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LITON RAHMAN / DRINKNEWS

Sham economic growth

G.D.P, expressed in arithmetical number, is the barometer to measure economic development of a country. Obviously, the question is does it stand true to what it is intended for? A cursory look at the state of affairs obtaining in developed and developing economies all over the world will provide instant answer. It is apparent that though a good many countries show meteoric G.D.P growth and high rise of income and wealth, yet the fruits of development do not reach equally, or even at all, to all the segments of the population. In fact, the rich and poor divide further widens and the number of poor multiplies.

In this context, I would like to quote some relevant extracts from the speech of India's Congress party president, Ms. Sonia Gandhi in a recent convention in Delhi: "... The broad mass of people must believe in the fairness of the system if it is to

survive..." "... The story of India's contrasts is well known: ability, aspiration and achievement co-exist with injustice, inequity and inequality. We have more millionaires than ever before, alongside millions who struggle for two square meals a day..."

Therefore, as a conscientious elderly person, I strongly feel that traditional economic growth-matrix should be thoroughly overhauled and restructured. The new measure, in my humble opinion, instead of quantity, should be quality-based, depending on degree of accessibility-weighted average to food, shelter, healthcare, education and all other human rights of the entire population of a country.

S.A. Samad
General Manager (Retd.)
Janata Bank
Bara Moghbazar
Dhaka

Using our territory with zero tariff!

This refers to several news items on the above subject published in our various national dailies on December 01, 2010.

A few weeks back, our Finance Minister AMA Muhith said, 'Bangladesh is geographically a transit country and those who deny it are fools.' He further said that the government has taken the initiative to determine the fees required for the use transit and transshipment facilities through Bangladesh.

We are shocked at the lack of coordination among the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Communications, Home and Shipping. We believe that no one can sign the MOU in the interest of our country. Transit and transshipment is a very complicated and technical matter. We should always think thrice before we take a step, and take into consideration both short and long term effects, benefit and loss.

What was the value of gold when Bangladesh signed the river protocol with India in 1972 for taka 41.2 million only, what is the value of gold today in 2010 and what would be the value of gold after 20-50 years? We are also concerned about the large lorries to be used for carrying Indian cargo by road from Ashuganj to Akhaura. Would the large lorries belong to Bangladesh or India? Who would supply them fuel, ensure their security and maintenance?

O.H. Kabir
Hare Street
Wari, Dhaka

An open letter to Home Minister

The Honourable Home Minister always claims that law and order is satisfactory in the country. I do not know whether she is right or wrong when reportedly 208 people were killed in political violence, 115 in extrajudicial killings, 91 died in police custody, 63 Bangladeshi nationals killed in the border by Indian BSF; when there were 231 incidents of repression of journalists including killing, attack, litigation and arrest; and another 1,790 incidents of rape, in 11 months from January to November 2010.

If she says that compared to the BNP rule it is nothing, and hence the law and order situation is normal, then I have nothing to say. I want to welcome the government for taking the initiative to try the war criminals. But I cannot, because I see war criminals within the AL and they are in very good condition. Moreover, the present government is allowing its student and youth wings to do the same crime committed by the war criminals.

Honourable Home Minister, please learn to tell the truth and then you will be able to do good and bring peace in the country. Rape of innocent girls, reportedly, by the student cadre of the AL, is the worst crime and yet they are going unpunished. Do you want us to believe that you have the ability to take action against the leader of the opposition but do not have the ability to take action against a few young errant members of the party cadres?

M. Hossain, Zigatola, Dhaka

Hats off to Julian Assange

Julian Assange has shaken the world by standing against the superpower America and its allies. WikiLeaks has unearthed lots of significant and unknown data about what America and its allies are doing. We know how America has been doing injustice to other countries. They invaded Afghanistan and Iraq to fight against so-called 'terrorism,' but later the world came to know who the real terrorists are. The world also knows what is going on in Israel and Palestine. Now the USA has targeted Iran for developing its nuclear project. It cannot tolerate the rise of others. It always talks about humanity and democracy but does not without practice it.

However, Assange has already got support and sympathy of many, though his opponents termed him a 'Cyber terrorist' and many want him to be killed. It is not surprising that he will face many more difficulties in future as he has done an uncompromising job.

We need more such brave persons like him to show us the ugly face of America and other powerful countries. Hats off to the 'Cyber hero' Julian Assange!
Mohammad Zia-ul-Haque
Eng. department
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Doing a govt. job

These days a person is often considered to be good or bad by his/her profession. If he or she does a government job, most of the people make good comments about him or her. Sometimes I think if a rickshaw puller does not pull his rick-

shaw, then how will we be able to go to our destination? If all of us do government jobs, then who will do private jobs?

In our society, most of the parents want to marry their daughter off to a person who is doing a government job. A lot of people are struggling to earn their livelihoods in this country. What we need is to work together for our beloved country. People's mindset must be changed.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
Chittagong

Morality and secularism

Morality is the only virtue that makes human race a nation, and even a man great. The international, national, social and family problems that we are facing nowadays are due to lack of morality. All thoughtful people's opinion regarding morality is almost similar. Every religion teaches morality and the believers practice it whole-heartedly. In our society, the best way of teaching morality is to teach religion. The teaching of making a believer is more important than the teaching that makes a person mere educated.

If the secular society makes people educated not believers, morality will be at stake. The reality is that secularism may tend to lead the society to such a situation where education without morality will be taught. However, the teachers can teach their pupils the noble objective of secularism also. Because, it is seen that a peaceful society is built by the inhabitants who are educated and pious as well.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road

Terrible TIB report

We do not need the TIB report stating that the people of Bangladesh paid Tk. 9,591 crore bribe between June 2009 and May this year, or the WikiLeaks to assess how mired we are in corruption. People are aware of the ever increasing corruption in all sectors, thanks to the media.

People thought that political leaders would take lessons from the ordeal they were in during the last unconstitutional caretaker government. But once in power, they went back to square one. People saw helplessly how political vendetta made a triumphant come back with the opposition leader facing false cases and persecution and the ruling party cadres running roughshod over everything with impunity.

I think the present TIB report is the direct result of criminalisation of politics. The government this time is very smart in suppressing the opposition and overlooking the interest of the country. To counter this the opposition is too timid and the people are too helpless. We can now only hope that the government will take cognizance of the TIB report and set to work to salvage the country before it is too late.

Tinku
Lalpur, Natore



NOOR ALAM / DRINKNEWS



WAHID AONAN / DRINKNEWS

Traffic management

An article on the matter was published in a local daily on December 25th. The writer stated that merely restricting private motor cars is not the solution of traffic problems of Dhaka. I agree, and believe that two distinct steps need to be taken to ensure that traffic is streamlined by speed and power. The first step is to segregate traffic by type of drive (powered or manual).

Secondly, traffic police must control traffic by slots on time basis, rather than the traffic density in each direction, as they tend to do all the time.

To ensure uniformity, light (manual powered) and heavy (engine powered) types of transports must have separate and identified lanes. There have to be separate, clearly identified lanes for cycles, cycle-vans, cycle-rickshaws, pushcarts and bicycles. For bus

streets, this is a must, to begin with.

Importantly, policemen managing traffic manually should allow traffic to move in time slots and not till all the vehicles have cross over in one direction, before releasing traffic from the other direction! This is the main reason for bunching of traffic on both sides of the road crossing.

If the traffic policemen strictly follow this routine, then the tendency of traffic bunching up on both sides an intersection can be eased. Another solution, which may not be possible in all the crossings in Dhaka, is to have separate traffic lights for light and heavy vehicles. This should be introduced in Dhaka street crossings, wherever possible.

S.A. Mansoor, Dhaka

of a disease or disorder, and Etymology is a branch of linguistics that traces the origin, development, and changes over time of a word in a language, say English language.

I think to get fully prepared and equipped to compete for success and prosperity in this advanced digital world, a student needs to gather sound knowledge of language application plus knowledge of all the disciplines s/he is regularly exposed to.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University

Etymology and Etiology

My students often ask me for academic help/guidance over cell phone. Recently one of my students asked me the meaning of the word - "Etymology" as he was confusing this word with another word - "Etiology".

Well, Etymology is the study of the origin (history) of words while Etiology is the study of causation. Etymology is related with language while Etiology with diseases. Etiology is the science, which deals with the study of causes or origin

Pursuing old policies



QUDDUS ALAM / DRINKNEWS

It is very unfortunate that the Chief Election Commissioner has discouraged the use of national ID card on the plea that it is not hundred percent complete. Maintenance of national ID for over 70 million people is undoubtedly a continuous process and it will never be hundred percent complete and error free.

In Bangladesh, the past regime's good initiatives are indiscriminately shelved by the next regime. After the liberation of Bangladesh, cricket was discouraged on the plea that it was a Pakistani game. That's why Bangladesh cricket had been in a long pause. However, Bangladesh managed to become a Test playing country in 2000.

The health policy and the ICT initiatives of the Ershad regime were not followed up by the next govern-

ments. So, the "Health for All" by the year 2000 slogan went in vain.

In the early 90s, the Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf initiated a pilot database voter list project in Dapunia union in Mymensingh. But it also met the same fate, because the next government did not continue the project and it took over one and a half decades to get an electronic voter list and national database.

As a citizen of the country, I urge the government to maintain and improve the National ID cards. The present govt. should continue the good projects of the previous govt. to move ahead for good governance and join the digital information era. We must use national ID cards in every possible area.

Saif Tinku, Uttara, Dhaka