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WAHID ADNAN / DRINKNEWS

## Improvement of traffic situation

The communications minister made some plans to prevent traffic jams in Dhaka city. But he could not implement the plans. He declared to free the footpaths from illegal occupation of hawkers from 1st November 2010. Unfortunately, he could not start the rescue operation, the reason best known to him.

Now our finance minister has decided to reduce traffic jam by imposing restrictions on private cars. Private cars with less than four or five passengers would not be allowed to ply the city streets, he said. I'm doubtful whether he will be able to impose this type of restrictions. He gave examples of Bangkok, Singapore, USA and other European countries' traffic system. We should keep in mind that we are not like one of those countries. We have to solve the problem

considering our own context. We should take some pragmatic steps which will benefit us within a short period of time.

The minister admitted the government's failure in controlling the traffic situation in Dhaka. My point is, failure or success comes after taking an action. But the government did not take any action at all to solve the problem. In many areas, hawkers occupy a big portion of the roads. Some hawkers sell different types of goods on rickshaw van and they easily move from one place to another creating traffic jam.

In my opinion, the government can easily improve the traffic situation if it really wants to.

**Nirmal Singha Chowdhury**  
Gopibagh, Dhaka

## Unpleasant truth



The reaction of the police commissioner to the TIB report was no exception. In the West the motto of the police is to serve and protect, I am not sure what the motto of Bangladesh police is. Police in Bangladesh hardly serve the purpose, which is rendering service to the people at all times. Very few seek police assistance at the time of their need.

If an online poll is conducted, I am confident that majority of the people will express their dissatisfaction with the performance of the police. Hence, the report of the TIB is not baseless. The police should rather put their efforts to earn the trust and respect of the people instead of reacting in such a manner and thereby improve their ratings on the TIB corruption list.

**Nigar Choudhury**  
On e-mail

## Torture of SQC

On December 21, some Bangla newspapers carried a news item which said that BNP would raise the issue of police torture on SQ Chowdhury with the United Nations. The party believes that the present government is violating human rights by arresting and torturing their leader.

The UN is a forum which has been established to protect human rights all over the world. So it will definitely accept the complaint and review whether the government of Bangladesh is violating human rights or not. The man, in whose favour the BNP is planning to draw the attention of the UN, is himself a human rights violator, a person accused of committing crime against humanity during the Liberation War in his own country. There are evidences of his personal involvement in killings and arson. The present government has arrested him to put him on trial.

So, we believe there is nothing the UN can do to support SQC. They may request the present government to be fair to him and conduct an international standard trial.

**Shafiqul Islam, NY**

## Mashrafe Bin Mortaza

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has been plagued with injuries since he made his international debut in 2001. Perhaps no other cricketer has suffered so many injuries as Mashrafe. A few months back, he suffered an ankle injury and before that he had to undergo knee operations in Australia. He always remains sidelined due to injury. The time has come for the authorities to decide on the fate of Mashrafe.

**Kaif Hassan**  
Kazi Nazrul Islam Road  
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

## Real face of AL

I have seen the war of independence and the rule of AL after independence. During the period of 1972 to 1975, some connected to the AL could do anything they wanted to. They were hardly brought to justice. The court could take action only against those who did not belong to the party. Reportedly, thirty six thousand people including members of different political parties were killed by different forces, especially the 'Rakkhi Bahini,' and some AL leaders gave jobs to many people including members of Al-Badar and Razakar, for money.

I thank the present government for taking the initiative of bringing the war criminals to justice, but how about the criminals who belong to its own party?

The government should also

disclose the number of freedom fighters who were killed during '72-'75. It is the limitless corruption, nepotism, extrajudicial killings that had reduced the popularity of the then government.

If I were in Sheikh Hasina's position, I would have punished them first before punishing others. May I ask who established one party system in January 1975, and why General Osmani and Barrister Mainul resigned from the parliament?

**Akash**  
On e-mail

## Islamic values!

A good number of letters have appeared in this column on the topic. Some have expressed resentment or dissatisfaction on the performance of Shahrul Khan and his troupe citing Islamic values. I would like to remind those concerned readers that Bangladesh has done away with Islamic fundamentalism back in 1971. Bangladesh is a secular state; as such it is unfair to defend anything on Islamic pretext. Furthermore, I would like to add that merely by being born into a Muslim family and living in a Muslim society does not make a person Muslim.

According to Islam, all human beings are born into Islam; upbringing and religious practice determine the religious identity of a person. Only attending Jumma prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadan, slaughtering huge cattle during Eid and performing hajj every year does not qualify a person to be a Muslim. To be a Muslim, one has to abide by all the tenets of Islam, which is as difficult as holding a burning charcoal by the hand, resisting all kinds of evil temptations, enduring pains and sufferings of life. So, before criticizing anybody, let us first determine whether we qualify for the job or not.

**Saleh Ayub**  
On e-mail

## Death of pilots

The recent death of two BAF pilots in Bangladesh while on training has shed a negative impact in the minds of aspiring pilots. In the last couple of months, Bangladesh has experienced some tragic deaths of pilots on training. This is not only a great loss for the family, but also for the country. Besides, the image of Bangladesh Air Force is going down.

It is high time the government took some pragmatic measures like introducing new training planes instead of dilapidated ones and making sure there is no technical faults before taking off. Otherwise, the number of deaths in such accidents may rise in near future.



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## Restriction on cars mulled for city

*Muhith says it's a move to check traffic jam (December 22, 2010)*

In my opinion, Mr. Muhith came out with many good ideas to solve the transport problem in the capital city, but these are theories. In Bangladesh the problem lies with discipline, educating drivers, passengers and general public, starting from the basics.

**Mohammed Ibrahim**

It has been 40 years of all talks and no action. Such talks ring hollow... it's high time we deliver and boldly say we have done it.

**Expat Bangladeshi**

It is a bit strange that the country's finance minister is doing the job of transport authorities!

**Asad**

A good public bus service is important to reduce the use of private cars as well as traffic jams. A corporate trans-

port agency can efficiently deal all the public transport services in a city - then we can expect a standard service. In most of the cities of developed countries, public transport is managed by a specific corporate agency. In Dhaka, there are millions of bus owners, million types of buses, and million rules of their services. Transport is a service not business. The govt. should control it.

**Manobota Ahmed**

Cars are purchased with hard earned money paying considerable tax which goes directly into state coffers. We pay road tax, fitness tax. We have converted cars to CNG as per government advice. We have to maintain cars costing a great deal of money. How can the government stop us riding our own cars? If the government is determined to enforce the ban, it would then be better to ban all cars from the streets.

Please make available your public transport within minutes of walking distance from every house.

**Reaz Hassan**

Public transport should be improved. And all govt. officers and political leaders should obey the rule strictly. Thanks, honourable Finance Minister.

**Md. Selim Gazi**

Brilliant idea! Since there are very few roads in Dhaka, the city is likely to be clogged with buses instead of cars in a few years. No one seems to be suggesting a long-term suggestion to the problem, like an underground rail system, etc.

**Salam**

Thanks to our Finance Minister. Restriction on cars is already in action in Bogota city; here a car owner can drive his personal car only three days a week, in other days s/he uses public bus or taxi.

**Md. Muslemur Rahman**

Government may impose restriction for a certain period, but it will not be a durable solution, Dhaka city needs to be decentralised.

**Hossain Ahammad**

What about a widow living alone? What if only one person needs to go out?

**Talat Islam**

Most ridiculous solution. Stop the rickshaws, wrong parking on the road, all roads will be 50% clear right away. Build more roads and highways, all

problems will be solved.

The suggestions made here are not to solve the problem, but to create problem for car owners! Why? Are we not entitled to ride or buy a car?

**Qamruddin Chowdhury**

This policy is simply unjustified. There should be some exemptions to the rule without any penalty. In US, there are carpools for cars carrying more than one passenger. That can be applied.

**Dilruba**

Who owns more than one car? Only the businessmen with multiple companies and all of their cars are registered against their firms. One-car owners are the doctors, lawyers and service holders. We know many who own more than twenty cars but none is registered against their name. All are registered with the company. So restriction by odd and even number will not hurt them. No need to do another experiment. Just learn from other countries.

**Ameen Sayeed**

An excellent and timely decision taken by the government. Hope, we will see the positive impact soon.

**Md Zahidul Islam Milton**

While the honourable minister is correct that there are benefits to car pooling in other countries, in the U.S. in particular, I can say they do not prohibit cars with less passengers to navigate the roads or highways. For families here with members who need to travel to different parts of Dhaka, this proposed solution could be trouble-



PHOTO: STAR

## Economic development

Political stability is closely related to a country's economic development. In recent time, some positive signs of economic development are seen in our country. We have many possibilities, and to make use of all these possibilities, politics of hartal should be stopped.

In the past, many countries had shown their interest to invest in China. But they are now showing their eagerness to invest in Bangladesh. As for example, Turkey and Japan now want to invest in Bangladesh. Japan wants to buy various kinds of goods from Bangladesh instead of China. These are all positive signs. Political instability and destructive programmes like hartal can spoil these opportunities. The government and the opposition have to realise this for the sake of our country's economic development.

Besides, the government should take measures to contain extortion, tender manipulation, and solve infrastructure problem like gas and power crisis without any delay. The govt. and the opposition can play a significant role in creating an investment-friendly atmosphere in Bangladesh.

**Lutfur Rahman**  
Ghoraghat, Dinajpur