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WAHID ADMANI / DRINKNEWS

Preserving our Liberation War sites!

Most papers reported on 2nd December of the High Court reminding the government of its duty to preserve the Liberation War sites! It is a shame for the nation, the governments and now the Awami League, that two years on, they have done nothing towards preserving our historical sites related to our liberation struggle. Despite the writ petition in 2009, we are still ignoring our own history. One wonders why it needed a writ petition to the Hon. High Court by a few patriotic citi-

zens, to point out to the powers that are, of this vital national duty. Was it not the duty of our politicians to do this, since they talk the most about our liberation struggle and the creation of Bangladesh? They were and are unfortunately too busy otherwise!

It only points to their political shallowness and lopsided sense of values; as it seems they are keen to forget the history and sacrifices of many worthy sons of the soil, who sacrificed all, so that we could be free. It seems that their memories

are very short indeed! The government should take prompt steps to have this work completed before their term of office ends, otherwise they should forget about re-election. It is indeed a shame that the Hon. Court of Law has to remind us of our patriotic duty to preserve the key locations where our history was initiated, that led to the war of freedom and the birth of Bangladesh!

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Politics of hartal

Although BNP joined one or two parliament sessions, it is a matter of regret that this opposition party could not play a significant role in making the parliament effective. Besides, politics of hartal that caused huge loss to our economy has added fuel into the flame. BNP's decision of not joining the parliament has made the people frustrated. MPs of BNP can even resign any time from the parliament; they have warned the government about it. Undoubtedly, this decision is leading the whole country again to the politics of clash.

Democracy cannot be strengthened by quitting parliament and declaring hartals. The opposition will have to give up the bad practices. On the other hand, the government will have to show tolerance to the opposition, so that they cannot find any clue to declare any destructive programme like hartal. Hartal cannot be acceptable in any circumstances. The common people are also against this practice. But those who are in the opposition consider hartal the main weapon of movement for ousting the government. After the experience of 1/11, we hoped that the country would get rid of the politics of hartal. But the reality is different.

Lutfur Rahman
Ghoraghat, Dinajpur

Dr. Yunus - our pride

What is going on in our country? We are criticising Dr. Yunus in a way which is so

shameful for the nation. Dr. Yunus achieved the Nobel Prize for his role in eradicating poverty. He introduced microcredit to the world. It is a widely accepted theory and acknowledged by the world famous economists. He established his theory through his works. But we did not stand behind him, rather we criticised his getting the Nobel Prize. I felt so bad when I saw a procession coming out of Dhaka University shouting slogans against Dr. Yunus. Our PM also commented on the incident and demanded proper investigation into the matter which was unfortunate.

I urge the PM and the people of our country to stop criticising him and think about the positive aspects of his theory and work.

Ashfaq Ahmed
IBBL, Raipur Branch
Laxmipur

Bangla dailies' reports

One cannot get the actual stories behind the news by reading Bangladeshi dailies, especially the Bangla dailies. For example, most Bangla dailies carried the news of shifting Khaleda Zia's household belongings under big headlines. This is not a big news for the nation. The story behind this news is very simple. Begum Zia has lost her legal battle and she is vacating the cantonment house. Of course, she deserves some notice from the media, but not this big coverage.

For the last few days, the Bangla dailies have been

publishing news under big headlines about the alleged financial irregularities of Nobel laureate Dr. Yunus without carrying out any investigation. Dr. Yunus is an asset of Bangladesh, he has brought honour to the country; and his reputation is the country's reputation. Even if he has done any wrong, we should not allow others to know that before we are confirmed about the fact. We cannot wholly believe the version of the news of Norway TV unless and until we know the fact from him and also from the government. But the Bangla dailies have published many stories about Dr. Yunus which is unethical. I believe the local newspapers are responsible very much for creating image crisis of the country globally.

I think the newspapers should play a significant role in creating a good image of the country.
Shafiqul Islam
NY

Hindu communities' woes

While I was in Bangladesh a few weeks ago, I went to my village where I grew up. In our village, there were almost 50 Hindu families in 1971 and now there are only seven families left. More shocking is that these remaining families are now the poorest of all. Most of them once had agricultural land, were relatively affluent, but now landless.

What happened to these Hindu families? The majority of them left their beloved

motherland and moved to India. A few families, who did not go to India, moved to Dhaka or nearby cities. I met a few of these families in Dhaka and found that almost all of them now live in rented apartments and have no ability to buy any apartment or house. Their condition is no better than those remaining Hindu families in the village.

Everybody mentioned three main reasons behind this situation. The first reason is the existence of the Vested Property Act, formally known as the Enemy Property Act. With the help of this single law the powerful people grabbed their land forcefully, with false paper; in some cases, the Hindus sold their land at a nominal price for fear of losing it anyway. The second reason is the discriminatory practice by the government and the private sector in case of job opportunities, education, bank loan and even the distribution of relief materials during natural disasters. The third reason is lack of security.

The condition of the Hindu communities will continue to deteriorate until they stand up against this injustice.
Subodh C. Biswas
Edwards, Illinois, USA

Ragging

Ragging is a nasty manifestation of popular culture. But what will be accomplished by assigning new police functions to school or college administrations? A look at child rearing in Bangladesh will reveal the roots of ragging. Girls appear to have lesser

scope or opportunity for anti-social behaviour. But in the case of boys, a great deal is overlooked by parents. Even in school, a parent is offended by reports of anti-social behaviour by his son. Perhaps training children for adulthood has to start much earlier. It is difficult to overlook the fact that ragging is cultural in its origins.

The court's directive to educational institutions to put down ragging is welcome. The practice has cost many youngsters their lives. The best part of the order is that it fixes responsibility on college authorities to curb ragging.

Gopal Sengupta
Canada

Custodial deaths

Custodial deaths and extra judicial killings have made our law enforcing agencies controversial. Last year as many as 90 people died in custody. Very recently 17-year-old Sagor died in police custody. His family alleged that he died due to torture by the cops. Astonishingly, we are observing such deaths one after another. Besides, the police show their disgust to file cases in these connections. Thus, these deaths go uninvestigated.

Our media should stand against custodial deaths like they stood against corruption and stalking previously.

Tashrif Billah
EEE, BUET

Hillary's humour!

The American diplomacy sustained a serious jolt following disclosure of a huge volume of classified government documents by the Wikileaks. This disclosure has put the entire world into a chaotic and confusing situation.

Meanwhile, the most admired and dynamic Secretary of State of the United States of America Hillary Rodham Clinton made a little humour with Wikileaks disclosures. In a recent reception at the State Department hosted by Secretary Clinton for the recipients of this year's Kennedy Centre Honours, she said "I am writing a cable about it which I am sure you will find soon on your closest website!"

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural
University
Dhaka

Cardiovascular diseases

The daily Prothom Alo has published a report on the Health Bulletin-2010 of Health Directorate on 27th November 2010. Cardiovascular diseases have been identified as the number one cause of patients' death in the country in the report. And the people aged between 25 to 49 years die mainly of these diseases. The age group

Rights of minorities

I am disturbed by the contrast between the frequent assurances that the racial and religious minorities in Bangladesh are treated honourably and tolerantly and the numerous examples of quite different behaviour that I have come across personally in my years here or read about in your columns - and, so far, have been silent about. These included several murders which got minimal publicity and, usually, no follow-up. On November 30th, you reported two situations, one in Aluari village, Dinajpur and another in Shyamnagar, Satkhira. Mention of the damaging of 'a church' in one of them indicates the village was Christian and in the other one, the community concerned included Hindus.

I wish to know whether the Ministry of Religious Affairs has any staff coming from the minority religions and indigenous communities who can share in the

investigation of cases involving the inflicting of suffering on minorities by actions that include injuring people, confiscating land and destroying valuable crops, trees and homes. However, the worst suffering is surely the helplessness of those whom the local authorities, including the police, refuse to defend against such behaviour so they are made to feel that they are not considered valued citizens of the country with equal rights.

There was a time, when faced with the sexual harassment of stalkers and others, people shrugged their shoulders and said that nothing could be done. Thank God, the country is leaving behind such a feeble attitude and the law is beginning to be invoked with good effect.

Angela Robinson
On e-mail



FOYSAL MAHMUD / DRINKNEWS

Delayed news in DS

We have seen an example of objective and responsible reporting from The Daily Star on December 3. A foreign media circulated a story of fund transfer from Grameen Bank to a sister organisation Grameen Kalyan. Using this as a source the media at home made a news story on December 2 that created undue sensation in society. The news story created disturbance in the minds of the readers. Some of them, who take pride in the performance of Grameen Bank and its winning of the Nobel Peace Prize, were shocked at the allegations.

The Daily Star did not publish any news on this issue on December 2. The newspaper, however, came out with the news on December 3 and explained why it preferred to keep mum on December 2. We are impressed by the reasons why The Daily Star did not publish the news earlier, and especially by the style of presenting the news. We hope the

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media in our country will take a lesson from it in dealing with such issues of national importance.

M. Sekandar Khan
President
SUJAN-Sushasoner Jonya
Nagorik
Chittagong District
Committee

Hijacked Bangladeshi ship

A group of Somali pirates reportedly hijacked a Bangladesh-flagged ship in the Arabian Sea off the coast of India recently. The fate of 26 abductees remained unknown. The government and the naval force couldn't do anything to rescue the ship. Some days have passed, and now the debate has turned into who hijacked the ship. This is really frustrating. The government should do something very quickly to recover the ship from the hijackers.

Fahim Ibne Sarwar
Department of International
Relations
Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall
Jahangirnagar University

Controversial cantonment house

Has Begum Khaleda Zia committed any crime by living long 28 years at the cantonment house? She did not request Dhaka Cantonment Board to allot her that house. The fact is our past government/Dhaka Cantonment Board gave her the house to compensate her after the assassination of her husband President Ziaur Rahman. Begum Khaleda Zia is totally innocent. We are

surprised and shocked, and we fail to understand why Begum Khaleda Zia was evicted from her house after 28 years? Why now this hue and cry about cantonment house?

What would happen in future to the grief-stricken widows of the army officers killed in unfortunate BDR mutiny, if they are allotted flats at Dhaka Cantonment?

In view of the flexible and uncer-

tain decision of our government and legal complications, we would humbly suggest that either a mosque-cum-Eidgah or a public school with a playground may be constructed at the place of the controversial cantonment house to do away with any dispute in future, in the greater interest of law and order and peace in our country.

O.H. Kabir
Wari, Dhaka

Decentralisation of Dhaka



Almost all the countries of the world have two capitals i.e. administrative and commercial. The administrative capital of our neighbouring giant is New Delhi and the commercial capital is Mumbai. Then again, Islamabad is the administrative and Karachi is the commercial capital of Pakistan.

Bangladesh too has a commercial capital, Chittagong, but that is not functional in the true sense of the word. Everything is Dhaka based, in order to get anything done one has to come to Dhaka, and there is no alternative. Furthermore, most of the garment factories are located in Dhaka. All these have complicated the lives of the residents of Dhaka. The residents of Dhaka face manifold problems; severe traffic jam, power shortage, water scarcity, gas scarcity, water-logging, environmental pollution and so on. Almost 40 years into independence, nothing worth mentioning has been done in the way of decentralisation to lessen the burden of population in Dhaka. Decentralisation ought to be the top most priority of all the political parties in power and opposition for the survival of the nation.

I fail to understand why the political leaders do not realise the importance of such an issue, when late Bangabandhu realised the importance of decentralisation way back in the 1970's and planned to implement it accordingly. Now that the Awami League is in power headed by the daughter of Bangabandhu, I hope decentralisation becomes a reality in Bangladesh.

Saleh Ayub, One-mail

