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PHOTO: STAR

Ivy's victory in NCC polls: 2011's most positive event

The year 2011 is gone and we are already in 2012. In my opinion, the most positive event in Bangladesh last year was the victory of Selina Hayat Ivy in Narayanganj City Corporation election and The Daily Star published her picture smiling with a 'V' sign in the front page of 'New Year Special 2012.' This was not an ordinary victory, it reflected the hopes and aspirations of the mass people against all odds and oppressions. She had to fight against a formidable adversary who got the blessing of the ruling party. But people liked Ivy's simple and hard working nature. Above all, she was not involved in corruption. Ivy is an exception. She was elected first when the BNP was in power and now when her own party withdrew their supports from her, she was elected again. Her father was elected in 1974 in a similar way.

Selina Hayat Ivy, you are the mayor of the people. Do not forget them like many others. May Allah bless you.

Harun-or-Rashid
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

Patients being fleeced at cardiac clinics

It is a great relief that treatment of heart diseases is now done pretty well here in Dhaka. As we know, a patient with heart pain or heart related complaints is always advised to consult a cardiologist. If after investigations and angiogram, a patient is found to have blocks, one, two or more, the cardiologist is supposed to advise the patient what treatment s/he can undergo within his ability. But our cardiologists outright suggest implantation of 'ring', indicating nothing of the other method which is also widely available and he can follow. The cost of each ring is 1.20 or 1.40 lac and it is alleged that a hefty sum of commission is paid to the cardiologist by the ring-marketing coterie. Usually most of the patients need two rings and with other charges (hospital stay, medicines and cardiologists' fees, etc.) the cost of implantation of two rings come to between Tk. 3.50 and 4.00 lacs.

Though for the well-do-do patients, advice for having rings make no difference, but I am certain it is serious issue for the poor patients. I took a patient with two blocks to a specialized cardiac clinic and consulted one cardiologist there who advised us as above. But as I heard that the by-pass or open heart surgery costs less, I asked the doctor if the patient could undergo this procedure. He answered if by-pass was necessary, he himself would have suggested us that. The patient being financially insolvent, got disappointed and we had him treated by open heart surgery at another hospital at a total cost of Tk. 2 lacs.

It is no more a secret that the agents of Ring Manufacturing Companies pay commission to the cardiologists and so they insists more on rings than on by-pass/open heart surgery. A Bangla daily published a detailed report on the ring rackets and their brisk business in a hospital in the capital and now the same rackets work in many other private hospitals offering treatment for heart blocks. Patients, especially of low income groups are becoming their prey due to their (patients') ignorance about the alternative procedure that requires much less money.

Ahmed Niaz
Shekhertek, Mohammadpur
Dhaka

Implement transfer system

According to a report in The Daily Star, BRTA has been gripped with broker activities for decades; due to non-transfer of personnel at regular intervals (the same problem exists in Rajuk & DCC).

During the British rule, my father, in the Bengal Education Service, was transferred regularly after every two years.

Transfer during the third year should be strictly followed in government and allied offices. What is required is change of environment (our political culture has become stagnant).

Violence against women

A report prepared by BNWLA and published in The Daily Star on 9th January 2012 has surprised me. The report was about the safety and security of women in our country. Very truly we can say that proper monitoring by the government agencies and raising awareness among the people will have positive impact. I am confident that those people who are doing the acts of violence are not unaware about it. A group of people are continuing with such acts including torture on domestic helps. Formation of a national commission to protect the rights of women will be of help. We need to realise that all of us have sisters and daughters whom we love very much. Otherwise one day our own sister or daughter may become victim of torture.

Dr. Khairuddin Barkat
Bashundhara, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

TeleTalk should reduce call charge

I am a subscriber of state-owned mobile operator, TeleTalk. I thought that it would be cheaper and the service would be much better than other operators, forgetting that for state-owned institutions nothing runs as it should. I bought the SIM with a high price. The call charge of TeleTalk is 1.33 per minute, which is much higher than other operators. It is very disappointing and objectionable. According to a report published in The Daily Star, leading telecom operator GrameenPhone is still ahead with 3.61 crore users whereas Teletalk has only 11.98 lakh subscribers. Teletalk also lost 9,000 connections.

If nothing is done to improve its service and unless the call charge is brought down, Teletalk will lose many more users. So, the government must take steps to develop its service, lower the call charge and improve its network coverage.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Adopt Clean Car Standards

The timely and bold initiative taken by the US President Barack Obama to finalise Clean Car Standards, that will nearly double fuel efficiency and cut global warming emissions in half for new cars and trucks by 2025 saving consumers' billions at the gas pump, deserves appreciation and support from all the quarters. Automakers, labour leaders, security experts, and consumer groups all support the proposed standards but it's not clear why Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA) is on the attack against those working toward a clean car future?

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), USA also supported the noble move undertaken by Obama administration. I being a member of the UCS also support the US President's initiative towards ensuring a cleaner environment through fixing Clean Car Standards.

I would also suggest all the countries of the world including Bangladesh to adopt clean car standards to cut global warming emissions.

Prof. M Zahidul Haque
Dean
Faculty of Agriculture

BNP lawyers should join war crimes prosecution



AMDAUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Recently one of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)'s top leaders urged the government to stop the activities of International Crimes Tribunal (ICT). The BNP has made it clear that it stands against the prosecution of crimes against humanity. We cannot betray the ideals and values of our Liberation War. The crimes that were committed in 1971 must be dealt with very sincerely according to the law and this opportunity must not be lost. We are grateful to the government for starting the process. There may be some criticism, but the people of Bangladesh should trust it.

This will set a unique example, a model for the rest of the world. The government should be a bit cautious. Unexpectedly the criticism came from the political party whose founder General Zia was one of the sector commanders in our Liberation War. By criticising the prosecution, does BNP want to tell us that General Zia did wrong? The Liberation War was false? We hope the BNP lawyers will be involved in the prosecution to establish justice for crime against humanity.

Monir Ahammed
Chandpur

'Marching towards abyss'

Fidel Castro's well presented full page article, titled as above, published in the editorial page of a local English daily on 11th January, is a sound scientific analysis of what is happening and the dangerous possible aftermath of the methodology for exploration of methane from underground geological shale structures by the USA. Releasing the trapped methane gas from shale by forced hydraulic fracturing of the underground shale structure is a procedure involving various risks, as described in Castro's article. This procedure uses 'benzene' and 'toluene' to be injected mixed with water for the hydraulic fracture of the shale structure and releases water contaminated with carcinogenic benzene and toluene in the water bodies.

According to Castro, his observations are based on research findings of many knowledgeable West European scientists involved in the study of this methane of methane gas extraction. In their opinion, this and other hazards may even upset the underground geological structures causing man made calamities like earthquake or floods! He sums up that the 'hydraulic process' can damage our underground shale structure and in his considered opinion it is "an adventure that is far too premature and risky". Finally, I express my admiration for Mr. Fidel Castro, for presenting a lucid and well researched paper of great international importance, providing knowledge and information on a new subject.

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Khaleda Zia's self-contradictory comments

In Chittagong Polo Ground Begum Zia announced that Moinuddin- Fakhruddin caretaker government was unconstitutional. In the past she said several times that the said government was illegal and that she would try the advisers if she comes to power. But at the same time, she has been continuously demanding reinstatement of the caretaker government system for the upcoming national election, though she holds the view that CG was unconstitutional as well as illegal.

Is it not self-contradictory? Will BNP participate in the upcoming election if the CG is restored in the constitution? Can anybody give the nation the guarantee that after the next two terms of caretaker govt. (if finally restored), the conflicts between the parties will disappear and the interim government system will be accepted for holding future national elections?

Abu Shahjalal Azad
Dhanmondi RA

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Pakistan learnt no lesson from 1971"

Shameem, USA

Imran Khan is a Pakistani citizen, but he admitted that there was a genocide in 1971 in the then East Pakistan. However, some of our Bangladeshi people still do not admit that genocide took place in 1971. It is really sad.

Imran Chowdhury

Pakistan army should apologise to the Bangladeshes for the genocide they committed in East Pakistan in 1971.

S Khan

He said this before, couple of months ago on national television. But dissenting voices in Pakistan are usually silenced.

Dev Saha

True, lesson has not been learned from 1971. But Imran Khan is pointing his finger to the wrong direction. The very elephant in the room is the Pakistan army. And he dares not speak against them because that could finish his dream of becoming the next prime minister. Khan will be representing the civil face of military and his Taliban brothers.

Sabir Majumder, USA

These days I hear hopes from the expatriate Pakistanis in the US about their new and rising leader Imran Khan. I hope he can become a true civilian leader of Pakistan which I think an impossibility given the fact that Pakistan is a failed state already. However, we Bangladeshis have definitely learned a lesson about their model of Muslim brotherhood during our War of Independence in 1971.

Mohammad Nurul Hoque

Thanks to Imran Khan for a nice interview. We want your success in politics in Pakistan.

Amran Khan

I think Bangladesh could have been a separate country back in 1947. I still don't understand the logic why two different cultures with a distance of about 1000 miles had to be one state (with respect to our predecessors). Why we had to bleed all the way? A mere 'sorry' is not enough for the killing and humiliation of my ancestors. They must conduct a trial of the war criminals.

M.K. Aaref

Does it matter what he says? After ending our 23 years' association with 'them', we just celebrated our 40th anniversary. A nation that was established on the basis of Islamic principles, which is supposed to treat all men, short and dark, tall and fair as equals, failed miserably on those principles.

An observer

Shall we believe what he says? Why he tells it now at the age of 60 or so? Why didn't he tell anything like this before? Will he tell the same if he wins Pakistan's next election by any chance?

Azam

Pakistan learnt nothing since the independence of Bangladesh. But we learnt many things. Some of the criminals are under trial in our country, though many of us do not support it because they already forgot the dark days of East Pakistan.

Amin

If it takes so long for people like Imran Khan to understand Pakistani atrocities in 1971, then how long will it take for ordinary Pakistanis to understand?

Dr Karim, Australia

It is true that until 195 designated, proven Pakistani criminals of war, who had done horrific killings, rapes and crimes against humanity in 1971, couldn't be brought to justice, law and order can't come to normal, neither in Pakistan nor in Bangladesh.

Know thyself, my dear Pakistani friends and identify real enemies of a democratic society rather than witch hunting.