

Decentralisation -a must



By decentralising Dhaka metropolis, at least two major problems of the nation would be solved: a) administrative powers to the UZ and UC; and b) reduce congestion. But the MPs are not interested to initiate the move in the JS, and wish to maintain their monopoly at the district, upazila and union council levels. The divisional and district headquarters are not attractive to the investors and entrepreneurs; who all rush to the greater Dhaka Zone. The policy should be- discourage temporary trips to Dhaka for business or official contacts; and not make Dhaka the base for all kinds of activities. President Ershad proposed turning the divisions into provinces, but the idea was rejected by the Prime Minister. Small Bangladesh has the highest density of population in the world (around 1,000 persons per sq km): and it is difficult to rule from Dhaka, (the majority

live in the rural areas, and agriculture is a key factor in development; while a large percentage is illiterate). Secondly, the JS (parliament) is one-eyed and lame; and there is no political consensus at the national level (in 40 years). There are no long term development plans in the transport, energy, gas, IWT and the railways; while higher education is controlled by the private universities based on business profit concept. Corruption is all pervasive: and the TIB's preliminary sample reports are criticised by various vested groups. The governance is drifting along without any visible rudder; with false smugness in dynasty rules. What sins we have committed for which we are being punished for four decades? **A Husnain, Dhaka**

Making the capital market vibrant again

Please do not close the bourse again and again because of panic that gripped the whole capital market due to sudden slide in the prices of all shares in general. This unnecessary closure of the bourse will have a very negative impact on the stock markets both in Dhaka and Chittagong. Hence, please keep the capital market get going as usual in order to bring back confidence and tolerance among the investors. As we all know that this is a very usual practice in the capital market that market will have ups and downs but that does not necessarily force SEC to stop trading hoping that this will keep the slide at bay. What the investors want is a fair probe of the market manipulation. Moreover, the investors want positive assurance from the authorities concerned which will bring back the confidence of the investors and make the capital market vibrant again. **Humayun Hyder**
Zikatola, Dhaka

Import 'sweeping trucks'

The picture with which my mail appeared in these columns on Friday January 14, 2011, took me back to my school days in the 1970's learning about the invention of shoe, most probably a satire, by the world famous poet of the sub-continent. Cleaning a place with broom sticks apparently cleans that particular area or place, but it has a serious adverse impact on the environment and surroundings. I would never have learned about it, had I not have the privilege of living in Houston. While sweeping with broom sticks, dust containing harmful dust mites is spread into the air causing different types of airborne diseases to millions of people benefiting the pharmaceutical industries, the doctors and all those related to this profession. The worst sufferers are those engaged in this age old sweeping profession. With the intention of stopping this rudimentary method of cleaning, benefiting millions

people, I tried to draw the attention of the concerned authority with a view to importing vacuum sweeping trucks from abroad. Million of taxpayers' money is spent whimsically by all governments benefiting the people the least. Why not import some vacuum cleaning trucks, which shall not only revolutionize the cleaning sector but also benefit the people to a great extent, by not exposing them to many a harmful airborne diseases. Hope this time, it does not fall into deaf ears and we witness some thing positive happening. **Saleh Ayub, On e-mail**

Don't free them on bail

Living outside the country we are unable to guess the actual situation of law and order in Bangladesh. Our sources of information are generally the print media and some friends who are there. From print media we have learned that the situation is worse than before while some friends say that the situation has improved. We don't know who are correct. Even in cities like New York, London, Washington, there are lots of incidents of crimes of various nature including murder, kidnapping, rapes etc. So, this is a worldwide problem. Bangladesh is not an isolated place, here people are poor and illiterate and many are jobless. Incidents of mugging, dacoity, land disputes, murders, teasing and harassing women are very common here. Now, vandalism has been added to the list. The present government has declared war against terrorism, arrested many members of terrorist groups. The govt. has already earned support from the world leaders. In developed countries there are strict laws. Any incident of crime is properly investigated, and the law enforcement agencies catch the culprits and put the perpetrators to trial. But in developing countries like Bangladesh, the law enforcement agencies are not that efficient and equipped to investigate the incidents. Here the government should act quickly. People want to see punishment of criminals and not releasing them on bail.

Shafiqul Islam, NY

It all depends on the parents!

Everyone brings out the fault lines between the old generation and the new. Every generation is nostalgic about the innocence and purity of its past because it cannot cope with the demands of the changing times. Concepts, like individuals, have their histories and are just as incapable of withstanding the ravages of time as are individuals. But in and through all this they retain a kind of homesickness for the scenes of their childhood. Hors d'oeuvres have always a pathetic interest for me; they remind me of one's childhood that one goes through wondering what the next course is going to be like - and during the rest of the menu one wishes one had eaten more of the hors d'oeuvres. I never have known a man of ordinary common sense who did not urge upon his sons/daughters, from earliest childhood, doctrines of economy and the practice of accumulation. The new generation is at crossroads: it is caught in a mélange of cultures and lifestyles. It needs the sympathy and understanding and not rebuke of the elders. Being a single child and growing up with video games is traumatic. One must ponder who imposes such a lifestyle on the young. Children have to be reined in by parents to keep them out of harm's way. The need is to bring up children in such a way that they will imbibe moral fear and not trepidation. **Gopal Sengupta, Canada**

Mumtaz Begum denied Ekushey Padak

M. Emad's letter published on January 23rd is a shame on our authorities. In this case the minister turned down the proposal for awarding the 'Ekushey Padak' to Mumtaz Begum; only because he never heard of her! This confirms the opinion, that without 'Tadbir' with accompanying 'the usual sweets' or 'Nazrana or crisp currency notes' nothing gets done! The 'Nazrana' has real power to crystallize even fiction into fact! No 'Nazrana'; see no good, hear no good, and do no good; that is the fact.

We may call him "Minister in Wonderland." **Amused voter, Dhaka**

Keep watch on the Spa centres

Nowadays, 'Spa' is a frequently used word among the health conscious people and beauty sensitive ladies. But what does the word 'spa' means? Well, roughly it is, as I would define "Jol Chikitsa Babostha" (a method of treatment by water) or a "health through water" system. The word 'Spa' is derived from the name of a Belgium town "Spa" meaning 'sprinkles or moistens'. Since the medieval period spa has been in use to treat patients with iron deficiency by drinking iron bearing spring water. Medical terminology for Spa is "Balneotherapy". In this modern age, spa has assumed a variety of types/options which include ayurvedic spa, day spa, medical spa, mineral spring spa, etc. Day spa is usually done at beauty parlors or salons. Aromatherapy, facials, massage, yoga and meditation are some of the forms of spa treatment. Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, particularly in the capital city of Dhaka, quite a large number of beauty parlors and health clubs are offering spa. But I have noticed that there is almost no control of the authority over the establishment, price and quality of the spa centers and beauty parlors. I think some govt. machineries should be made operative to oversee these matters. **Professor M Zahidul Haque**
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University Dhaka

School buses should stay

Recently the government has launched 14 new buses for the use of school going children only. This initiative has been warmly greeted by the students and guardians. This bus service is cheap, safe and to some extent, reliable. It surely has a good prospect if utilised properly. The buses should maintain time and try to earn the trust of the general mass. The bus drivers must be qualified and experienced and the bus assistants must be helpful to ensure the safekeeping of the young ones. Accidents must be avoided at all cost, as only a single accident may ruin the reputation of the whole service. Popularising this service can effectively reduce the traffic congestion that usually persists around the neighborhood of schools. The school bus service must be carried on for the betterment of the transportation system in Dhaka city. **Shahriar Kabir**

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Peter's mission

Two years ago, I wrote a novel "After the Road Accident" where I tried to depict the suffering and struggle of a victim of road accident in our country. So far, I had strong confidence upon my novel. But today after seeing Peter Donnelly and listening to his adventurous plan, all my thoughts began to change. Peter is going to make a history. Being a wheelchair user, he has decided to cross five thousand miles to reach his motherland UK. Can you imagine it? In fact, I have read many adventurous stories but never saw any adventurous hero. I also feel proud to think that Peter is going to start his journey from my country. There is a huge difference between the environment of Europe and our country. The upbringing of Peter and any ordinary person of our country are not the same. Major portion of our population do not consider road accident a problem. The result is our general indifference towards the issue. The people who advocate for road safety in our country are often thought to be cowards. There are many energetic young people who think it's boring and a waste of time to fight against road accident. In this context, there is no doubt that Peter will raise the hope in the hearts of the millions. We strongly believe that Peter would be successful in his mission and reach his home safely. **Pradip Das, Lecturer, BHPi**

East Timor, Sudan and Kashmir

No one doubts the outcome of the referendum in southern Sudan. The voters are sure to vote for secession. Some years ago, a similar event occurred in Indonesia which had to cede a part of its territory, Eastern Timor, to become an independent state in a manner identical with the excision of Sudan's south as it also had a large Christian population. In contrast with the events in Sudan and Indonesia, the stalemate in Kashmir and the resulting standoff between Pakistan and India on it continues and the referendum mandated under the resolutions of the United Nations passed nearly 62 years ago to ascertain the wishes of the people of Kashmir remain unimplemented. Kashmir is being illegally held by India in open defiance of the directives of the United Nations. And yet the world conscience, despite its pretence to high morality and human sensibility, remains unmoved. In the mean time, Kashmiri people, who have been demanding freedom from the Indian stranglehold, continue to live in terror and suffer from the brutal acts of repression. The international mass media does not consider these

Safer rickshaws wanted



May I echo Sikander Ahmed's request for the need of a newly-designed rickshaw to be on the streets? Like millions, I love the rickshaw - not only its convenience and cheapness but the encouragement of a means of earning a living in a way that does not pollute the environment and responds to so many needs. However, when I first got on a rickshaw, I looked around for the safety belt! The narrow sloping seat guarantees that, in the event of an accident, the passenger is thrown out. I am sure I am not the only

person in this dear country who has ended up in hospital. However, I hear that the rickshaw does not need to be re-designed because a first-class job was done on that many years ago by a devoted friend of Bangladesh and a first-class engineer. The only problem is that the adapted design was never officially accepted or put into production. Is there anyone out there to take on the challenge? **Angela Robinson**
Gulshan, Dhaka

Good luck Tigers!



Bangladesh cricket team for the upcoming world cup seems to be a balanced one, although there are mixed opinions and agitations for not including the best pacer of the country Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. There is no denying the fact that Mashrafe is an asset for the team, but one must be fit to play. Irrespective of all the disagreements, it is to be noted that the recent performance of our national cricket team has been remarkable. The entire team is young, energetic and passionate. Our current national team has been showing greater skills and has won many matches including whitewashing strong opponent like New Zealand. It appears that our national cricket team is following the statement 'Success is all about the consistency around the fundamentals'. In terms of batting, bowling and fielding we are obviously more mature and watchful than ever before. We believe that day is not too far away when the Tigers would surprise the people of the entire world by winning the world cup. **Shohag Mostafij**
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No change in fare!

The government has increased the meter fare of the CNG driven auto rickshaws. But still the drivers are behaving in the same way as before. They are demanding extra fare to go anywhere or they are going on

contract basis. This is very irritating. So, traffic police and the government should take extra measures to make the new rule for CNG auto rickshaws a success. **Sharmin Banani**
Dhaka