

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 200 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Some suggestions: Is railway minister listening?

Whenever someone goes to a railway station in Dhaka or Chittagong, five days, six days or ten day earlier to his desired travelling day, he is told at the ticket counter that 'all the tickets are sold.' But when a ticket is somehow managed and one has boarded the train, he would find that lots of the seats are lying vacant and some people are selling those vacant seats. Intercity trains have an attendant in each compartment. It is alleged that some of these attendants are involved in selling vacant seats. These attendants virtually come to no help to the passengers.



PRITO REZA / DRINKNEWS

To improve the situation I would like to request the railway minister to kindly take the following steps:
--The ticketing staff and their superiors in Dhaka and Chittagong railway stations, who are responsible for the 'non-availability' of tickets, may be transferred to some small stations like Mirsarai, Talshahar, Bhatshala, etc., irrespective of their political allegiance.
--The attendants may be removed from the train.
--The procedure of selling railway tickets by mobile phone operators is not customer-friendly. The Indian railway tickets can be bought even from some travelling agents in Bangla-

des. Some travelling agents in the big cities of the country may be allowed to sell Bangladesh Railway tickets.

--Increasing the price of tickets is not a popular way to curb the loss of the railway. If the black marketing of the railway tickets can be brought down to a sustainable level, the Bangladesh Railway will become a profitable organisation.

Faruque Hasan
Dhaka

Make it a successful event

Bangladesh Premier League, which will kick off on February 10, 2012 is going to be the biggest domestic tournament in the history of Bangladesh cricket. According to the BCB, lots of overseas players will take part in this T20 event along with our renowned Bangladeshi cricketers. This foreign players' list includes some big names like Muralidharan, Gilchrist, Warne, Gayle, Hayden, Dilshan, Mendis, Afridi and so on. So, it is a golden opportunity for the Tigers to gain more experience.

Undoubtedly, this mega event will provide great financial advantage to BCB but they should remember that this tournament is for the development of our cricket. Hence, they (BCB) as well as the franchisees should enhance facilities for the local cricketers. We would like to see six Bangladeshi captains in all six teams. And we would like to witness a successful mega event so that the fireworks can show the whole world what Bangladesh is capable of.

Kh. Nabil Abrar
Student, BRAC University

Room grabbing in DU hall

I am a Masters student of Surja Ssen Hall at Dhaka University. Like every year, this year on 5th January the hall authorities distributed seats among the students on the basis of seniority and merit. But after getting allotment for new seats, the students are facing difficulties in getting their allotted seats.

Political leaders are grabbing most of the rooms. Students who are not involved in politics can't stay in their rooms as politically involved students or activists are staying there. What is frustrating is that the hall authorities don't have any power to ensure that a student can stay in his/her room. I stay in the hall because I don't have any other alternative to live in this city. But now I can't go to my allocated single room just because my room is grabbed by some political students! Where will I go now? Can the authorities give me an answer?

A victim student
Surjasen Hall, University of Dhaka

We want a sports channel

We have a good number of satellite channels in the country. These channels broadcast drama serials, movies, talk shows and many more entertaining programmes. We also have a few channels that are broadcasting only news. However, it is really unfortunate that we do not have any sports channel. We hardly get daily sports updates except in the news. Like other countries, we need our own sports channel. Our national cricket team play international matches regularly. But BTV only broadcasts a few of the matches. Therefore, we need a 24-hour sports channel to meet the demand of the sports lovers.

Muhtashim Uddin Ahmed
Dhanmondi

Old age allowance

The older people of the country are being given an allowance of Tk.100 per month by the government. We think the amount is too meagre given the rising prices of the essentials. As the elderly people cannot work and earn like the younger ones, they need the allowance. But this allowance should not be a mere token money. Even though the country is beset with many problems, the government is at least doing something for the welfare of the poor old people. This is a noble initiative on the part of the government, but the said amount is a mere pittance by any standard.

We hope the present government will raise the amount of the old age allowance considering the prevailing economic realities and make it something meaningful.

ZabedWali
On e-mail



PHOTO: STAR

Killing of nuke scientists in Iran

It is surprising that four Iranian nuclear scientists were killed in two years. We have learnt from the newspapers that the Iranian official noted that the latest assassination method - magnetic bomb being attached to the target's vehicle and two men on a motorbike doing the job was similar to that used in the killings of three other scientists.

This killing has sharpened an international confrontation over Iran's nuclear programme in which threats and counter-threats are being increasingly backed by displays of military muscle.

Moreover, this killing occurred at a time when Iran said it could easily close the Strait of Hormuz in response to the threatening postures of the Western nations and the USA that it. The Strait of Hormuz is a chokepoint for 20 percent of the world's oil at the entrance to the Gulf. Iran can choke this strait, if it is attacked or if sanctions halt its petroleum exports. The USA says that in return, it would keep sending its warships to the region, warning that closing the strait would be a "red line" that Iran should not cross.

However, Iran has been blaming Israel and the United States for the killing of its scientists.

Nevertheless, we are sure that these sorts of killings, any warfare or any sanctions are not the solution at all. So we hope that the world's influential intellectuals would come forward to defuse this tension.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka

Coal will remain a reserve forever?



PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN

The Prime Minister has declared that we will keep our coal reserve for the next generation and will now import coal to generate electricity for our use in Bangladesh. Having attended several ministerial and secretarial meetings on coal policy, I have written in your daily that the forces working against coal mining in Bangladesh is more powerful than that of AL, BNP and JP put together. My write-up 'Buried Treasure' published in your Forum's July 2010 issue explains that we do not have to reinvent the wheel, nor is it rocket-science to formulate a simple 'coal policy' and avert the crisis that faces this country.

We have the best coal in the region in terms of density and quality (sulphur content less than 0.04%, compared to 7 to 15% into that imported from India) and in sufficient quantity (energy for 50 years worth more than \$150 billion in the current global market). Coal is there to be extracted, yet we are not allowed to do so and successive governments have tried and failed repeatedly. Won't Bangladesh ever be allowed to extract its own coal?

Md. Mahmoodul Haque
Former Executive Director, Delta Pacific Mining plc.
Gulshan, Dhaka

EVM magic

Despite much criticism about the use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), mainly by the opposition party, the Election Commission (EC) has done the job successfully in Comilla City Corporation election. The polling stations were hassle-free. And the final result came out like a magic, within a very short time. Although there is a big risk of election manipulation in case of EVM use, but a strong, unbiased and transparent Election Commission can accomplish this Herculean task.

Yeahia All Mamun
MS student
Dept. of Soil, Water and Environment
University of Dhaka

We need quality education

The students of class V throughout the country made a very good result in the last Primary Education Terminal Exam. Last year the pass rate was 88.84 per cent. The pass rate rose by 4.92% this year. The overall result of JSC examinations has improved also. But still the dropout rate is a matter of concern. By dint of hard work the students are making satisfactory results. The guardians are also very serious about their children's education. If the situation improves gradually, no student will fail in any public examination in the near future. Now importance should be given to the improvement of the quality of education. Quality should be ensured for the better future of the students and for the betterment of the nation.

Abul Kalam Azad
Uttara, Dhaka

People are the best judge

The recent victory of the rebel BNP candidate Monirul Haque Sakku in mayoral election of Comilla City Corporation proved once again that people always favour a leader who is dedicated to improve common people's lot. Our political parties must understand the pulse of the common people and they must nominate honest and pro-people leaders who truly represent the parties. They must not choose candidates with dubious characters. Nowadays, the common people have become more conscious. They know they should elect the right candidate. In the recent mayoral elections of Narayanganj and Comilla, people have made it clear. Any kind of manipulation in voting could be disastrous for the government. It would have rekindled the politics of confrontation and distrust. The government and the Election Commission deserve kudos for holding a free and fair election in a peaceful environment. Congrats to the new mayor of Comilla!

Mohammed Sohel Hara
Shahjadpur



PHOTO: STAR

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Khaleda faces graft charges"

Shagor Hossain

Nobody is above the law. If Anti-Corruption Commission is really corruption-free, it should investigate the corruption cases against anyone neutrally.

Prince ruze

It's disgraceful that our former prime minister had participated in black money whitening process during the last caretaker government. Moreover, her eldest son is internationally known for money laundering.

Salam

I wonder how much taxpayers' money has been wasted on Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina prosecuting each other for the past 30 years.

Anonymous

We are living in such a country where the political leaders are looting thousands of crores of taka from the country. But we can't do anything against them.

Nasarullah

This graft charge is insignificant; there are thousands of cases of corruption to be looked into. It is nothing but a politically motivated case to humiliate and denigrate the opposition leader.

Jewel

This is very sad news for Khaleda Zia.

Anonymous

ACC must bring all corrupt politicians to justice, if the law is equal for all. We the expatriate people don't want the country to face serious political unrest. We urge the government not to harass the opposition leader. Bring her back to parliament and discuss economic issues. We will never support any autocratic system in Bangladesh.

Anonymous

It is an attempt to bar Khaleda Zia from participating in the next election.

M. Shafiqul Alam

Does this news item merit to be main headline when this case is likely to go through a lengthy legal battle and the government has to prove the accusations beyond doubt. In recent times, critics have found many inadequacies in such cases and people maintain certain reservations for this type of allegations against the politicians. Please go by the news value as you usually do in your newspaper.

Anonymous

We should not do anything that may lead the country to serious crisis. If law is equal for all, the corrupt leaders of the ruling party should also face trial. They are doing these things to ruin Khaleda Zia's image, because they find Khaleda Zia a highly popular leader. But ACC has failed to take any step against the corrupt