

War crimes trial is never too late



As Wikipedia tells us, the Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk (born Ivan Mykolaiovych Demianiuk; Ukrainian, 1920), had been living in disguise in the USA since 1952. And in 1986 he (at age 66) was deported to Israel for his war crimes committed in 1942-43 at Treblinka and Sobibor extermination camps. In 1988 he was sentenced to death, in 1993 had his sentence overturned by the Israeli Supreme Court, and so he returned to the USA.

In 2001 he was charged again for his war crimes at Sobibor and Majdanek camps in occupied Poland and at the Flossenbürg camp in Germany. In 2009, (at age 89) he was again deported to Germany and in 2011 (at age 91) was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Later, he was released pending bail.

So there is no reason why 89-year-old Ghulam Azam cannot be tried for his alleged crimes in 1971. War crimes trial is never too late!

Khurshed Ahmed
Baridhara Diplomatic Zone, Dhaka

Dishonouring the teachers

It is praiseworthy that our government is trying to digitalise the education system of Bangladesh, but the rules they are imposing on teachers are really regrettable. From time immemorial, teachers are respectable persons but now we see that teachers are being harassed. Any kind of punishment in the classroom has been banned. But we should understand that in some cases, punishment is indispensable for maintaining discipline, though it should be moderate. The teachers who apply severe punishment on students should be brought to justice but passage of a law against any kind of punishment is quite unexpected. Now teachers have become puppets in the hands of conspirators. Many teachers are being harassed and accused of practising corporal punishment in schools. If this situation continues, no sensible person will take to teaching. And this is the best way to destroy a nation. So the government should look into the matter.

Sayed Karim
Agrabad
Chittagong

Wall Street, climate change & UCS

As communicated by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), on January 27, the Wall Street Journal of the USA had published an opinion piece titled. "No Need to Panic About Global Warming" signed by sixteen scientists urging policymakers not to worry about our changing climate, claiming that there have been no global warming for the past 10 years.

But this is not an authentic claim. Thirty-eight climate scientists immediately responded to this saying that global warming is real and human-caused. Scientists active in climate research have stated that the science is clear: "The world is heating up and humans are primarily responsible. Impacts are already apparent and will increase.....It would be an act of recklessness for any political leader to disregard the weight of evidence and ignore the enormous risks that climate change clearly poses."

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) also sharply responded to the above claim. UCS Director of Science and Policy Peter Frumhaff in his write-up quoted from a 2009 report, developed under the Bush Administration which said "Observations show that warming of the climate is unequivocal. The global warming observed over the past 50 years is due primarily to human-induced emissions of heat-trapping gases. These emissions come mainly from the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas), with important contributions from the clearing of forests, agricultural practices, and other activities."

Global warming, greenhouse gases and climate change are proven facts. Instead of drawing unscientific observations and inferences, the world as a whole should concentrate on how to reduce emission of green house gasses for protecting our dear planet and Mother Nature.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Dean, Faculty of Agriculture
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka



Death of a small investor

We are shocked at the death of an investor of stock market who allegedly killed himself recently after becoming bankrupt in stock business. We have no words to console his wife, lone child and relatives. Borrowing money with interest in order to become wealthy overnight without toil is discouraged in Islam. My view is, in the name of share business what is going on is sheer gambling. Our stock market is in no way like that of other countries.

We need to take precautions before making further investment after the so-called correction of the market by the authorities. My fervent request to all small investors who lost their money is to have patience at this juncture.

Our life is so precious. We are not born on our will and certainly we should not take our lives on our own accord. Liakot left his family in utter miseries. Nevertheless, we pray for the salvation of his departed soul. May Allah forgive him.

Dr. Md. Zahid Hussain
Consultant
Shahid Sk. Abu Naser Specialised Hospital, Khulna

Amor Ekushey

Samuelson said:
"My heart is indicating a great matter,
My tongue is pen of a ready writer."
21st February is a red letter day in our national life. It is a day of great historical importance. The UNESCO has declared February 21 as the International Mother Language Day. Barkat, Salam, Safique, Jabbar, and Rafique sacrificed their lives for protecting our mother tongue. They have earned us the freedom to speak in our mother tongue, Bangla. We should respect Ekushey February and our language heroes.

Md. Mashiur Rahman Chy
Dept. of English
Premier University
Chittagong

Choose the right way to protest wrong

Recently more than 25,000 Indian websites have been hacked by a group of Bangladeshi hackers named 'Black Hat Hackers'. This group also includes hackers from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and other countries. They have hacked important government and official sites including the website of BSF. The hackers' main purpose was to make the Indian government and its people aware of the incidents happening at the border and also create pressure on the Indian government to stop the BSF's brutality.

I strongly believe the quote: "Every action has an equal and opposite reaction." And this is what has happened. Indian hackers have already hacked five websites of various ministries in Bangladesh and are now making frantic bid to hack the sites of Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited [BTCL] and some other websites.

I appreciate that the new generation of Bangladesh is concerned about this issue and hence this protest. But isn't cyber war a wrong way to protest? This has created more complications between the two countries.

I hope we will protest against things which are wrong but always choose the right way of protest.

Choudhury Tasnim
On e-mail

Give railway importance

Railway is an effective and cheap way of transportation. But in our country road network has been given more emphasis than other means of transportation. Compared to the road network, railway network is not developed. But as now we have a separate ministry for railway, we can hope that railway will be given due importance. The railway ministry should work hard to ensure cheap and comfortable journey for the people. Steps should be taken to make it popular among people.

Montasir Mamun
Department of Civil Engineering

Challenges capitalism facing



There are controversies and severe criticisms all over the world about the efficacy of the capitalist market economy model. Charles W. Eliot University Professor at Harvard and former US Treasury Secretary Lawrence H. Summers came up with his scholarly exposition in an article under the above caption wherein Professor Summers unambiguously endorsed the model. He also discounted the version of different schools of thought that capitalism brings about various kinds of social maladies.

In the opinion of Professor Summer, as I understand, capitalist model delivers satisfactorily in today's global economy. Maladies referred to by the critics are actually outside the ambit of the system as such.

It is the responsibility of the stakeholders including the workers, their employers, businesses and above all the government need address problem.

S. A. Samad
General Manager (retd)
Janata Bank
Boro Moghbazar
Dhaka

Urge people to use over-bridge

I really don't understand why people do not use the foot bridge. Is time more valuable than life? Well it may be annoying to use the foot bridge when we are running out of time. But we should think about our safety first; life is more precious than time. Every time I cross a road, I use the nearby foot bridge. Tragic road accidents are taking place regularly due to jaywalking. In recent years, many people including schoolchildren were crushed to death for not using the over-bridge. As a conscious citizen, I am very worried. People urge the government to build over-bridges, but surprisingly, they don't use it!

The government should take immediate steps to stop jaywalking. There should be more traffic police on the busy roads so that they can keep track of the jaywalkers. People should be forced to use over-bridges.

There are also other reasons why people don't use over-bridges: dirty atmosphere, hawkers and beggars occupy maximum space of the over-bridges. I think over-bridges should be clean and free from all hawkers and beggars. At last, I would urge The Daily Star --the leading English daily-- to hold a campaign across the country to educate people about the benefits of using over-bridge.

Safran Fazle Rahman
A-level student
Uttara, Dhaka

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Living gets tough"

Anonymous

This is the achievement of the Awami League in the last three years. The finance minister should be ashamed of this and should consider doing something good for people. The minister destroyed the share market, banks and other financial institutions and the economy. But he still considers the economy strong and vibrant. He must be out of his mind.

A Bangalee

The price of rice should have been Taka 10.00 as was promised by the Awami League during the election campaign.

Jyothi

Hasn't it gone up internationally as well? The only difference is there is scope for improvement elsewhere while things get downhill in Bangladesh. God save the country!

Anonymous

This is the real picture of Bangladesh. AL government is giving false information to the people. BNP was much better. Is it a digital Bangladesh? We general people are helpless in the hands of these politicians. This government is busy in harassing the opposition, talking much and doing nothing and creating tension over the caretaker government issue. Poor and low income people are always ignored in the country. Corruption in transport sector is a big headache for the countrymen.

Dr Karim, Australia

The health sector remains the same as before. Other sectors should also be evaluated in microscopic eyes. Expatriate opinion is more important as they can give unbiased opinion.

Humayun Kabir

The figure is telling that our economic plan and resource management are not producing the desired results. Time has come for our top leaders, responsible for our economic management, to change the current growth strategy and re-prioritise major goals to avoid further damage to the economy.

Abedin Azad

The whole world is facing this crisis. I must say in case of Bangladesh the situation is much better. We should focus on some positive aspects also.

Engr. Abdul Gafur

Price of every item has increased. It is very hard to maintain the extra cost. Persons who depend on their pension are the worst sufferers. Only the Almighty can save us. Unrest in every sector speaks the truth. Thanks to the editor.

Anonymous

The prime minister says that her government is working for the welfare of the people. Now we see the welfare. The finance minister says that the country's economy is strong. Now we see the strength. Why are all these leaders bluffing the people? Instead of delivering speeches, these leaders should work in their offices and make plans for the betterment of the country.

Anonymous

No government makes plans for improving the living standard of people. No significant improvement has been made by the incumbent government in the last few years. Most of the improvements can be traced to two factors: the remittances of the expatriates and the efforts of the hardworking, self-reliant and

Border incidents

At times I find it difficult to understand our media reporting. Regarding border incidents, both Mr. Ashraf and Mr. Mukherjee have tried to say that it is basically a law and order issue and has to be dealt with the law enforcing agencies of both countries. It is not necessary to politicise the incidents of trespass on the international border.

You may be aware of the USA-Mexico border which thousands of Mexicans attempt to cross every year. Many make it and many get caught and even killed. It's an issue (having economic, humanitarian as well as criminal dimensions) that has to be addressed in its right perspective. Here the media should play an honest role.

Mizan
Dhanmondi, Dhaka