religious discrimination

With the annulment of 5th and 7th amendment of the Constitution we have virtually gone back to the original Constitution of 1972, which was formulated on four fundamental principles including secularism. The spirit of the War of Liberation was to create a just and non-communal state in the world map as we had experienced a lot of state-designed communal riots and unrest in the then East Pakistan. The Pakistani authorities, with bad intentions, unleashed that communal hatred.

Article 28 of the Constitution of Bangladesh says, 'The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth'. Article 27 says, 'All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law'. Article 11 of the Constitution also ensured democracy and human rights. The present government also values this spirit. Following the government instructions, all the public universities remained off for minimum a week during Durga Puja festival. But a few private universities are possibly living in other world as they allowed only one day holiday for the students and teachers on Bijoya

Dashami (17 October), the last day of the four-day festival.

Is it practically possible for the Hindu students and staff to come back the next morning to join the class/duty after Bijoya Dashami?

Chand Mukul
Shantibagh
Malibag, Dhaka

Impatience everywhere!

Everybody is becoming impatient day by day. In the house, office, classroom, street, bazaar, and transport, everybody reacts to other's actions, every now and then. It is observed very often that sons and daughters shout and even become violent against the decisions of their parents. On a trivial matter, one driver beats up another on the busy street, resulting in a massive traffic jam. A rickshaw passenger slaps the rickshaw puller for giving an 'offensive' look. Students cannot tolerate their teacher's advice. Neighbours and relatives do not come to each other's help. On the contrary, one tries to harass another openly. One's bad luck makes others happy. Why are these happening?

Sociologists know the answer to it very well. They can find out the factors behind this social crisis. People, who have the habit of analysing their whole day's work at the end of the day, can take a decision to change their attitude towards others, come the next day. All of us should ask ourselves whether we are doing the right thing or not. We have to be patient. In fact, at present, it is the only way to get rid of the situation.

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