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AMADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

## Should media blackout news on hartal?

The BNP called a hartal in protest against the division of Dhaka city. Hartals have never achieved any positive results except making the poor poorer, damaging business and the national economy. I am rather surprised that the press supported them by publishing reports on the hartal.

Last year Sir Frank Peters posed a very interesting question when he asked what would happen if a hartal were announced but the media ignored it and gave it no coverage whatsoever? Without the media coverage, chances are that only a few people would know about it and even less would attend.

I am so fed up with hartals that I would not mind a media blackout on all hartals, before, during and after. We should also be mindful of the fact that less newspapers are sold on days of hartals because most newspapers are bought on the way to or from work. The media should think about it.

Eng. Shahim Tanveer  
Barisal

### Ill-starred Dhaka University

According to 2011 Webometrics ranking of universities, Dhaka University, once the Oxford of the East ranked 3627th and BUET ranked 2108th. We all know that dirty party politics initiated after the independence is at the root of all evils. Experts have blamed Dhaka University's woe on the notorious Dhaka University Order 1973 that replaced meritocracy with democracy.

How can merit thrive here when merit is pushed to the back-burner and the less educated people and dishonest student leaders are becoming super rich using the magic lamp of political affiliation?

However, we see light at the end of the tunnel when ICCIT holds its conference here in Bangladesh and our researchers are contributing considerably to information and technology, the driving force of the modern era. Hopefully, the first ever World Marketing Summit (WMS) is going to be held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka next year.

Abdus Subhan  
On e-mail

### Splitting DCC

We have heard that the capital of Bangladesh has been split into two parts to render better services to the city dwellers. It may be a good initiative but why was it done after three years of the ruling party's tenure and on the eve of the DCC polls? Splitting the city is not mandatory to offer better civic services, rather it can create anarchy.

Akter, Kabir and others  
Bangshal  
Old Dhaka

### A shameful power cut

When the Bangladeshi supporters were enjoying the 3rd ODI match between Bangladesh and Pakistan at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, suddenly the match was interrupted by power failure. That proved our carelessness in managing an international match. This sort of power cut has brought shame for us. The problem in our power sector must not be exposed to the international spectators. And darkness in a large crowd for a few seconds might cause many unexpected accidents. The authorities should be more careful in managing international events. We hope this sort of incident will not happen again.

Mohammad Saifuddin  
Assistant officer  
Jamuna Bank Ltd.  
Agrabad Branch

## Supporting a foreign team



PHOTO: AFP

Supporting a foreign team when the national side is playing against that team is a personal choice, of course. Anybody can do that on his/her sweet will. But such a choice proves his/her lack of loyalty to his/her country. And such a person is no better than Mir Jafar. This person deserves to be stripped of his/her citizenship and must not be allowed to take any government job.

In a sport, when he/she can prefer another country to his/her own country, he/she can do it in some other spheres as well. The country must remain alert about such a person's activities.

This is a person who can get involved in espionage against his/her country for the benefit of any foreign country. The government may keep tabs on such persons. The next match in the Chittagong Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium is a perfect venue to detect such people. But this sort of people must not be physically punished.

Faruque Hasan  
Uttara, Dhaka

### Height of desperation

It is now six months into our stay in Houston, Texas. Previously, on another occasion, we lived here up to a maximum period of ten months. Of late, things are really getting worse not only in Bangladesh but perhaps throughout the world and Houston is no exception.

The other day it was reported on local television that a man took his life by driving his car on the wrong side of the road on beltway 8 hitting his car on a speeding truck coming from the opposite direction. However, the truck driver and his son survived the crash. Then another day, a Hispanic man in the Bay City area shot his four children and himself to death, critically injuring another child and his wife. The surviving child and the lady are reported to be recovering from the bullet shot wounds. These are the acts of utter frustration and desperation resulting from unemployment and unhappiness.

The above two are examples of incidents happening every now and then even in this part of the world. Houston is dubbed as the Space City and is also known to be the fourth largest economy in the world; I do not know whether it is true or false. What I would like to emphasise that despite scientific innovation and discoveries i.e. cell phones, i-phones, i-pads, i-pods, life perhaps was better for all the human beings living in this world forty or fifty years ago, no matter how difficult or hard it was without the present day comforts of life.

Saleh Ayub  
On e-mail

### Paracetamol intake harmful!

We have become very worried since the publication of a news about the harmful effects of Paracetamol and the faulty technique of its manufacturing. Paracetamol is commonly used in our country. Some of our renowned professors have mentioned that the present dose of paracetamol available in our country is not appropriate and they are very toxic. My question is who had approved this drug and how long will the people suffer for other people's crimes?

Devnath Arianell  
On e-mail

## Arab League's capitulation!



PHOTO: AFP

Activities of the Arab League for the last few years hardly reflect the interests of the Arab people and the oppressed people of the whole world. It did not take any effective measure when millions of Iraqi civilians were killed by the US and its allies. It has not said a word against those who committed genocide in Iraq. Anyone can understand that the US and its allies attacked Libya and Iraq not to establish democracy and human rights but to loot the oil resources of those countries.

The Arab League's decision to suspend Syria's membership, impose economic sanctions, and discuss transition-period arrangements with the opposition could pave the way to a military offensive by the Western powers in Syria, similar to what happened in Libya. If the US and its allies can give power to their puppet government in Syria with the help of Arab League, it will be easier for them to attack Iran.

If anybody carefully analyses the situation in Syria, he or she will understand that it is not Assad, rather the US and its allies are responsible for violence and death of civilians in Syria. Gaddafi hoped that if he did not kill the so-called rebels, NATO would help to settle the crisis through discussion, but ruthless NATO leaders did not give him any chance.

The sooner the Arabs understand that the Arab League leaders are not really helping them, the better.

Dr. M. Mahboob Hossain  
Associate Professor  
Microbiology Programme  
BRAC University  
Dhaka

### Unpatriotic spectators

During the last world cup quarter final match between Pakistan and West Indies at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, the spectators were overjoyed at the victory of the Pakistan team. After that match, such behaviour of the audience at the stadium was criticised in various blogs.

This time during the first ODI match between Bangladesh and Pakistan, I saw many people waving Pakistani flags in the gallery. Beside the giant screen, there was a gigantic Pakistani flag held by more than ten people! But I didn't find any such huge Bangladeshi flag in the stadium!! I also realised that they (they were obviously Bangladeshi) were cheering spontaneously at the success of the Pakistani team.

Is it rational to support another team when our own national team is playing against them? What is the logic behind this kind of behaviour? Don't they love and respect their own country? If not, why are they living here and enjoying the facilities provided by the country? Is there any other cursed nation on earth whose people would be cheerful at the defeat of its own team?

Yeasir Arafat Nadim  
Dept. of Economics  
University of Dhaka

### Tragedy on Berkeley campus

I would rather call the incident a tragedy. As reported in The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 17 issue, Christopher Nathen Elliot Travis was shot dead by a police officer at Berkeley's business school at the University of California. He was reportedly seen with a gun in an elevator and the matter was informed to the police by the authorities. When the police officers found him, moments later, in a nearby computer laboratory, he pointed the gun at them and then a police officer shot him.

Perhaps the police action was appropriate in terms of law, but I think Mr. Travis was not given any chance to explain himself. Later, from Travis' web page statement, it was revealed that he was mentally disturbed or suffering from frustration, as I believe. Travis wrote in the web page:

"My name is Chris Travis. I tried to kill myself when I was 5. ... I took 219 sleeping pills one day when I was 23". The web page said that the author wanted to get an internship in the United Nations and pursue a career in international business. "I want to learn more and do more to make this world better," Travis hoped.

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

## READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star report headlined "Private-public fund to build it."

### Gopal Sengupta

Congrats! We must go ahead without such donor funding. The government must welcome and encourage public-private partnership for betterment of our development activities.

### Manzoor Ashraf

Building this bridge will not be viable under PPP since it will not generate enough revenue. Secondly, World Bank's fund given to Bangladesh for building this bridge cannot be channeled to other projects.

### S Rahman

I have worked for donors for 30 years. I know well how donors use rhetoric and various tactics for their self-interest. I am not saying we are a clean country either. But World Bank must come forward with clear statement of corruption which they have not done.

### Rawshan Iajdani

Implementing the project with fresh fund is easy. The authorities will do the feasibility study, design new structure, negotiate the compensation period, arrange fund from financial institutions and finally start constructing the bridge. It may take another three years.

Instead of talking too much, the government must show its seriousness in punishing the culprits and bringing World Bank's confidence back so that they release the fund quickly. Replacing the minister was the right step and now the government should let the new minister work.

### Amdem

It may be a wishful thinking for Bangladesh to construct Padma Bridge under PPP. Bangladesh is already in serious financial trouble-- the remittance flow has reduced, tax collection is not satisfactory. Moreover, there is another project waiting for PPP investment- the Bangabandhu International Airport. We do not understand from where the money will come.

### Nasirullah Mridha

If we can implement a project under PPP, why should we go to the World Bank? We want to see concrete measures taken by the government.

### Anonymous

Changing the minister does not absolve the government of corruption. And it will not change the mind of World Bank.

### Abdul Aziz Mir

Padma Bridge was the dream of the people of greater Faridpur and Barisal. But this is now going to be a reality, people are waiting for the bridge to be built.

### Dr. Nazmul Haq

The World Bank lends money on behalf of the members of this organisation to other members of this entity, presumably at lower interest rate than available in commercial markets. It is not an investigating agency. It does not have the power or mandate to investigate corruption allegations. It is incumbent on the part of the government to investigate the charge and take necessary action.

### Deep Purple Blue

If Sheikh Hasina was not convinced of Abul's corruption, then why did she remove him from the communications ministry?

### Fida Likhon

Now, the World Bank (WB) should take the challenge of Sheikh Hasina and prove the corruption allegations it made. If WB cannot prove it, it will mean that it has done dirty politics. We want to see whether Sheikh Hasina or WB is truthful.

### Eddo Brandis

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is now treating the World Bank as her opposition party. But she has already taken the World Bank's allegation into account by removing the Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain.

### Jumana Sarwar

The World Bank is not an investigation agency. They can only raise their concern, the rest is the PM's job as the leader of the country. What is disturbing is the PM's continuous refusal to accept the corruption charge and the ineptness