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Price hike of essentials

In the last general election, the ruling Awami League had pledged to keep the prices of essentials within the reach of the common man. But we notice with great frustration that the govt. has miserably failed to control the rise in the prices of all the essential commodities.

A TCB report says that the prices of rice and wheat increased by 44% and 52% respectively in a single year. Prices of edible oil also rose by 35%. Likewise, prices of all other essential commodities like pulses, egg, sugar and milk powder have registered a sharp rise in recent days. At present, coarse rice is selling at Tk. 33 per kg, whereas it was Tk. 28 only a few months ago.

The poor and the people belonging to fixed-income group are groaning under the heavy wheels of spiralling prices. But the govt. has so far been

unable to protect them. We hear of the existence of syndicates of unscrupulous traders who are involved in price manipulation. But the govt. has so far failed to thwart them. Why? Are these syndicates more powerful than the govt.?

The govt. should massively expand the OMS programme all over the country, reactivate the TCB and immediately evolve a strict monitoring system to bring stability in market. The Awami League led grand alliance govt. must keep its election pledge to keep the prices of all essential commodities within the reach of the common people. The continuous price hike of essentials may blur all other plus points of the govt.

Md Mohsin Ali
Nuton Courtpara
Kushtia



PHOTO: STAR

The tilting edifice

Another building built on the foundation of corruption is tilting, teetering on the brink of falling on the adjacent buildings. It seemed to me that it is not the building but the edifice of our nation, achieved through so much sacrifice and blood, is tilting dangerously, thanks to the ruling party's wanton disregard for the national security, safety, sanity and solidarity.

It seemed to me buildings are speaking out revolting the age-old corruption. What have we done to free Buriganga and other rivers from illegal occupation and pollution? The hazards of Hazaribagh are lingering, thanks to the government's dilly dallying to relocate the tannery. The giant machine of corruption is out there to crush everything.

Can't you hear the rumbling around? Nature is revolting; a fume of anger is

fomenting somewhere ready to erupt.
Abdus Subhan
Lalpur, Natore

Certificate of appreciation

There is something dreadfully wrong with this society when we can't even say 'thank you' appropriately to those who deserve it. I'm referring to the greatest achievement this country has witnessed since its birth the conquest of Mount Everest by Musa Ibrahim. An outstanding achievement if ever there was one. It won the hearts of Bangladeshis globally.

The snow had hardly melted on Musa's boots at his Kathmandu hotel when foreigner Sir Frank Peters proposed the novel and brilliant idea to encapsulate the young ever-smiling Bangladeshi hero on a postage stamp which was applauded by, and

echoed the sentiments of, all Bangladeshis worldwide.

In an English-language newspaper he said, "not only would the stamp bring in much needed foreign revenue, but it would also serve as a unique certificate of appreciation from the nation to Musa and inspire other Bangladeshis to achieve similar greatness." Good intent and inarguable logic, but still no stamp. It's an injustice.

He has brought such great honour and worldwide applause to a country that seemingly doesn't appreciate it. Honourable Prime Minister, Musa Ibrahim not only deserves his picture on a postage stamp, but also a plot of land.

I'm confident that I'm speaking on behalf of all the people of Bangladesh in this regard.

Tanzara A. Ahmed
Austin, Texas
USA

Motijheel CA

Motijheel commercial area is a business hub of the capital city of Dhaka.

There are many sky high buildings packed with innumerable govt., semi-govt. and private offices and establishments where thousands of people are employed. Further, thousands of people from near and far come and visit the area daily for their business, commercial and financial purposes.

Unfortunately, a chaotic and disorderly situation prevails all over the area from 9am to 9pm daily. The roads and footpaths are overcrowded and jam-packed. Thousands of all types of vehicles are parked here and there haphazardly. Hawkers and vendors crowd the whole area. Every thing people need is sold on the streets and footpaths. A visit to Motijheel commercial area makes one wonder whether Motijheel is a commercial area or a bazaar.

We advise the authorities concerned, especially the DCC, to kindly look into the matter and take positive and concrete measures to make Motijheel commercial area a neat, clean and disciplined place in the interest of public service.

O. H. Kabir
Wari, Dhaka

Prescribing antibiotics

A front page lead article on the subject, was published in a local English daily on 8th November, about the easy across-the-counter sale of any drug, which, as reported, was not legal!

In Bangladesh context however, anyone can write the name of any medicine, or ask for it, and unless it is not a dangerous poison, the chemist shops will gladly sell it to anyone. You do not need a prescription to buy any drug, if it is in stock, you get it! As reported, 75 percent of antibiotics prescribed were unsuitable, while 7 percent were outright harmful! Does it mean that the balance 18 percent were appropriate drugs prescribed!

However, may be this is not representative for all rural areas in Bangladesh. In rural areas, quite often the shopkeeper will listen to your complaints, and sell you a medicine. Their judgment is accepted in good grace, and if the drug is cheap, the patient is happy! Regarding the observation in the news report that "village doctors are not allowed to give prescription drugs," I am ignorant of any such specific law in

Bangladesh. Here the drug trade, except for some levels of price regulation and manufacturing permission, is quite an open market environment, as far as the drug retail is concerned! I wonder how the "illegal" mentioned in the headline, comes from? Is there any law on prescription and sale of drugs, and without prescription sale of all drugs are prohibited? For the fact of life in Bangladesh is otherwise!

S.A. Mansoor

Dhaka

A father of 11 children!

It is reported in the daily Shamakal that a family planning inspector in Cox's Bazar is a proud father of 11 children and yet his wife is carrying the 12th child. If the report is true, then in my opinion the

inspector has committed a crime.

Bangladesh is already plagued with this incurable disease, whereas Mr. Shahabuddin is supposed to eradicate this phenomenal problem, he is rather contributing towards it. This particular act of Mr. Shahabuddin should be an eye opener for the policy makers of the country. Having more than one child per family should be declared as an act of crime against humanity. All the development efforts shall go in vain, if the population boom is not arrested. Time is running out, please save the nation before it is too late.

Saleh Ayub
One-mail

What would have happened?

It is gathered from the media news that during the recent bilateral talks between the US President Barack Obama and the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi, Indian Officials had blocked three US reporters from entering the venue to cover the meeting. It was earlier agreed that eight American reporters would be allowed to cover the meeting. This had seriously angered US President's Press Secretary Robert Gibbs who strongly protested the Indian Officials'

my opinion, the trees in the city roads are dying due to lack of care.

As we destroy trees, they destroy our life in turn. We should plant another 550 trees to recover the loss.

I would request the government to take initiatives to plant a large number of trees in and around the city and take special care of them. The govt. should also encourage people to plant more trees.

Choudhury Tasnim

The Aga Khan School, Dhaka

Death of trees

In the front page of The Daily Star on 12th November 2010 a report titled "Trees dying in Dhaka" was published. It says till now experts are clueless behind the reasons of death or decay of trees. More than 550 trees have died in the last four years in the city!

Some experts think that the rain trees might have decayed due to lack of proper environment, soil problem and air pollution. Sulphuric acid, nitric acid, hydrochloric acid and other types of acids in the air are also responsible for the death of trees. Experts have cited various other scientific explanations behind the death of these trees. In

decision by threatening to pull Obama out of the talks if all the eight US reporters were not allowed to cover the bilateral talks. Finding no other way, the Indian official eventually allowed the full American press delegation together with many other Indian reporters to cover the event.

The question is what would have happened had Press Secretary Gibbs pulled Mr. President out of the bilateral talks? Professor M Zahidul Haque Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University Dhaka

Eye medicine

The letter published on the above subject in The Daily Star very clearly stated the problems faced by the glaucoma eye patients for procuring the imported medicines at a very high cost from the local market. We are a poor nation and the purchasing power of our people is very limited. Most of the earnings of our people are spent for food and shelter. Therefore, if someone gets sick, then they have to borrow money for the treatment.

Glaucoma treatment is very expensive and it is not curable. It is therefore necessary that all the medicines required for Glaucoma treatment should be manufac-

ured in our country. This will ensure availability of medicines at a reasonable price for the people.

We are sure our local medicine manufacturers will come forward and take necessary steps for public interest.

Jahan Ara
Bailyroad, Dhaka

Killings by BSF

The BSF continues to kill the poor Bangladeshis at their own free will. This time again two cattle traders have been killed as reported in your esteemed daily. Has anyone ever heard of a drug peddler being killed by the BSF? At least I have not. It does not mean that the drugs do not come from India. As a matter of fact, all most all the drugs used by the addicts of Bangladesh are made in India. So why does not a drug peddler get killed by the BSF? The answer is very simple, the neighbouring giant does not want so, for reasons best known to them. I am rather sure their intention is definitely not good. That is the reason why only the poor Bangladeshi cattle traders and farmers get killed every now and then.

The BSF killings continue unabated, looks like Bangladesh has lost its voice to protest such illegal killings.

Nigar Chowdhury
One-mail

Drug addiction



ZAD AMIR ISLAM / DRINKNEWS

A study of the Department of Narcotic Control of Bangladesh reveals that nearly 40% students between the age of 15 and 30 in our educational institutions have taken to different forms of drug and other crimes. According to the study, both female and male medical students are more addicted to drugs as they have easy access to pharmaceutical products. The study also unveils that most of the addicted students justify their addictions with depression as they live in hostels having limited opportunity for recreation and too stressed with their studies.

Other reasons being very limited or no extracurricular activities, emotional issues, smoking-habits, peer pressure, curiosity, maintaining status in friends' circle, unemployment etc.

This is an extremely harmful disease that will cripple our future generation. The percentage is dreadful and if we fail to take effective measures in time the menace will keep on spreading and the result is not too difficult to imagine. The DU VC has opined that the effective remedy to divert them from this vicious cycle is to involve them in different pursuits, and one eminent psychologist has advised appointing psychologists at educational institutions.

It is the duty of everyone in the society including the people in power to come forward to arrest the evil. And we must remember that, "Whatever misfortune befalls us it is because of the things our hands have wrought and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness". So, it is our duty to find the remedy.

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur R/A, Khulna

Toxic wastes and chemicals



MUNEM WASIF / DRINKNEWS

The hazardous wastes of Hazaribagh tanneries are now flowing through the city drains polluting most of the areas of Rayerbazar. The toxic effluent having a bitter smell is not only polluting the surrounding areas but also posing a serious health hazard to the people living in the adjoining areas. A lot has been written in the newspapers. Television channels also gave coverage highlighting the peril of the toxic wastes and other chemicals that are being used in the tanneries. The successive governments in the face of

protests by the locals took a massive task of rehabilitating the tannery industry elsewhere with all modern amenities.

However, it is very unfortunate that the owners of the tanneries show utter reluctance to shift their factories. I feel the government should take stern measures and make them shift as soon as possible and save thousands of people from the danger of toxic wastes and chemicals.

Humayun Hyder
Zikatola, Dhaka