



PHOTO: STAR

Killers should be arrested

Sagar Sarowar and Mehrun Runi, a journalist couple, were brutally murdered at their residence on February 11, 2012. Words are failing me to express my deep shock and agony at this fiendish incident. One has to gasp with horror and disbelief, it is so macabre. We just cannot take it anymore; it seems that the whole country has become a slaughter house.

We learned that Sagar came back from Germany only a few months back to serve his country. And what had his country given him? It took away his life along with his wife's, and made their son an orphan.

We pray for the departed souls; our condolence to the family members of the deceased; and our special prayers for Megh, the only son of Sagar and Rumi; may he live a long and successful life.

The reason behind this alarming rise of criminal activities is that the offenders are never punished.

The government must shake off its carefree attitude and bring to book all the culprits and give them exemplary punishment. We have noticed that offenders who belong to the ruling party somehow get away without any punishment and others become emboldened by this. It cannot go on like this. The government must give safety to people, it is its sacred duty.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Border killings should stopped

Recently, the BSF Chief U K Bansal said that it would not be possible to put a total stop to the firing along the India-Bangladesh border, as his troops must take steps to stop the offenders.

Unfortunately, this comment might encourage the BSF members who are involved in killing and torturing the Bangladeshis in the border areas.

Though there is no accurate data on the total number of killings along the border by the BSF, Dhaka-based NGO Odhikar puts the figure at 1000, in the past ten years. Since 2007, Kolkata-based NGO Masum has documented 165 killings in just two districts of West Bengal-Murshidabad and North 24 Parganas, accounting for eight percent of the deaths on the West Bengal Bangladesh border. According to a 2010 report by Human Rights Watch, the BSF itself admits to killing 164 Indians and 347 Bangladeshis since 2006.

We have learnt from different media reports that these killings are a violation of Indian and international law. Unlike the army, the BSF has no special powers allowing it impunity. The BSF can only fire in self-defence. Surprisingly, no such report was found that any BSF personnel have been arrested or held liable for any of these crimes.

We have also learnt that under the Border Security Act, the BSF personnel cannot be tried in civilian courts without prior approval from the Union Home Ministry. The Act gives supremacy to BSF's internal courts. Many say that these are the reasons why border killing are taking place frequently.

Even so, we believe that the two governments will take a firm initiative to stop border killings.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka

Qualities of sewer pipes and earth-filling on dug roads

Dhaka WASA has taken a project to lay sewer pipes in Dhanmondi Residential Area and in some parts of Mirpur Road. We appreciate the work taken up at the right time of the year.

As a free citizen of a democratic country, I will be failing in my duties if I do not bring to the notice of the concerned authorities the following:

- i. After digging trenches and completing laying of the pipes therein, good quality sand is supposed to be used to fill up the holes. Unfortunately, I find that the filling is done with soil and sand which will make the cut portion vulnerable to traffic as voids will remain and more so no compaction is done. During the rainy season, the filling will start compacting automatically making depression and holes here and there thus jeopardising life and property of the people.
- ii. The pipes of different diameters are said to have been checked for design from BUET to stand the load and water pressure etc. From the broken parts of some of the pipes we can clearly see that ¼ inch rods have been placed which are normally used as binders of reinforcements.

I have discussed these two points with some of my civil engineer friends and they have also expressed their great concern over the matter.

I would request you to bring this to the notice of the appropriate authorities for taking corrective measures.

N.H. Choudhury
Dhanmandi, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

Promotion spree of civil servants

The government has promoted 649 officers to the ranks of additional secretary, joint secretary and deputy secretary though there are no vacant posts. According to the DS report, there are about 1,500 deputy secretaries against 830 approved posts, 500 joint secretaries against 250 posts and 148 additional secretaries against 108 approved posts.

There are different key organisations under different ministries. The organisations give vital and necessary service to the country. As per rule, when officials of these organisations become eligible for promotion, a committee consisting of members of the line ministry scrutinises the necessary papers and examines the compatibility of the existing rules and regulations. Generally, the first query the member from the ministry makes is whether there is any approved vacant post for the promotion.

In the DS report, adviser to the previous caretaker government and former cabinet secretary Akbar Ali Khan commented on the issue, but he never mentioned if it is a violation of the existing service law or not. The government should act according to the law in this respect.

Saif
Dhaka

Cyber war and our fighters

More than 20,000 Indian websites have been hacked by the Bangladeshi hackers over the last few days which include important government and financial sites. The website of the BSF was completely damaged in this process.

According to the Bangladeshi hackers' announcement, the cyber war is continuing in protest of severe brutality and murders committed by the Indian BSF to the Bangladeshi civilians for decades. Bangladeshi hackers have conveyed specific messages to the Indian government. Their demand is to stop killing innocent Bangladeshi citizens at the border, stop building the Tipaimukh Dam, sign the Teesta Water Sharing Treaty, etc.

I think this is a good way of protest against the inhumanity of the BSF. Hacking is just a message to the Indian general people which will open their eyes about the killings that have been going on at the borders, because they don't have any idea what is actually happening along the border.

As our government has failed to make the Indian government realise what BSF is doing against us, it's the right way of protest by the Bangladeshi hackers to stop this brutality.

Md. Yeasir Arafat Nadim
4th year, Dept. of Economics
University of Dhaka

Theft at Dhaka airport

Recently, I visited Singapore and upon reaching the luggage hall of arrival lounge I found my bag cut and damaged on two sides and my lock disappeared. I believe this happened in Dhaka and not in Singapore airport, as the security system there is very strong and such burglary is unthinkable. About eighty percent of my belongings was stolen and I had to buy all the necessary items without which I could not manage to stay there. Therefore, I would request the authorities concerned through your esteemed daily, to look into the matter very seriously so that this type of unwanted burglary stops permanently at our airports and passengers can reach their destination with their necessary belongings.

Kazi Mizanur Rahman
Gulshan-2, Dhaka

LGRD minister's indiscreet comments

LGRD minister Syed Ashrafur Islam is widely known to be a sober, polite, soft-spoken and wise politician. But recently his comments on different issues were really surprising, confusing and disappointing.

Referring to cattle-lifting, drug smuggling and other crimes in the border areas, the minister recently said, "Such crimes happened in the past, are happening now and will happen in the future". Does not such a statement indicate that the minister has a negative attitude towards eradication of such crimes? Isn't such a view tantamount to instigation?

Commenting on the heinous and obnoxious physical abuse of a Bangladeshi youth by BSF recently, the minister said "the government is not much worried about such incidents." Doesn't such a comment express his insensitivity to such crimes against human rights?

Only a few days ago, the minister took umbrage at the media for describing death in road accidents as 'killing'. According to him, "an accident is simply an accident". By saying so, isn't the minister nonchalantly ignoring the real causes of road accidents in our country?

We only hope our minister would avoid making such indiscreet comments for the interest of the government and the people.

Md. Mohsin Ali
Senior Assistant Secretary (Retd.)
Nutan Courtpara
Kushtia

Whitney Houston's untimely death



PHOTO: AFP

The American singer and actress Whitney Houston is no more. Houston, one of the most celebrated female singers, died on February 12, 2012 in Los Angeles at the age of only 48. Having won six Grammy Awards herself, Whitney Houston died Saturday on the eve of the Grammy Awards ceremony. During her brief life Whitney sang a number of hit songs like "I will always love you" and "Saving all my love for you." Her death is a loss of a highly talented singer and performer.

Meanwhile, it is reported in the media that in the recent years drug use had taken its toll on Houston and her voice -- once recognised as one of the finest in pop music -- was badly damaged. Her marriage to singer Bobby Brown had also made the star's life difficult. Although the actual cause of her death is yet to be known but it appears that drug had caused serious damage to Whitney's health which ultimately led her to her death at such a young age! It is unfortunate that many young talents world over are dying or getting out of normal life due to drug intakes. International efforts should be intensified to control the abuse of and trafficking in drugs.

Whitney Houston is dead but her magic voice will continue to entertain people forever.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Dhaka



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Minister pulls for extortion

Shajahan Khan asks JS body to recommend legalising the crime to stop rampant corruption in transport sector (*February 13, 2012*)

May be we need someone to think out-of-the box for once. Every politician promises that she/he will eliminate corruption but to no avail. Perhaps we should think twice before dismissing his idea outright. It's easy to be cynical, providing solutions tend to be lot more difficult.

Koyes, UK

The other day the PM praised his all ministers in Parliament. Now, this is the example of smartness. Actually, all our ministers are always smart. They are smart enough for themselves and not for the people. The minister should rather propose to PM to legalize all types of corruptions to make

the country 'corruption-free'.

Engr. MA Qasem

It is virtually being urged by the minister to set legalise one form of corruption in order to reduce it. What an illogical decision! He should think before saying whatever he wants to say.

A R Rakhail

Toll is a form of tax usually levied in a particular sector of the economy to generate extra revenue to meet certain expenses of that sector. Since it is a tax, only government (local, city or state) can levy it. It is done instead of raising general tax which is not good for politician's re-election. Toll collection by any entity other than

the government is unconstitutional and must be banned. Private toll collection is simply extortion and PM must explain legitimacy of non governmental toll collection. What a conflict of interest! It is only possible in Bangladesh.

Emran Ahmad

I believe that sometimes unconventional measures are required to start the process of improvement in a very desperate situation. I think the proposal merits consideration and it may not be a bad idea at all in practice.

Anonymous

The government astounds us.

Robert Tarik

I would like to congratulate the minister for at least suggesting an alternative way though the idea is very irrational and imprudent.

Jumana Sarwar

The minister is contradicting Sheikh Hasina who has always been saying that there is no corruption in her government. The cat has been taken out of the bag by the minister. They

should resign immediately.

Anonymous Bangalee

The government should mount close monitoring to stop such illegal way of income and take necessary steps to reform such unions with innovative ideas for betterment of society and the country.

Nasarullah

The PM was not telling the nation truth although she knew that corruption was going on in all the ministries. Now her minister has divulged the secret. How can she defend herself now? We want an answer from her.

Anonymous Bangalee

I cannot believe what I just read!

Truth Teller

The PM said in parliament that her ministers were not suited booted, but they were smart. Shajahan Khan is an example of that.

So the minister could advice the PM to legalise all corruption alongside toll collection, so that Bangladesh might become a 'corruption-free' country.

A Bangladeshi