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The state of our society

Md Asadullah Khan draws the attention of the political regime to the article on the state of our society, appearing in The Daily Star of 25/9/10. The political pundits never broach these hot topics in their mike appearances, and the government is busy hunting for mega projects, while the moral foundations are cracking up!

It is a tough test for public leadership. The only tool used today (in Dhaka) is to live in the past, chanting names, while the young society is degenerating at an alarming rate, morally and ethically. The rot starts from the top, using the young generation for ulterior purposes. There is no continuity of discipline, and the established institutions have broken down. Unlike newly established capitals like Islamabad and Dhaka, New Delhi has the advantage of not starting from zero.

Today, the modern pace of life is much faster, eschewing tolerance and patience. The LDCs are very sensitive to capitalistic living, based on over-spending. The slum areas in the big cities point out to the heavy migration from the rural to the urban areas. The tendency is misapplied in fertile and green Bangladesh, situated in a delta region. The contribution of the farmers is not officially and socially noticed; only their marginal living conditions are spotlighted in the media.

'Over-population' is a man-made term ignoring the wisdom of Mother Nature. Erosion of riverbanks is a natural, powerful phenomenon, witnessed by generations in a rural family; yet we complain over too much water, and too little water. The fertility rate is automatically lower in the mountainous and desert areas. The gift of the gab of the Bengalis is due to the average higher density of population per sq km. The top leaders have to set examples.

A Mawaz
Dhaka

E-bikes

Every time the authorities residing in their ivory towers come up with a new gimmick to solve the perennial headache of Dhaka's traffic jam, they never fail to amaze me with the depths of their ignorance. The latest official nightmare is electrically recharged battery operated 3-wheel auto-rickshaws (e-bikes) that consume 250 MW

Primary education



A.M. AHAD / DRINKNEWS

The Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2010 has turned the spotlight on substantive questions of quality of teaching and learning. The report sponsored by UNESCO points out that in a large number of developing and least developed countries, the cognitive development of children remains below requisite minimum levels.

Approximately 103.5 million children are still out-of-school and less than 75 per cent of those who enrol continue up to grade five in many countries. Some 800 million adults are

illiterate. Seventy per cent of them live in nine countries belonging to sub-Saharan Africa and East and South Asia, notably, Bangladesh. While access to education has expanded and spending increased in recent years, the 2005 report observes, this has not been matched by an expansion of resources and facilities in these countries. Currently, international aid to basic education is estimated to be \$1.5 billion a year. It is reckoned that an additional \$7.6 billion in international assistance is required annually to achieve universal primary edu-

cation by 2015.

Recent pledges indicate that there will be a major shortfall. Nothing reveals the mismatch between stated intentions and actual practice more starkly than the global expenditure on defence. In a scenario where trade rather than aid defines relations with the industrialised world, developing countries need to build the political will to commit major additional resources to priority sectors such as basic education and public health.

Gopal Sengupta
Canada

of electricity, which is a waste. So it must be banned!

If the so-called authorities had the eyes to see the paucity of city roads to accommodate the private cars, and the will and intelligence to recognise what exactly causes traffic jams in Dhaka, they would not even think about banning e-bikes, but take steps to encourage its use. They are the appropriate mode of transport and an excellent alternative to rickshaws and baby taxis for over 50 lacs Dhakabashis who venture forth every day to go to their jobs, schools, bazaars, visits etc. What is 250 MW, when you get in exchange an affordable, environmentally clean, fast, safe means of transport at your doorstep? Have they ever voiced similar concerns at the much greater so-called "Systems Loss", which is another name for barefaced

theft?

A few days ago headlines proclaimed the concerned minister's latest "Lollipop"-the import of hundreds of large buses shortly. Will these buses venture into Dhaka's narrow pot-holed lanes filled to the brim with parked private cars? Will they be available to carry the old, the infirm, disabled, women, children and those with heavy bags? How will such people go from their homes to the bus stop and vice versa?

Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Gulshan-1
Dhaka

Publish LLB (Part-1) results

Majority of the students studies in the National University (NU). But session jam is very common here. Many students are leaving

the NU in the middle of their education session as it takes seven years to complete a four-year honours course and four years to complete two-year LL.B course! So, many of the students are leaving the NU and getting admitted to private universities spending a lot of money, to complete their studies quickly.

I would like to draw the kind attention of the NU authorities to publish the results of LLB (Part-1) examination immediately which ended on 30th April 2010.

Md Zahidul Islam
LLB Final Year
Bangabandhu Law College
Dhaka

PM-please help us

I live in B block, Road 2, Halihsahar, Chittagong. Our colony is constantly living in

the fear of getting robbed at any time day or night. Every day, people of this colony are getting robbed. Till now a good number of people have also been attacked physically. We think the media can help us. We have not been sleeping for the last two nights; we can't even leave our home for work, because our family members are not safe in our home. I want The Daily Star to publish front-page news about this so that our PM can learn about the condition of the general people. Honourable Prime Minister, we want to sleep at night. There is no need to build a digital Bangladesh. At first, make our country safe so that we can feel safe in our homes.

Nazmul Hassan
One-mail

Medical education

People in general have a common complain against the doctors that they are not behaving rationally with their patients. They charge exorbitant fees for their advice and other health services, which are not commensurate with the average earning of the people. They advise unnecessary tests just to get some extra money from the diagnostic centres. They even do not examine the patients properly. Scarcity of doctors in the country is the main reason behind such irrational behaviour. Usually the doctors are reluctant to serve the rural health centres. It has become difficult to keep the doctors in rural areas. To address this problem, it is necessary to set up medical colleges in every district. And the govt. should recruit the doctors from their respective areas.

Moreover, it is a matter of great concern that students are losing their interest to study science at secondary and higher secondary levels. Setting up more medical colleges may encourage them to study science.

Md. Ashraf Hossain
Cenral Bashabo, Dhaka

Road accidents

Recently a city bus plunged into the river near Amin Bazar. Some people died. Monowara Khatun Tara, a student of JU, also died in that accident.

I know that bridge very well. The bridge has been in a dilapidated condition for many years. How many deaths would it take to have a safe road?

Faruki, JU

Water-logging

Chittagong, the business capital of Bangladesh, plays a vital role to uphold the dignity of our country. But it is a matter of great regret that most of the important parts of the city, namely Chawkbazar, Chandanpura, DC road, Dewanbazar, Bogerbeel, etc., remain under water in the rainy season. Even the tidal water inundates Kalam colony and Goni colony every day, where approximately six lakh people live. In this circumstance, newly elected authorities are playing the role of observers.

Akter, Shahid, Liton, Rahbar
Kalam Colony, Chittagong

Decentralisation

Decentralising different offices and industries outside Dhaka is the only way to save this city. This city is literally dying in front of our eyes.

Corruption, unplanned urbanisation, lack of far-sightedness, disrespect to law and greed are destroying the city.

Dhaka's housing problem will never end if we don't start decentralisation process. Every single canal and river will be grabbed soon and no open space will be left in Dhaka.

Dhaka's traffic jam has already gone beyond our control. And electricity, water and gas crisis have made life even worse. I don't think elevated expressway and underground train will work for Dhaka.

Solution to Dhaka's traffic problem lies in modernising its public transport system, maintaining a good

road condition so that vehicles can move faster, vacating all roads and footpaths from illegal occupants, etc.

All of the above mentioned problems are associated with over population. It seems like everyone wants to live in Dhaka. We have to spread development and economic activities to every corner of the country and start thinking about Bangladesh as a whole.

G.M. Rezwana Rasul
Kalyanpur, Dhaka

Value of life

The accident that took place in Sirajganj is highly condemnable. Any loss of life is poignant but what occurred after the train accident is quite unacceptable. Torching the whole train was a subversive activity.

My question is - what were the BNP activists doing on the railway tracks? Didn't they hear the whistle of the train? Why did they make the podium near the railway tracks?

In Bangladesh there is no value of life. Bus plunges into the river, runs over the pedestrians and breaks the roadside shops and houses. Train hits vehicles. Miscreants kill innocents, and the angry mob beats the miscreants to death. The police and RAB kill people in the name of encounter. There is no guaranty that we will go back home safely.

Solaiman Palash
East Jurain
Dhaka

Seat belts

This morning a cop stopped me for not using the seat belt while driving. He asked me where my belt was, I showed him where it was. Then he said, "I can sue you for violating traffic rules." I replied that this particular rule would be applicable from November 1, 2010, as has been mentioned in the media.

I wrote on this topic earlier, wherein I mentioned the seat belt was the cause of death of late Mr. Saifur Rahman, as has been revealed. Seat belts are meant to save lives.

It is applicable for America and Europe, where people drive at high speeds. There are no or very few examples of death occurring from car crashes for not using seat belts in Bangladesh.

I wonder whether the concerned lawmaker or the police are aware of this or not.

Saleh Ayub
One-mail

Road safety

Road accident has become a serious problem in Bangladesh. Each year, as per police report, more than 3300 people lose their lives in road accidents and many more sustain injuries.

The authorities should take urgent steps to improve road safety and thus prevent road accidents. The govt. as well as other organisations should play their part in this regard. And, of course, everyone in the society has a part to play in combating the problem.

Tanha Kashfia Kate
Uttara Model Town, Dhaka

Trial of war criminals



FIROZ GAZI / DRINKNEWS

It is very urgent that the trial of the war criminals is completed. People of Bangladesh are very keen to see the trial commence as early as possible.

The government should not delay the trial; otherwise people would doubt the whole process.

Rowshan Ali, On e-mail

Mindless vandalism



PHOTO: STAR

Again five BNP men were killed this time by the running train, not by the lathi and oar wielding AL cadres. The criminal train was unable to go off scot-free, because the mob was overwhelming in number and the revenge was quick.

I felt like the burning train was burning my hope for a better future characterised by sanity and love for the country. There is no excuse for this vandalism. When will we, the wretched Bengalis, come to sense?

Tinku
Lalpur, Natore

Following a train accident in Sirajganj on October 11, an angry mob torched the train. Those who destroyed the state property were none but miscreants. And we do not want the innocent people to be killed any more. The ruling party or the opposition has no right to kill the innocents and destroy state property. We always expect them to work together for the betterment of the nation.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
Chittagong

This is another heart-rending picture of our politics. The comments of the high commands of both AL and BNP about this incident are almost the same traditional reiterations that we have been habituated to read in the national dailies, and we consider it our fate.

How long will our lives be hostage to a few hooligans of the political parties?

Mobarak Ali
Gopibag, Dhaka