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# Liberation war in textbooks

We have a glorious history of liberation war. Yet, our schools do not teach this chapter with much importance. The Bangla medium schools follow "Amar Boi" as the textbook up to class-7. Each part of this book includes a chapter on one of the seven Bir sreshthos. A few schools teach a little of 21st February, 26th March and 16th December as part of general knowledge. The English medium schools follow only the book given from the board, that is, "Amar Boi". Our students grow up not knowing much on liberation war. It is sad that after 40 years of our great liberation war, we hear from a student of class-1 that a "clash" occurred between Bangladesh and Pakistan in 1971. But how can we blame that kid when we watched a video on Facebook after Pakistan won the match at ICC Cricket World Cup 2011, held at Mirpur stadium, where a young man said with delight, "That is past, we forgot it!" If this is

the situation today, what will happen after ten or twenty years?

The time has come to give our students a clear idea about the liberation war. We know that there is a book of only twenty pages written by Mohammad Zafar Iqbal named "Muktijuddher Itihas." This book narrates all the important information about our liberation war in a fairly easy language. If this book is selected as a textbook in both Bangla and English medium schools at primary level, specifically in class-5, we can expect to save our next generations from disregarding our glorious past. Honourable Education Minister, will you please consider distributing this book along with all other textbooks?

**Rabeya Rowshin**  
Department of Economics  
Dhaka University

## Patriot

Recently the Prime Minister declared she is the biggest patriot. A patriot is "one who loves, defends and does not harm his country". The PM has challenged but without response. She has invited all 'patriotic' Bangladeshis to contest her claim by:

1. Declaring their Black Money for developing the country.
2. Repatriating hoarded ForEx for investment here.
3. Sell and return proceeds of all property, land and assets abroad.
4. Swearing never to accept bribes by all bribe-takers.
5. Giving fair wages and facilities to employees.
6. Who in turn forsake strikes, hartals and civil commotion.
7. Abandoning grabbing rivers, canals, cutting trees or polluting water, land or air.
8. Importers, exporters and others renouncing over, under-invoicing, mis-declaration, smuggling etc.
9. Abandoning adulteration in construction work and food-stuff.
10. Daily Star and DHL awarding 'patriots'.

**Sikander Ahmed**  
Niketon, Gulshan-1  
Dhaka

## Islamic inheritance laws

The PCP article by Zeeshan Hasan (21 June) is a correct summarisation of the position on Islamic inheritance laws as stated in the Quran. The making of a will with two male witnesses was the customary practice and whatever was in the will, the estate of the deceased was distributed accordingly.

However, in those days scribes were difficult to find to put the will in writing, so most wills were verbal in front of disinterested witnesses. However, there were enormous pressure on witnesses from inheritors to change the terms of the verbal will and hence the various admonitions in Quran against this. The formal law of two shares for male and one for female and other distribution guidance came soon after the battle of Ohud, when many Muslims lost their lives without being able to make a will.

These provisions do not cancel or supersede the earlier provisions of making a will in the Quran. However, the verbal will and pressurised witnesses remained a problem in society. So, some Muslim ruler (I do not know whether it was the prophet himself or there was any hadith on this) adopted the post-Ohud version as Sharia Law to avoid any witness problems and the verbal will.

A will was still allowed to be made in favour of someone who is not a legal inheritor under Sharia Law, but only up to one third of the value of the estate and no more (I do not know the basis of this). So according to the Quran, making of a will and distribution of all property by its terms as was allowed before the battle of Ohud is not abolished, and nowadays with a written will and formal attestation by witnesses, enforcement of this is no problem.

The standard Sharia provision appears applicable only to someone dying without having made a valid will. The modern educated Ulema needs to rethink and perhaps allow this Quranic practice unless there is clear disbanding of this practice mentioned somewhere in the Quran or Hadith.

**Engineer Shafi Ahmed**  
London, UK

# Why not USA/NATO forces take over Israel?



In the name of human rights, democracy, protection of human lives and property, the US and NATO forces are bombing on Libya killing hundreds of innocent people- men, women and children. Why do the USA/ NATO poke their nose into the internal affairs of an independent and sovereign country, and use UNO as and when necessary according to their sweet will, political and economic benefit?

Why don't they take any military action against Israel which has been illegally occupying Palestine by force for the last few decades, carrying out reign of terror, killing and maiming thousands of Palestinians, violating all international laws, regulations and morality?

Why should not Palestine have human rights, freedom, democracy and free market economy like the USA and NATO countries? The USA has made Israel a Frankenstein, like it made Osama Bin Laden and then killed him. Why don't the US commandos, CIA, FBI take over Tel Aviv and establish peace all over the world, uprooting terrorism from the good earth?

**O H Kabir**  
Hare Street  
Wari  
Dhaka

## Where East meets West

I read with interest the article written by Ms. Milia Ali titled "Where east meets west" published in The Daily Star on 26th June, 2011. The writer tried to compare the eastern and western life styles and their values in social living. It is pleasing to know that she and her friend are contended to find the caring nature of the western friends in the neighbourhood. I did not live in the west as long as she lived but have a little exposure to their way of life and I go through a lot on these in social literature and wide discourse with friends and family.

Ms Ali's generalisation seemed to be naive. It is true that the westerners could institutionalise many of their social needs as services which are available with money. But the eastern way of life with strong social bond is missed in her view. Compare their old homes and our family care for the old, our support and sharing of stress when somebody is sick, the support extended by mothers and aunts in rearing children.

The joy of seasonal return of working people from Dhaka to their town and village homes to share the religious festivals with near and dear ones are just incomparable. The beauty of visiting neighbours and relatives on Eid days and other cross cultural festivals has no parallel in the west.

I shall not agree that the west can still overtake the values of social bliss that we have in the east though they had advanced much materially.

**Bazlur Rahman**  
Bailey Road  
Ramna, Dhaka

## Congrats Ban Ki-moon!

It is heartening to know that the present UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon has been given a second term to head the World Body. Heartiest congratulations to Mr. Ban Ki-moon. Indeed, Mr. Ban Ki-moon during his first term as the UN Chief has contributed enormously towards strengthening the role and visibility of the United Nations in difficult circumstances.

I sincerely hope that he will continue to extend his able leadership and dynamic vision to promote peace, justice and international security. I wish him a golden success in his renewed assignment and hope that he will be able to help resolve certain hanging world crisis through applying his good office.

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

# Trapped between schools and coaching centres?



A growing frustration is brewing in the minds of the guardians as well as the students concerning the credibility of the schools and their teachers who are entrusted with the noble task of building the future of the nation. The guardians think that there is no point in spending a huge amount of money every month on the school fees besides spending almost double the amount in a forced manner in coaching centres for the same purpose. The guardians fail to understand why extra coaching is needed when the schools are paying their teachers for doing the same job. It may sound ridiculous, but the bare fact is that it is the teachers who insist the students to take extra lessons at their coaching centres, which are mostly situated at their homes, in order to excel and get better results in the examinations. It is reckoned that a school teacher, besides

getting his usual salaries in the school, earns Tk. 1.5 lakh on an average per month by coaching students privately. In older days, teachers vehemently discouraged students about having private coaching saying that if they didn't understand lessons, they should ask them. What a difference between now and then! Now everything is evaluated in terms of money! Now teachers create such a situation that students are compelled to go for coaching or he/she will surely fail in the exam. I am certain that this practice would seriously impede students' ability in acquiring desired education. Can our authorities concerned ban private coaching for good? I would also urge the authorities to check if these teachers pay taxes properly.

**Humayun Hyder**  
Zigatola  
Dhaka

## READERS

### respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star report headlined "Govt should have talked with BNP"

**Dr. Nazmul Haq**  
Hypocrisy at its worst.

**M**  
Politicians who cannot win a single election with failed socialist agenda are failures.

**Dr. Nazmul Haq**  
I also agree since it is a more political issue than constitutional. AL has deliberately chosen confrontation on the issue.

**Anonymous**  
The caretaker system worked fine in three elections, so it is proved that the system was good and needed for the country.

**Faqrul**  
I think the best course will be to form a delegation to meet the opposition leaders and to seek their proposal which would ensure free and fair elections including an acceptable result to the political parties. PM's consent is needed for this.

**Sarwar**  
AL is a democratic political party and democratically elected party. In 2008 they secured around 40 to 45 percent vote. But AL must make a survey now which will give them an indication. We are continuously watching such decisions taken by the ruling political parties. Hypocrisy is abounding in political world.

## When you're rich

California Democrats closed the remainder of what had been a gaping budget deficit by relying on a combination of deep spending cuts, optimistic revenue projections and new fees that are sure to be challenged in court. The cuts will be triggered during the middle of the year if tax revenue falls short of assumptions.

This will include \$100 million to the in-home services program. They already cut services 12% this year. Nursing homes cost five times as much per In-Home Supportive Service (IHSS) client. The number of skilled-nursing-center beds has dwindled through the years as IHSS' success has grown at helping the elderly continue living independently.

When you're rich and lose money on a leveraged investment, you are a victim of the bad economy and deserve to be bailed out. When you're poor and lose money on a risky investment, you're a financially incompetent person who chases get-rich-quick schemes.

**Ted Rudow III, MA**  
Encina Ave

# High prices of essentials

The parliamentary standing committee of commerce ministry visited three kitchen markets of the city on June 15 this year. It also prepared a report that said it was satisfied that prices of daily essentials were "stable" and "did not increase" after the budget proposal on June 9. "The committee hopes it will remain stable during the month of Ramadan (in August)," a report said. In a stark contrast, however, a number of the ruling alliance lawmakers including Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal MP Hasanul Haq Inu and Jatiya Party MP Fazle Rabbi Chowdhury expressed concern over the price hike of essentials in parliament on June 26.

At the time of the committee's visits to Karwan Bazar, Mohammadpur Town Hall Super Market and Mohammadpur wholesale market, there were no price lists there. The chief of the House body told the reporters on that day that prices of essentials were under control, but customers said shopkeepers misled the committee members by lying about the prices.

On that day, a customer bought 1 kg of sugar for Tk. 64/- from a shop, but the shopkeeper told the House delegation that he was selling sugar at Tk. 60/- . So, the committee in its report said sugar was selling at Tk 60 a kg. In this way the House committee visited the kitchen markets and accordingly prepared a report. How could the chief of the house committee tell the reporters that prices of essentials were stable? The real picture is totally different.

Government should look into the matter seriously without any plea because the holy Ramadan is knocking at the door.

**Mohammed Jashim Uddin**  
Dhaka

