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Population census

Population census is going to be conducted in the country next month. I hope Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics would add new points in the fifth survey questionnaire. The questionnaire formulated long ago is utilised by the authorities without any change.

Since the beginning of Family Planning programmes in our country in 1975, all educated people became conscious about their family size. But illiterate population is not yet conscious about social factor or their family size. Our government is taking quite a number of good measures to meet the MDGs. During this census, people at grassroots level should be warned of losing many facilities, if they have more than two children.

Dr. Lailun Nahar
On e-mail

Let people of Kashmir decide

India claims it is a democracy but on Republic Day last week, Indian troops were seen preventing the people of Kashmir Valley from taking part in passive resistance against Indian rule.

Those who risked stepping out of their homes had to face the troops' wrath. Despite all these oppressive actions, the Indian army could not stop the people expressing their anger against the state administration. The valley reverberated with anti-government slogans. The Kashmiris showed unity in demanding their right to self-rule as acknowledged by the UN Security Council. Now that Kashmiris have expressed their opposition to the Indian rule, the UN must step in and ask India to honour its commitment to the world body and the Kashmiri people by holding a plebiscite so the Kashmiris decide to remain with India, join Pakistan or opt for independence.

Muhammed Jamil Ather
Karachi, Pakistan

Banning of Pakistan Trio

I was utterly shocked to learn about the banning of three of my most favourite cricketers for as long as five to ten years from international cricket by ICC. Having read the news I was hurt. But later I could justify the ban of the trio because cricket is larger than cricketers and that those who degraded my favourite sport and team must get their due.

Let the banning of Butt, Asif and Amir be a warning to every unscrupulous cricketer who tries to fix matches to feed their greed, shattering the expectations of the millions and stigmatising the team, nation and cricket itself.

A Rahman Shibly
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

A wise decision

There is no doubt that our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wants to make a developed and prosperous Bangladesh by 2021. For this reason she wants to build a new airport.

The villagers of Munshiganj protested the acquisition of land for the proposed airport in Arial Beel. After the clash between local people and police, the Prime Minister asked the ministers concerned to look for alternative sites for the proposed Bangabandhu International Airport, instead of the site chosen at Arial Beel. The villagers hail the government's decision. The govt. has taken a true step to stop the recurrence of such incidents. They proved that our country is truly a democratic country. We congratulate the govt. on taking this decision.

Shamima Yasmin
Department of English
Jagannath University

Student attacks teacher!!

The ruling party's student wing activists of Comilla University reportedly put the academic building of the university under lock and key demanding cancellation of a one-year expulsion order against a party fellow. They also

Bravo Bangladesh



SYED ASHRAFUL ALOM TITO

On February 17, I was going through an AFP (Agence France-Presse) accredited news item published in the "Saudi Gazette" newspaper which appeared under the heading "Bangladesh ready for opening gala". I would like to reproduce below some of the lines from the above news item:

"(AFP) DHAKA: Bangladesh has spruced up its capital Dhaka for the World Cup as it seeks to take advantage of a prime opportunity to re-brand a country often known only for devastating floods and cyclones.

The impoverished South Asian nation has spent more than \$100 million to tidy up for the tournament it co-hosts with India and Sri Lanka, looking at the showpiece as the biggest event since independence in 1971.

Beggars have been paid to stay off roads; hawkers

evicted from overcrowded pavements and buildings given a new coat of paint. Efforts have even been made to reduce the infamous traffic jams in the bustling capital."

My immediate reaction to the above mentioned news item was like this - Men have only a little control over natural phenomena and devastating floods and cyclones is a part of the natural process in Bangladesh. In fact, Bangladesh is a country of lush green crop fields with a rich historical and cultural heritage. Even under so many limitations Bangladesh took the courage to host the grand event of the historical Cricket World Cup in Dhaka.

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

brought out procession on the campus protesting the expulsion of a third year second semester student of Public Administration department of the university. All classes of the university remained suspended since morning following the incident. Campus sources said the expelled student attacked the residence of a lecturer on January 24 bringing allegation that the teacher gave him poor marks in an examination.

I am always worried when students insult, curse or even harm a teacher when they are punished for wrongdoings. Some parents attack teachers and seniors when their children are punished. Teachers are their role models and they act as their parents while in school. That is why they are always expected to lead exemplary lives for students to emulate. Since they represent students' parents, students have to accord them the respect students give to their parents. Therefore, when students go contrary to the rules set for them, students are put right either by their parents or teachers.

However, if students think a particular teacher is picking on students, for no reason, they have to report to their head of the institution. It is, however, wrong for students or parents to harm or insult teachers and seniors. Student attacks on teachers must be dealt with severely.

Gopal Sengupta
Dhaka

Lawyers from overseas for Jamaat!

Your front page report published on 6th. February, points to confirmation of the guilt by the Jamaat's leaders, the killers of 1971! To save their skin, they have got a battery of British legal help. However, lest they forget 'truth shall prevail' and "Although murder has no tongue, yet it speaks!"

Some of the reasons and questions that arise from these steps taken by the criminals from Jamaat are as follows:

1. They are aware of their guilt of war crimes; and the battery of overseas lawyers will be there only to create muddle in the trial, for a hefty fee in Pound Sterling!
2. Do they not trust local lawyers? Or is it that no local lawyer is willing to defend them? The latter is possibly the truth!
3. They are really well-off to go for expensive defense team to save their skins! Why did they not go for a Pakistani Military defense lawyers? That would have been more appropriate for their crimes! Or have their Pakistani mentors disowned them?
4. How will the payment in foreign exchange be arranged? Will they do it through a 'Letter of Credit' or through official remittance channels? Or will they commit another crime by violating the country's foreign exchange



Rickshawpullers rule

While watching a documentary on TV SouthAsia yesterday, I was astounded to learn that a rickshaw puller on an average makes an amount equivalent to US\$200 a month in Dhaka and they have shot to such a fame that TV SouthAsia aired a documentary on them for almost half an hour or so.

How many a graduate makes that amount in Bangladesh? If the statement is correct, I can comfortably say that a very few does. Considering the standard of living of a rickshaw puller, I think they can easily save up to US\$100 a month, which many a graduate making double the amount i.e. US\$400 can not do for maintaining their standard of living.

The rickshaw pullers have not only become rich they also have become powerful which is evidenced by the helplessness of cops on duty at times.

The big businessmen alone are not to be blamed for the exploitation of the people, most of the rickshaw pullers are equally to be blamed, as they compel mostly women passengers to pay them according to their whimsical demands.

Saleh Ayub
On e-mail



Readers' instant comments
on The Daily Star
Online reports.
Log on to thedailystar.net
to leave your comments.

Huge support for Yunus (February 18, 2011)

A few days ago, I commented that Bangladesh being a nation that still depends on foreign aid should be careful in dealing with Dr. Yunus who received foreign money to start microcredit. The matter that happened with NORAD was settled 12 years ago. Nothing else has happened since then. Prime Minister's comment about Yunus was purely personal and shocking. We now see that the interest of Bangladesh is going to be damaged because of her stand against Yunus.

Anonymous

The issue regarding Dr. Yunus needs to be resolved immediately. The newly formed Friends of Grameen could encourage Dr. Yunus to release a statement about his wealth which will show that he has not profited from the organisation. Also, a statement about what the borrower/owner of the organisation earned during their course of business with Grameen will show how people benefited.

Friends of Grameen could let an independent group run the analysis. After all, there should be an assess-

ment of the effectiveness of the system in alleviation of poverty. Let the facts come to light and stop tarnishing the reputation of a Nobel laureate.

Towhid Salam

It is very disturbing that the Bangladesh govt. is trying to remove Dr Yunus from the Grameen Bank based on some questionable allegation made by a foreign TV report. Surely, Dr Yunus has never been a superhuman and he does also make mistakes. But his honesty and sincerity in trying to make a difference in millions of women's lives for many years is beyond anyone's question. The ruling party people should focus on cleaning their own hands. A small glitch in the life of Dr. Yunus should be treated respectfully. Never forget how we all became proud of him, how we convinced ourselves one more time that we could do it when he won the highest honour, Nobel Prize, a few years back.

Mong Sano Marma

A 20% interest rate is indecent, any-

thing above is insane. Yet Bangladesh's Finance Minister and the PM should find better things to do to uplift the miserable conditions of the millions of poor citizens than to attack Dr. Yunus in such unjust manner. It is totally inappropriate, even in Bangladesh, to declare someone guilty, before a fair trial. The appropriate law enforcing agencies should take the lead to conduct a fair and transparent investigation to determine if any law was broken. Until then there should be no judgment even by those in power.

Dr. M Islam

Everybody should support Prof Yunus. The government is apparently carrying out a campaign to undermine the Nobel Laureate's image both nationally and internationally.

M. Bazlur Rahman

The politically motivated attack on pride of Bangladesh, Dr Yunus, is well known. Regrettably, I fear that this move would further worsen hostility of our ministers towards the Nobel laureate.

Amer Chowdhury

Awami League is bringing great shame to the nation by disrespecting Dr Yunus.

Anonymous

Competent persons in Bangladesh always had been put aside. Not only Prof Yunus, many others who had contribution in nation building had been neglected by tricks so that they can't come in policy making. It's not a matter of pro-western or high rates of interests in Grameen, it's simple jeal-

ousy of less competent politicians. If Prof Yunus is a corrupt there is a protocol of justice but verdict given by top politicians before trial is not acceptable.

Dr. Karim

Our Prime Minister is doing disservice to our country. The way she treated Dr. Yunus, a Nobel laureate, is deplorable. Not only that she is trying to put him down, but so ruining the future of our country.

Anonymous

You don't have to necessarily like micro-credit as a solution to poverty to defend the honour of a sincere person. What signal does this send to young and upcoming who want to do something big for our country?

I am reminded of a quote in another context: "We shall have to repent in this generation, not so much for the evil deeds of the wicked people, but for the appalling silence of the good people."

Saleh Tanveer

Prof Yunus is Bangladeshi icon, a great personality and our pride. Some short sighted, narrow vision people in Bangladesh out of sheer jealousy have unleashed volley of propaganda which will soon be overwhelmed by massive world opinion in favour of him.

Saleque Sufi

Down with the detractors of Yunus (though small in number but powerful) who are trying to malign him while the world community stands steadfastly behind him!

Nila

regulations?

We look forward to eventful days ahead.
Man with Memories
Dhaka

Failure all around!

After two years of five-year term it is futile to re fix priorities of a government that came to power after a protracted struggle of 7 years. In spite of best efforts of the Prime Minister, the government is wandering like a rudderless boat.

Government effort to control price hike is lost in the words of the Commerce Minister. The crossfire prescription has failed miserably. Development works are confined in the files of inept bureaucrats. All money and efforts of youths are diverted to the quicksand of elusive share market spreading it to the nook and corner of the country. Roads, highways even streets all over the country are in very sad condition. Communications minister's joyful gesture could not be reflected in any of his divisions. Dreams of Padma Bridge, deep sea port and new airport could hardly inspire the voters who voted two years back en masse.

Since 1970 when I attained voting age I have been voting for the Awami League. I sincerely pray that AL comes to power in the 2014 election. Next 3 years is very crucial not only for the AL but also for the nation. The party in power should immediately reset the priorities, reshuffle cabinet and appoint a full time secretary general for the party. Time is running out fast.

M. Sanaul Haq
Uttara, Dhaka

Make room for Forestry Graduates

An advertisement of 31st BCS was published recently. One thing was noticeable that it invited applications from the graduates and post graduates of Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Soil Science, Environment Science and Forestry discipline for the post of BCS Forest Cadre. I think like other professional cadres, BCS Forest Cadre should be reserved only for the Forestry graduates. Forestry degree is also a professional degree like Engineering, Agriculture etc. This degree is awarded only by three public universities-Khulna University, Chittagong University and Shylet University of Science and Technology in Bangladesh. The students of Forestry dept. study only forest related courses. They mainly learn how to manage forest, forest resources, and wildlife and so on.

However, from the above three universities about 150 students complete their graduation and post graduation every year. They have fewer opportunities to serve in private firms or NGOs except for a few government organisations like BFDC and BFRI. So, a large number of Forestry graduates have to change their track in service life. I hope PSC will change their decision next time and reserve the mentioned positions only for Forestry graduates.

Biswajit Kumar Sarker
B.Sc. (Hon's) in Forestry
Forestry and Wood Technology Discipline
Khulna University, Khulna

BUET or Buet

BUET stands for Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. So far BUET is an abbreviated word, it is written in all capital form. But unfortunately, staff correspondent of The Daily Star is making this mistake consistently. On February 4, in the report on convocation it was written as 'Buet' and again on February 5 in the report on reunion it was written as 'Buet'.

The Daily Star is the most circulating English daily of the country. Many like me read this daily with a view to enriching their vocabulary. In this context, such mistake is really unacceptable. I wish such mistake will not occur again.

Tashrif Billah