

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.

Alternative transport for waterways

Although waterways is a popular form of water transport, shallow depth of many rivers, canals and beels, compels to take longer detours. Further, shallow draft prevents having permanent ferry crossings and IWT launch terminals and wayside stations. These need to be shifted practically every year or so along with approach roads on both sides of the river for ferry crossings to enable motor vehicles to board the ferry. This is practically a regular problem for most of our land routes where one or even more ferry crossings have to be made.

To overcome these bottlenecks, we should actively consider the use of hovercrafts for both passenger

and goods traffic. This was at one time quite popular for crossing the English Channel, between Europe and England. Today however, the Euro tunnel under the English Channel has made the hovercraft service redundant. In my opinion, our government could actively take the matter with the UK government to introduce hovercrafts services across our shallow waterways and marshland and other water bodies for direct and easier communication. The use of hovercraft will allow both passenger and cargo traffic across many of our river and other waterways. This will save time and money. In the long run quite possibly the hovercraft service will prove to be eco-

nomic. It will also encourage the growth of movement of goods and people between the eastern and south-western zones of Bangladesh.

Our planners and officials of the Ministry of Inland Water Transport should seriously take up this matter in the overall national interest of Bangladesh. It will pave the way for easy and quicker transport between large areas of habitation now cut-off by shallow marshes and other water bodies where conventional powered riverine vessels cannot now ply because of shallow draft.

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka



AMDAUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Demand of CNG stations

When there is acute shortage of gas supply for preparation of our meals the demand of the CNG stations for round the clock provision for supply to the private cars is just imprudent. For the last few months our women in the home have been facing dire odds to keep burners on and keep us fed in time. Gas, apart from household use, also caters for production of electricity, and to speak the truth, the power outage could never be so awful and miserable if priority for generation of power (electricity) was considered more imperative than granting the provision for random supply of gas to private cars. And making CNG available at a cheaper rate induced the haves to rush to buy cars and as a result Dhaka has witnessed the boom of private cars that has singly attributed to the present insoluble problem of traffic jam. However, public transport like three wheelers could get preference

for obvious reason.

Gas has diverse use and we must see its use more for increase of production in various sectors than for luxury ride of the private car owners. Think of the condition of the have-nots first. Besides, the adjacent areas of Dhaka need to be brought under gas supply as burning woods have become costly. LP gas makes its way into the hearths of the affluent only. When the reduced hours for supply of gas from CNG stations could not improve the situation at city homes or in generation of electricity, what justification is there to give in to their demands?

Ahmed Niaz
Shekher tek, Mohammedpur
Dhaka

Digital Bangladesh?

Some time ago, anxious to buy a railway ticket for over Eid, I went to Banani Railway Station, as instructed by the friends I am visiting, to buy the ticket I needed for a journey

on November 13th. I was told I could not book until 9 days before the journey i.e. November 4th, so, on that afternoon, I duly joined the queue. After a time, there was an electricity cut and we were informed that, as the ticket machine worked by electricity, we would have to wait an hour. I waited in my car for an hour but, when I returned and was kindly pushed to the front of the queue, I was taken to one side and informed that the ticket could not be given to me as I had to get it on my mobile. My mind boggled. I was told I had to go to the Grameen Centre. Now in a daze, my car faced the jams back to Gulshan 2 once more.

At the Grameen Centre, I encountered the man giving out the numbered tickets to gain access to the counter. When I told him what I wanted, he told me, confidently, that I should go to the railway station!

The process there had taken nearly 3 hours, even with a car and driver - and the kindness of several individu-

als.

I appreciate the attempts of Bangladesh (i.e. the transport department and the Grameen) to introduce us to the privileges and responsibilities of the digital age but would it be possible to organise it a bit better? For instance, could some of the 'helpful' leaflets be available in English and could people be told earlier in the process how to share with customers what they are meant to do? Why was I not given the right information on my first visit to the railway station? And as for ticket-machines that do not work in electricity cuts - it makes me wonder whether the adoption of the 'digital' - or any other - method is the sole answer. Would it not be simpler - and kinder - in the long run, to find ways of managing necessary jobs so that employees do not end up looking incompetent in the eyes of the public, whatever the method?

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

Early education

I have read Mr. Zafar Alam Bhuiyan's letter entitled 'Make early education interesting' in The Daily Star of October 20, 2010. I agree with him that a good and caring environment should be ensured for the children from the very beginning of their education. And it is the sacred duty of both the guardians and the teachers to guide them properly.

Some days ago my ten-year-old son Taosin, who reads in class five in a reputed school, could not prepare his lesson for the class.

His class teacher rebuked him rudely. All the students of the class laughed at him. As a result, he started to flee from his school every day. Because of being service holders, both my husband and I were totally unaware about this at first. When we knew that, we were stunned. His father even beat him cruelly. Priti, a nine-year-old girl of our neighbourhood, also stopped going to school, because the insult was too much for her in the class.

My question is - why do the kids

of this tender age lose their interest to go to school? How can the teachers become so cruel to these kids? Can this type of behaviour of a teacher do any good to the students?

I think both the guardians and the teachers should try to understand the psychology of the children. We should guide them properly so that they can become good citizens in the future.

Sanjida Rahman Swapna
Mirpur, Dhaka



AM. AHAD / DRINKNEWS

Bridge approach roads

Media reports frequently point out collapse of the approach roads to the bridges (especially small bridges). What is the solution?

One way to solve the problem between the bridge contractor and the road contractor is to include the approach road in the bridge tender, as this is a specially reinforced construction, needing extra materials and cost.

We all know that the quality of workmanship of the numerous road projects in the country is rather poor; not only the road surfaces, but also the slope embankments. The corrupt practices in tenders are legendary; but the vested groups are conveniently ignoring it. The problem is not technical, but human.

Alif Zabr
Dhaka

Unruly elements in AL

Perhaps the Hon'ble PM is kept well posted about what is happening across the country, or to say rightly, what majority of the activists belonging to different branch outfits of the AL are committing caring damn to what causes disrepute of the government. Their bullying, rowdiness, and muscle flexing, especially in the spheres of public works have been the talk of the country, and the nation is well taking note of them. Though she warned them of dire consequences, but people observe, they are still being dealt with kid gloves and so they could carry out the murder in Baraigram, Natore just after the sensational attack on the high-ranking public servants in Pabna.

Question naturally arises how did they get this liberty and guts to kill a man elected to a public office? Where were the law enforcers? By any account this was a gruesome murder wantonly perpetrated that all on a sudden doomed the life of a family. What led them to be carried away with this sort of insanity?

The PM committed to bring in changes, but that will remain an illusion if the ruling party loses people's support because of their failure to rein in the unruly elements in their party.

A.H. Dewan
South Kafrul
Dhaka Cantt., Dhaka

Price hike

I am writing this letter to state the plight of millions who live under extreme poverty. Out of five basic needs food is something, which comes first. After around forty years of our independence, have we yet met the demand of 16.44 crore people? The simple answer is "NO".

The prices of essential items such as rice, oil, sugar, lentils, garlic, etc., are on the rise. The condition of a big family with the only earning member is beyond description.

Recently we witnessed the government's multiple initiatives such as fixing the price of daily commodities for both wholesalers and retailers, and selling rice to the poor at a reduced rate to address this problem.

I earnestly request all our countrymen to work together in helping thousands of poor people dying due to starvation and malnutrition every year.

Prosanto Kumar Datta
Mirpur, Dhaka

Teaching methods

Although Bangladesh is a developing country, still compared to the other countries the teaching methods are very old and hence monotonous. The students of our country are hardworking and serious. This is the reason why many Bangladeshi students are studying in many renowned educational institutions around the world.

Methods of education are changing in the world. To keep pace with the modern world, we need to improve our teaching methods at school, college and university level.

Hema Khan
Lalbagh
Old town
Dhaka



Bangladesh cricket leadership

Bangladesh cricket team's recent success against New Zealand is due to the combined leadership offered by all agencies concerned. But one aspect stands out (in the background): the captaincy of Shakib Al Hasan.

He has several qualities of leadership, which has turned him into the world's No 1 all rounder. He works quietly in the background, and has a genial personality, maintains low profile, and is not arrogant. Some of our political leaders could take tips from him.

His slow bowling action is natural, and appears to be effortless (flexibility of the joints and muscles). Therefore his bowling is deceptive, in flight, and after pitching of the ball. He bats effortlessly. In fact, he never appears to try; all actions come naturally (coordination and reactions, due to good training, and practise).

He deserves a national award.
A Mahasen, Dhaka

Traffic jam

Traffic jam is everywhere around and you can't just avoid it. The long queue in front of the CNG filling stations is one of the reasons. Secondly, thousands of vehicles are being added to the streets of Dhaka every day. People park their vehicles in wrong places, drivers try to overtake each other, stop their cars in the middle of the road, and start arguing. These are some of the major reasons behind severe traffic jam. Nowadays it's really hard for me to get to my school in time.

I suggest the police to control the traffic properly and the public to follow the rules of the road. If everyone follows the rules, then we will see a big change in Dhaka streets and traffic jam will be reduced.

Md. Aiman Sharif
The Aga Khan School
Dhaka

Good customer service

Good customer service is the lifeblood of any business. You can offer promotions and slash prices to bring in as

many new customers as you want, but unless you can get some of those customers to come back, your business won't be profitable for long. In Bangladesh service providers hardly think that way. Good customer service is all about bringing customers back. And about sending them away happy happy enough to pass positive feedback about your business along to others, who may then try the product or service you offer for them and in their turn become repeat customers.

If you're a good salesperson, you can sell anything to anyone once. But it will be your approach to customer service that determines whether or not you'll ever be able to sell that person anything else. The essence of good customer service is forming a relationship with customers. But in Bangladesh in most of the places you will find the salespersons are busy gossiping, hardly paying any attention to you. If you go to any big shopping malls you will find salespersons with grumpy look and speak to customers in a very unfriendly way, and there is none to complain. Same scenario is in the

renowned hospitals, where you will find hospital staff very unfriendly despite paying a huge amount of bill at the end of the day.

In Bangladesh we believe once we have established our business, customer will come to us regardless to any service we offer to them, but they should understand that customer service is the top most service they should be providing to people if they want them to come back. During festival seasons these salespersons seem to become harsher than usual time and their behaviour towards the customers deteriorates.

Providing good customer service is a simple thing: Behave politely with customers, listen to them with care, pay attention to their need, deal with them smilingly and always treat your customer as you want to be treated as a customer. There is an old saying - "One customer, well taken care of, could be more valuable than \$10,000 worth of advertising."

Badal Hasib
Ex Pro Consul
Western Diplomatic Mission
in Bangladesh

Save Dhaka



AMDAUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Dhaka is the 9th most populated capital city in the world. Its all areas, localities, roads and streets, govt. offices and commercial places, markets and bazaars, schools, colleges and universities, bus terminals, river stations, railways stations, banks and hospitals and what not are over crowded and jam-packed.

The city of Dhaka is beset with chronic problems of load shedding, water supply and sewerage, gas supply, garbage disposal, pollution, indiscriminate parking of vehicles, street hawkers and terrible traffic jam.

The area of Dhaka is very small but the population is over one crore and fifty lakh. Yet more and more people are arriving in Dhaka daily.

Reports say that Dhaka is at the

threshold of a big earthquake that may happen any time. What will happen if a 7-9-magnitude earthquake hits Dhaka? In our normal and day-to-day life we cannot rush a serious and dying patient by ambulance to hospital for treatment, nor we can carry a dead body to the graveyard for burial in time due to traffic jam.

What do our authorities concerned say? How will they carry out rescue operations?

We all must be always alert, take precaution and be prepared for the eventualities and save Dhaka from becoming another Haiti.

O.H. Kabir
Dhaka