

# Indo-Bangla agreements

It is really a matter of great regret that the most expected 'Transit Facility' and 'Teesta Water Sharing' agreements between Bangladesh and India could not be signed during Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's historical visit to Bangladesh recently. These agreements could significantly improve and strengthen zzIndo-Bangla friendship and cooperation. It is sincerely hoped that the gaps would soon be bridged and both the neighbours would reach to an agreement.

Meanwhile, I strongly feel that natural resources like water should be shared by human beings abiding by the law of nature.

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



PHOTO: STAR

## A bewildered nation

We are bewildered by the actions and comments of our minister. It is very upsetting. We have learned that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has instructed the intelligence agencies to collect information about the leaders of the organisation who staged a rally at Shaheed Minar on Eid day demanding safety on the road. It is a non-political organisation acting with the sole purpose of the welfare of the people but they are being treated like suspected criminals. How unfortunate it is!

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan is trying to prove his point that drivers do not need education. Health and Family Welfare Minister Mujibur Rahman Fakir declared that Tareque Masood and Mishuk Munier died on the day allotted for them, that we can be sorry for them. We agree but what about the people who were murdered? That day also must have been ordained for them, then why the murderers are hunted down and if captured brought to justice?

Mujibur Rahman Fakir, who was attending a workshop arranged by the family planning commission, also said that if the parents are educated, having many children will not pose a problem, and that he is the ninth child of his parents. He also said that Rabindranath Tagore was also the ninth child of his family. We do not expect this sort of facile remarks from our ministers. They should speak rationally.

**Nur Jahan**  
*Chittagong*

# High price of food

"More poor people are suffering and more people could become poor because of volatility in the market and high food prices", said World Bank president Robert B. Zoellick. Food price is increasing day by day. If this situation continues, then most of the people will not get sufficient food. As a result, people will suffer from malnutrition. And we will not be able to make an

intelligent generation. They will not be qualified to lead a country. On the other hand, we are buying adulterated foods at high prices. As a result, we are having health problems. It is high time the government took steps to arrest price hike of all food items as well as stop food adulteration.

**Md. Shahinuzzaman Shaheen**  
*Tangail*



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## 9/11 tragedy

Being a Muslim, I condemn the attacks on 9/11 for many reasons. 9/11 marked the destruction of property, loss of lives, onslaught of Islamophobia and intolerance, beginning of two costly wars, and gross violation of human rights in Guantanamo Bay. I was shocked when a few youths of Bangladesh called 9/11 a "justice" on Facebook. This is alarming because such minds are the breeding grounds for other destructive activities by terrorist organisations. This will also scare away non-Muslim tourists and citizens from Bangladesh. I would request the media to play an active role in promoting inter-faith dialogue. Running away from religion-based discussion would only give rise to graver consequences. Some universities offer a course on world religions, but do not actually conduct it. Such a course is needed to teach the commonness among different faiths.

**Monica Islam**  
*Dhaka*

## The child bride

For the last two weeks, I have been working as a kiosk associate at a shopping mall in one of the most posh areas of Houston, Texas. I must say, I am indeed very fortunate to have got this job at this time of high unemployment all over America. The West and its allies are against child marriage in the third world countries and more so in Bangladesh, which is indeed praiseworthy.

But while working at the mall, I have noticed with grave concern something of a very serious nature. I have noticed many girls aged below 20 with small children, and I mistook them as their siblings. Later on, while watching talk shows on local television, I figured out that those teenage school going girls were in fact single mothers. I must caution the viewers back at home that CNN does not telecast such programmes, depriving the viewers the world over of what goes inside America. I am tempted to further believe that similar situation is prevailing in other states as well.

From the talk shows, I further realised that these school going girls are enticed or encouraged to have babies outside marriage. I am rather confused what exactly do they want? On the one hand, they advocate not to get married at an early age on health and social grounds, while on the other hand, they encourage girls of the same age group to have children outside marriage.

**Saleh Ayub**  
*On e-mail*

## India's suffering Muslims

In recent times several militant attacks worried India. But innocent Muslims are the victims of these cases. After the Mumbai attack, a Muslim boy named Foyaj Hossain was arrested, who was totally unaware about the blast, and killed in the custody after being tortured brutally. In 2007 during Hyderabad Mecca Mosque attack, an innocent medical student was arrested, who endured inhuman tortures by the Indian police. The police alleged that he was a militant without having any proof. There were also 60 innocent youths who were arrested around that time and 28 among them were sent to jail. But later it was found that the allegations made against them were totally false. In 2008, during Gujarat Ahmedabad bomb attack, 62 Muslim youths were arrested. Human rights organisations are silent and inactive in these cases. India is a democratic country but they are violating human rights in such a way!

**Shehjad Imran**  
*S.M hall*  
*DU*

## Earthquake

I did not feel the earthquake at all! I live in Niketon and work in Banani. So every day, I have to traverse, by rickshaw along one of the three 'roads' that exit from Gulshan-1 to Mohakhali Road.

On Sunday evening, I was coming home by rickshaw through the link road next to Zara Mall at the time of the earthquake. Due to incessant rain, this "Paddy Field" masquerading as a 'road', was in a condition that beggars description. Twice a day I go through an experience that probably measures 8.9 on the Richter scale. So the earthquake of Sunday could make any impact on me. By the by, if the PM is looking for evidence of her ministers' corruptibility and incompetence, she can take a ride on a rickshaw on any one of the many such 'roads' like the three I have mentioned.

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

# Noise pollution

We are quite unaware of noise pollution although it causes physiological and psychological problems like annoyance, aggression, hypertension, high stress level, obsession, headaches, hearing loss, sleep disturbance, heart disease, and many other problems in the nervous system.

I live in Segunbagicha area in Dhaka. There are two buildings under construction near our building. In one plot they are doing piling works and tiles-fitting is going on in the other building. I can't read, sleep, or even watch television or work with computer. I know that noise is an inescapable part of modern life but at least at night we can have some respite from this!

**Md. Sakhawat Hossain**  
*Department of Zoology*  
*University of Dhaka*



PHOTO: STAR

## Let us be good

While travelling on buses and trains, I see the tattered poverty-ridden faces, naughty visages of the smugglers with bags of smuggled Indian sarees aggravating the already trade imbalance with India. The rich, busy enjoying their easygoing lives in comfy cars and dwellings suffering no load-shedding, hardly understand the pains of the teeming millions. The 'proven honest' ministers are there but still the impassable roads continue to send vehicles on collision courses and kill us every day. And still, money meant for the poor fill the miscreants' pockets, still criminals are given a wide berth while the innocent get the heavy battering at the law-enforcers' hand. Pervasive corruption is widening the chasm at the bottom and helping economic disparity to grow. Cannot we leave our children a corruption-free Bangladesh? Is it too difficult for this proud nation to achieve? It is high time we set out to realise our dreams. From now on, let us be good, selfless, helping and noble, aiming a long-term benefit in the life here and here-after.

**Abdus Subhan**  
*On e-mail*

# Pharmacy business

People say pharmacy business is now a lucrative business. As a sincere citizen and an honest professional, I hereby take this opportunity to inform you that medicine-sellers should dispense medicines in the quantity as prescribed by the doctor or on the basis of the daily dose regimen. However, many pharmacies across Dhaka have adopted the practice of selling medicines as per the bulk pack whether or not required by the patient. Even if a patient requires four tablets, he has to buy eight because less than that will not be sold. These storekeepers should know that they are not selling groceries or chocolate; they are not selling preservative-added commodities. They are selling medicines that can save lives or can even cause death. This can not go on.

**M Alamgir Hossain**  
*Upazila election officer*  
*Chhatak*



PHOTO: STAR

## READERS respond

*Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news article headlined "Jamaat men run riot"*

**Saif Islam**  
Islam does not permit this type of violence. Every Muslim should hate Jamaat-e-Islami.

**Abdullah Al Kafi**  
If you corner a cat, it turns into a tiger. Let Jamaat, BNP and whoever that may be exercise their democratic rights unhindered.

**Muntasir Mamun**  
They surely have the right to protest but have no right to vandalise and torch vehicles and create trouble for common people. Surely ISI is behind them.

**Jiasmin Khan**  
Jamaat is a dangerous political party. Initially Shibir, now they have started war with police with surprising strength. It is certain they have international backing.

**Iqbal Ehsan Shovon**  
Jamaat has no right to claim themselves as religious. They always misinterpret Islam. We should stop calling them a religious party. Hypocrisy is their main characteristics.

**Mostak**  
Jamaat should take tough action against the government its undemocratic policy. Jamaat is a recognized political party and they have every right to run political activities in Bangladesh.

**Anonymous**  
Let us unite against Jamaat. They are the extremists in our motherland. It is BNP that gave the shelter to Jamaat to grow dangerous. Time is not far when Jamaat will betray BNP.

**Anonymous**  
Reuters, as usual along with other India-based Western news agencies, is reporting Bangladeshi news as if it is a war zone like Pakistan. India had daily wars but Western media censor that news.

**MSA London**  
Jamaat has done what Awami League did in 2007. Bangladesh politics is like that. How can we forget the "logi-boitha" days and the non-stop hartal call by AL in the late 1990s? AL is lucky that, BNP is yet to give any programmes of demonstration.

**A citizen**  
This incident was instigated by the ruling party to finish Jamaat activities. Ask CEC to revoke Jamaat registration if ruling party feels. As long as Jamaat is considered as a legitimate political party of the country, they must have the right to go for political activities and police has no right to prevent them.

**Nasirullah Mridha**  
If the rally was peaceful why did the cops obstruct that procession? Jamaat turned violent because their back is now to the walls. Police should not have been aggressive on that rally. Burning property, frightening the people will only cause to grow Jamaat's disdain for the regime. For what reason did the AL's student-wing organised a rally is unintelligible to me. Something fishy.

**Jumana Sarwar**  
Is that only Jamaat men running the riot and police and disguised AL supporters are sitting with clean hands? The lack of tolerance to accept others' opinion and the use of police brutality to disrupt the legitimate political protest are the hallmark of AL version of democracy. This unnecessary confrontation has wasted lots of time, money and lives that we as a nation cannot afford anymore.

**Mohammed Shah Alam Khan**  
This is unbelievable that five police vehicles were burned in the city. Jamaat is always a terrorist political party. The AL does not have the guts to ban their political activities. It is a shame, if we consider that Jamaat must not have the right to do politics in Bangladesh because their party was formed by Rajakars against Muktiyoddahs. Still there is time for AL to control Jamaat, otherwise there will be civil war soon. They always want to prove that the freedom was not right decision, so we must resist Jamaat.