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Communicating with the children

If family violence teaches children that might makes right at home, how will we hope to cure the futile impulse to solve worldly conflicts with force? Children are a wonderful gift. They have an extraordinary capacity to see into the heart of things and to expose sham and humbug for what they are. Parents say work pressure prevents them from communicating with their children. The young, who are innovative and effective in communication, spend more time with friends and peers. They doubt their parents' skills in comprehension and try to avoid interaction. Their concern is modernism and liberation.

This situation often forces parents to be too liberal or dictatorial

two extremes of leadership. Counselling to educate parents and children is a must because it is not always possible to recreate a studio setting, as seen on television, to exchange feelings or make confessions. Parents must think of new ways of telling their children that they care for their enthusiasm, ideals, goals and aspirations. They will then be more receptive to advice. Many children, especially adolescents, will blossom if they get friendly advice. In their anxiety to ensure a better future for their children, parents forget the basic principle "give respect and take respect."

It is among the commonplaces of education that we often first cut off the living root and then try to

replace its natural functions by artificial means. Thus we suppress the child's curiosity and then when he lacks a natural interest in learning he is offered special coaching for his scholastic difficulties. Parents love their children and punish them only to get the best out of them. It is children who should respect the love shown by their parents, even if they are punished. The reasoning of many parents is "we were handled by our parents like this. Why not we do the same?" This only results in aggression among children. If they are dealt with like friends, relations will be smooth.

Gopal Sengupta
Canada

How can I leave out the most hilarious sign of all? A new one on Banani says "Call us if you need help". It is from the local Cop shop. They must think we are all crazy. At least there is a silver lining. The signboard painters and paint companies must be doing a roaring trade.

Sikander Ahmed
Gulshan-1, Dhaka

Community e-Centre

With the help of Community e-Centre the door of information technology will be open for marginalized and hard to reach area's people. The govt. has taken it as a challenge, which is a part of digitalisation of Bangladesh. Of late, the Planning Commission took a project of Tk. 598 crore to fulfil the dream of digital Bangladesh.

Community e-Centre will work as a storehouse of information. People can get information about education, health, agriculture, etc., there. This project will create employment opportunities for rural women.

We urge the govt. to implement the project as soon as possible.

S.M.Abu Nayeem Sarker
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Road built for self destruction

Road No. 8 in Gulshan 1, for about 100 meters for the main avenue towards the best was badly damaged. Recently Gulshan Municipality had it rebuilt. The top layer was of 2 to 30 inch thick concrete. The concreting was done throughout the day on 30th October. However, no arrangements were made to cure the concrete, and the concrete cast, was not kept wet. Without curing the concrete road surface will crumble within the next few months.

Seeing the road surface totally dry next morning (31st October), since I live nearby, I went to the Municipal office and told this to the Executive Engineer and requested him to ensure that the concrete road surface is properly cured at least for a week, if not more. I saw the road again on the next two days (1st & 2nd November) and found the road surface totally dry! Only on 31st October after I told the Executive Engineer the road was wetted late in the afternoon of that day; and that was all the curing done. No wonder this road will start cracking and breaking up in



US midterm polls: an observation

The setback sustained by US President Barack Obama's democrats in the recently held midterm polls was mainly due to American people's dissatisfaction over the present employment situation. A large number of Americans are experiencing problems in securing new jobs or in retaining their running jobs.

In fact, President Obama and his government are well aware of the critical employment situation and they have already started exploring new job opportunities for the Americans both in home and abroad. One of the steps as I observed towards realising this end, Obama government has already taken a programme in refreshing and improving relationship with economically advanced Muslim countries. Recent successful visit of the US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to Malaysia (a US Secretary of

State's visit to Kuala Lumpur after 1995) affirmed Obama government's efforts towards exploring new job opportunities.

I am confident that the Obama government will soon overcome all the problems and regain their popularity among the Americans as well as other nations with President Obama's mission to "Change".

Meanwhile I would like to sincerely request our government to intensify its efforts to further strengthening relationship and understandings with brotherly Muslim countries so that they import more manpower from Bangladesh and let those Bangladeshis who are already working to live and work without any hassle.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
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Depressing news

I have to brace myself before opening newspapers or turning on the television or radio, knowing very well that disappointing news is waiting there. In the November 4, 2010 issue of The Daily Star, there is quite a number of such news. Road crashes kill 9, 60 hurt in cop-student clash in city, BSF kills 1, man kills wife in city, JU journo assaulted by BCL men, agitators besiege BRTA office, abductors kill 4-year-old boy, muggers stab trader to death. The situation is worsening day by day, and there is no improvement. To tackle the situation law-enforcing agents must fan out all over the country and remain vigil all the time. Criminals must get exemplary punishment, in no circumstances should they be allowed to get away.

Nur Jahan

Chittagong

Predatory lendings

As the Obama administration rejects a foreclosure moratorium and austerity protests grip Europe, Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz backs calls for a foreclosure moratorium and says opponents of a new government stimulus "don't understand basic economics."

One of the first bankers to loan money to the government was a German who became known as Rothschild who started lending to the prince in power in the late 1700s and who soon found himself a part of the national finance business. Rothschild then sent his five sons to the major cities of Italy, Austria, France and England to set up similar banks, which soon became powerful in the same manner, all the while cooperating with each other and not divulging their business secrets to outsiders.

Those same mortgage companies, the banks, are engaged in predatory lending practices. They weren't asking what was the best mortgage for these homeowners; they were asking what was the mortgage that generated most fees for me. The way the mortgage system worked, they could take bad mortgages, sell them off to investment banks that would repackage them and sell them on to other people.

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Writer and the altruistic politician

In her recent remarks, noted Indian writer Arundhati Roy stated, "I pity a nation that needs to jail those who ask for justice." Her statement is in particular challenging the recent outcry of some politicians who demand that she must be brought to justice for sedition.

What Arundhati Roy voiced is that 'freedom' is possibly the only source of emancipation for the ordinary citizens of Kashmir. Moreover, I acknowledge that this is not only her sentiment but of millions who have compassion for the tortured people of Kashmir. Nevertheless, the intention of the passage is not to contribute to the debate on whether 'independence' of Kashmir is a solution or not, but rather to shed light on the phenomenon that writers repeatedly feel frustrated with politicians. They feel that politicians fail to see the bigger picture, and are often satisfied with what economists call 'the second best solution'.

Such was definitely the case between Tagore and Gandhiji. For example, Tagore criticized the over-emphasis of nationalism in colonial India, and argued for a greater focus on internationalism. Yet, Gandhiji contradicted by pointing out that one must reach internationalism through ones dedication to nationalism.

My purpose here is not to argue whether Tagore was right or Gandhiji was wrong, but state a trivial fact that nationalism is probably the most fundamental force that drives an altruistic politician. It is a force that makes him crisscross a nation to identify solutions through which the masses can rise above poverty. It is an ideal for which a politician is willing to sacrifice his own existence. It is an idea that he can't stop romanticizing.

Hence, to a politician who loves his nation and derives his identity from its existence - 'Azadi' of a particular state is never the solution. It is also not the solution because altruistic politicians, who fight vested interest of various quarters in every policy meeting, knows that the 'second best solution' is possibly the only

pragmatic solution that is worth voicing given that the world is not completely full of Arundhati Roys.

Ashikur Rahman
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Plastered with signboards

Once upon a time, Dhaka was known as the City of Mosques. Now it can well be known as the "City of Signboards". They come in all shapes and sizes, black 'n' white/coloured, as banners, leaflets, stencils and huge hoardings, costing from a couple of takas to elaborate affairs costing lacs with their own lighting/scaffolding. They do not bother if they are an eye-sore, obstruct view and traffic or a nuisance for those who wish to keep their walls etc clean. Who is there to protect/protect?

They advertise almost anything that you may desire. Coaching centres,

educational institutions are the current leaders each extolling the quality of 'education' they impart and close by are hundreds of A-Z Sirs, teaching everything from ABC to Advanced Physics and beyond. Cosmetics, fast food, tuition wanted, house to-let, transport for hire, etc are other favorites.

Then there are the 'helpful' signboards: "Dustbin", where you can throw your garbage, if not already thrown on your head from the 5th floor, "Bus Stop" where you will never get a bus nor does it stop there, "No Hawkers" where you can buy your daily vegetables, fruits, etc. The most futile of them all is of course, "No Parking or Reserved Parking or Parking For Loading and others", where you can park your Gas Guzzling Monstrosities (GGMs) with confidence, where you can see 4-5 cars parked abreast amongst half-a-dozen "No Parking" signs.

Traffic jam



Let us have a look at the main causes of traffic jam at a glance:

- 1) Lack of proper planning
- 2) Inadequate road facilities
- 3) Plying of unfit vehicles
- 4) Misuse of existing road facilities as car parking is found here and there.
- 5) Ignoring traffic rules
- 6) Not having modern transportation facilities like metro way, elevated expressway, flyover, over-pass and

under-pass, etc.

According to the statistics, the total economic loss due to traffic jam is Tk. 19,000 crore a year. As a result, our economic development is being severely hampered. Some say that Dhaka would not be liveable within a few years, as the motion of life has come to a standstill due to traffic jam. Planners and experts say that still we have some time left in our hand to find a way out.

They have emphasized to implement DAP (Detailed Area Plan) to face the problem in the coming years. RAJUK and DCC have already taken many initiatives to implement DAP.

It is expected that in future people of this mega-city would find a good environment to live in.

Eng. Md. Mehebab Haque
BUET

Good leaders

According to Promoth Chowdhury, a renowned writer of the Bengali literature, "Reading book is one of the best habits of human beings." I am sure people around the world who love to read books would agree with the statement.

In a word, reading books help you to grow. The great leaders of the world were good readers too. By encouraging our young generation to read more we can help create good leaders.

Shohag Mostafij
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Childcare homes

We are working parents. My wife is a teacher of a school run by an NGO for the underprivileged children. I am a teacher of a private university. My university is not very far from my house, but I have to start very early in the morning because of traffic jam. No body is there to take care of my 6-year-old daughter Tahiti when we are not in home. A governess stays with my daughter after she returns from her school. But she cannot manage to come every day.

We are in a big trouble raising our daughter. I think there are a lot of parents like us. There are a few childcare homes in the city, which are beyond the reach of the middle class.

Our govt. should set up more quality childcare homes in Dhaka.

Zafar Alam Bhuiyan

Lecturer of Fashion Design

Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology

An appeal

A good number of students of Monipur High School go to attend their classes from Ahmad Nagar, East Monipur and Janata Housing of Mirpur, using a connecting road at Popular Housing-1, Barabagh. At the entrance of this road there is a welding shop. In the welding shop most of the workers are young and they do their works in the middle of the road creating a barricade to the passengers. They even tease the school going girls.

I would request the authorities concerned to take action against this.

Aresident
East Monipur
Mirpur, Dhaka

A new trend

We all know from our daily experiences that the public buses plying on different routes of Dhaka City are not enough for carrying all the commuters. A new trend has developed among the bus drivers. During office time all local buses declare themselves as Sitting Service Buses and raise the fare. The helplessness of the people at that time is beyond description.

Mobarak Ali
Gopibag, Dhaka

Illegal police practice

How long more will the government ignore the sickly, worsening law and order situation?

Every day news of grisly incidents of murder, rape, acid throwing, land and property grabbing, mugging, maiming, and even-teasing to mention but a few reach our breakfast tables in quality newspapers. Soon it won't be safe for us to leave our homes in fear of what awaits us outside. We learned recently from Sir Frank Peters about school-boy Aaquib Tanveer who was mugged at gunpoint in broad daylight on his way to school and his seven-times mugged school friend. The boys didn't report the crimes because they would have to pay baksheesh to the cops. The noble gentleman then asked how many more hundreds or thousands of crimes are committed that go unreported because of this illegal police practice. That's what we would all like to know.

The first duty of every police force worldwide is to gather crime information, then resolve them.

We hear soothing superficial words from the government telling us everything is under control, but how can that be if crimes are not even chronicled? It's illogical and insults our intelligence.

This government can do itself and the nation a favour by taking whatever hard measures deemed necessary to improve law and order. If this means mass police, government and bureaucratic sackings for the eventual good of Bangladesh, so be it. It's a small price to pay.

Professor Shajahan Khan
Chittagong