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PHOTO: STAR

Public opinion trampled

It is most unfortunate that the government is paying no heed to the public opinions as is manifested in its cutting of Dhaka City into two parts. If democracy is about people's right to say and the government is to respect it, then the government has miserably failed in that respect. Ignoring the people's opposition to splitting of Dhaka City as reports on and views of the public carried by the print and electronic media go, the government has gone for pushing through the bill in the Jatiya Sangsad and by force of brute majority the bill was enacted within minutes. This is an instance of trampling public opinions. The AL-led government has in fact shown a dictatorial attitude by dividing the historical Dhaka (of 400 years) and hurting the people's sentiment. The government has hardly delivered for the betterment of the people, though it has been successful in creating chaos and unrest resulting into downslide in its popularity. The country is reeling from the shock of the scrapping the CTG system as well as splitting of Dhaka city. The irony is that the AL is failing to read the pulse of the people or take stock of things.

A.H. Dewan
South Kafrul
Dhaka Cantt., Dhaka

Need for competent leaders

The other day I was watching President Obama and his two daughters in a bookstore on the eve of Thanksgiving Day on a local television channel. The president of the United States of America, dubbed the most powerful man in the world, was interacting with a cashier at a bookstore.

I wonder whether the prime minister or the leader of the Opposition in Bangladesh knows how to interact with a cashier of a store or any other common person. The answer is obviously No; the protocol does not allow so. Our incompetent and greedy political leaders excel only in hollow rhetoric, resulting in the backwardness of the nation. In order to be prosperous, a nation needs competent leaders.

Saleh Ayub
On e-mail

The Padma bridge

A lot is being written about the difficulties of correcting the scandalous malpractices in the building of the Padma Bridge but I have not read the obvious - that whoever is in charge of the work, should be like the Chief Adviser (British) who built the Paksey Bridge, who was ready to get up at 2 O'clock in the morning to check that the quality of the cement going into the uprights was the quality specified by the designer and not a cheaper variety!

In every country and organisation, the quality of work is only as good as the people to whom the workers are accountable - or, failing that, their own consciences. There is a natural enthusiasm for high salaries but paymasters must surely not be shy of sitting down with those involved, whether seniors or juniors and explain, clearly and simply, how they are to EARN that salary and clarify the conditions upon which they could be dismissed.

The same Chief Adviser told me that he dismissed a truck driver who persistently refused to obey demands to drive slowly round a bend in the road used by local people for centuries as their pathway to the river. The driver was deeply shocked as he thought the job was his, however he did it!

It is good to see how, slowly, such accountability is being introduced but why does it seem to be slower in huge projects that have disastrous and expensive results when they are not properly carried out?

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

Review the govt employees' pay structure

Corruption exists in every country including Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, we see corruption mostly in the government offices. According to Human Resource Management (HRM), an attractive compensation package is very important for any employee. Corruption mostly occurs due to very low wages and benefits given to the employees. Some employees cannot manage their living expenses with their poor salary. To maintain a minimum standard of living, many government officials get involved in corruption and make money by illegal means. Reasonable compensation package is very vital to curb this kind of corruption. So, the government needs to make a new compensation structure based on the country's economy. It should also regularly review the pay structures. This will motivate people and help them live peacefully. The employees should at the same time be duly warned of punishment they will have if they are found indulging in corruption.

I hope the government will pay attention to the matter and review the pay structure.

A.S.M. Zobayer
BBA student
East West University



PHOTO: AMIRUL RAJIB

BNP in a political quagmire

The Election Commission (EC) did not pay any heed to any of the BNP's demands in the recently held Narayanganj City Corporation election. Neither did it refrain from using EVM, nor could it deploy the army. As a result, BNP had to withdraw its mayoral candidate at the last moment, much to the frustration of its activists and supporters.

Now the EC has already declared that EVM will be used in all the election centres and there would be no army deployment in the ensuing Comilla City Corporation (CCC) election.

If BNP decides to boycott the CCC election, most of its workers and supporters will switch over to other parties and if it participates in the election, justifiability of its demands in the next general election will lose its force in the public eye.

It seems that BNP has been locked in a deep political quagmire. It is to be seen how the party comes out of this difficult situation.

Md. Mohsin Ali
Nutan Courtpara
Kushtia

Uncivil protest earns nothing for people

Incidents of insulting high-ranking and even elderly personalities in the name of protest are increasing. Recently, India's Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar was slapped in the face by an angry youth protesting against price hike of essentials and corruption.

We remember that a shoe was hurled at US President George W. Bush by an angry young journalist in Iraq, and even media tycoon Rupert Murdoch fell victim to this sort of attack.

In fact, some people do this to get media coverage. Perhaps every new attacker is inspired by the previous attackers who had got huge media coverage for doing that heroic (!) job. Possibly that is why the attackers, after being arrested by the law enforcers, tell loudly to the reporters that they are proud of doing this.

Sharad Pawar's attacker also said something like that and interestingly added that he was inspired by Anna Hazare. But everybody knows that Anna does not support uncivil and violent protests.

This is a bad trend and we must not let this uncivilised attitude develop.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh
Dhaka

Indian PM's assurances



PHOTO: STAR

All the dailies on November 3 reported on the Indian PM's statement that: "India will not take any steps on Tipaimukhi Project that may adversely affect Bangladesh." Given India's past record, there is reason for concern. They will build the dam and the hydroelectric power plant, and irrigate their land by diverting river water as they have been doing all along, despite their assurances. Mamata from Calcutta knows it all, hence she did not come to Bangladesh with the Indian PM. The fact is that the dam, power plant and irrigation works are all under progress in stages; with the irrigation works as the last work to be done; while Bangladesh is lulled into silence. After all, Indian hegemony is not unknown in the sub-continent. Now after patching up with USA, they are the western powers' official representative for all matters in this sub-continent!

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Metro rail route

Metro rail route should be taken via IDB Bhaban-Shyamoli Shishu Mela -Asadgate-Farmgate, instead of Bijoy Sharani or Khamar Bari. If it is routed via Bijoy Sharani or Khamar Bari, metro facility will be out of reach of the residents of Mohammadpur, Lalmatia and Dhanmondi.

Technically, metro rail via Bijoy Sharani or Khamar Bari is not feasible due to the sharp left and right turns required at both places. In view of the above reasons we request the Honourable Prime Minister to consider the metro route via Shyamoli-Asadgate-Farmgate.

Abdul Hafiz
Mohakhali
Dhaka

Changing torn notes at bank counters



PHOTO: STAR

A few days ago I went to a private bank to deposit some money. But the person at the cash counter refused to accept three torn one hundred taka notes among other banknotes that I placed at the counter. She asked me to replace those with good notes. I was surprised and said that they could easily exchange those notes with Bangladesh Bank and I also showed them a poster circulated by Bangladesh Bank, near the cash counter, where it was written that the bank would accept torn notes. After much argument when I understood that it was futile to argue with her, I just changed those notes.

I have seen many customers having trouble for the same reason. Despite Bangladesh Bank's open declaration, the banks are not following the rules and harassing the customers. I request Bangladesh Bank to look into the matter so that the bank employees may refrain from subjecting its clients and other service users to further harassment.

Mohammed Sohel Hara
Adamjee EPZ
Narayanganj



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The Daily Star Online reports.
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leave your comments.

Tipaimukh Power Project

Delhi open to Dhaka's stake
Manmohan tells Hasina's advisers; reassures them
of no-Tipai harm (December 3, 2011)

Fundamentally, the issue is technical and, therefore, Indian PM's non-technical assurance that India will not do anything to harm Bangladesh is not credible. However, India has apparently indicated that appropriate studies may be undertaken before it will embark upon the Tipaimukh Dam construction. The crucial thing will be to jointly draw up the Terms of Reference of the desired study.

Ronen Rahman

This is not the diplomatic way to reply to a sovereign state regarding an issue of such high magnitude and of an international nature, affecting sustenance of another country. We have seen how they are interfering in neighbouring countries and the latest

instance is in Nepal. Our government is acting only to please India to fool the people. Our 10-member team and the advisers visited India recently. Does any of them understand the technicalities of such project?

Hussain

We should not do anything that would hamper our national interests.

Md. Saifur Rahman

This is immoral and pathetic, and all the people of the country should raise their voice until the government acts in line with people's wishes.

Reaz Hassan

What about Farakka dam? Is not harming Bangladesh?

Anonymous

India told the same thing during the construction of Farakka dam. Now we know how severely agricultural land of Bangladesh is affected due to the construction of Farkkah dam. Many rivers are dead today because of this dam. The rest of the rivers of Bangladesh will also die if Tipaimukh dam is built.

Mahboob Hossain

For the sake of our existence we should befriend competent global powers.

AH

Why was such offer not made prior to the signing of the agreement of the project in question?

Anonymous

Masihur Rahman and Gowher Rizvi have visited Delhi and Kolkata many times in the last few months. Why didn't Indian leaders bother to tell them about the Tipaimukh project earlier?

Anonymous

We should resolve the issue through dialogue and not through destructive activities. We should protect our interest

honestly.

Nabaj

We can only negotiate to get a good deal. I believe this government is patriotic and it is sincerely trying to resolve the problem.

Niloufar sarker

I do not know how to respond to this news. It is basically a question of trust and confidence in the relationship between the two neighbours. The ideological divide between the political parties is harming the process of creating a national platform for holding open discussions. Parliament should be the centre of discussion but unfortunately it is now dysfunctional.

Faqrul

The adverse impacts of the Tipaimukh hydro-electric dam could be several. Some of the big dams constructed in the 50s and 60s had deadly effect on the environment. The World Bank does not support any more construction of dams due to their massive environmental consequences. If the structure collapses due to earthquake or any natural calamity, the sudden release of water will wreak havoc on