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Preparedness against earthquake



ANDADUL HUQ / DREKNEWS

On April 11 while I was working in my office I found that our building was continuously shaking. I was thinking if the magnitude of the earthquake were much higher, what would have happened? Most of the buildings would collapse, almost all the roads would be blocked, and there would be no place to take shelter as there is almost no playground or open space in Dhaka.

In 1995 an earthquake killed more than six thousand people in Kobe of Japan where houses were built abiding by building code. So imagine what may happen if such an earthquake (which is likely to happen anytime) hits Bangladesh. If a strong earthquake hits the country, millions of people will be trapped inside buildings, millions of people will die and millions of people will become disabled forever.

I request the government to take the following steps as soon as possible:

1. Identify the buildings which are not made following the building code to resist earthquake; demolish them as soon as possible; construct new buildings following the building code.

2. Ensure that not a single building is constructed without following the building code.

If we do not follow the building code, a strong earthquake will cripple the nation. Let us be very serious and united at least on this issue.

Dr. M. Mahboob Hossain

Associate Professor
Microbiology Program
Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
BRAC University

Victim of conspiracy?

I was really shocked to find Suranjit Sengupta, a political leader of high esteem, caught almost red-handed in a money scandal! It is hard to believe that a bold and outspoken leader like Suranjit Sengupta could be involved in such an ugly act. Maybe he became a victim of conspiracy. His appointment as a minister without portfolio suggests his innocence.

Professor M Zahidul Haque

Dean, Faculty of Agriculture
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka

Dilapidated Dhaka-Narayanganj link road

Many letters have been published on the unbearable and hazardous condition of Dhaka-Narayanganj Link road, popularly known as Biswa Road. The road is now in a very deplorable condition. Several parts of the road have been damaged and it is almost impossible for the vehicles to ply the road. There are several big holes on the road which turn into pools of water after a little rainfall. Few months back, some efforts were made to repair the road but for some unknown reason the work stopped. People living in Chashara, Chanmari and New Court areas are the worst sufferers. Every day thousands of people use this road to go to Dhaka risking their lives. A number of accidents took place on this road and many of those were serious ones. But the authorities did not take any step to repair this road. People of Narayanganj thought that their sufferings would come to an end as the new communications minister took charge. But the problem remains the same.

I request the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to repair the road which is also the main cause of traffic jam.

Md. Ahsanul Kabir Sohan

Amhatta

Umbrella for garment workers

Bangladesh is earning more than ten billion US dollars per annum from garment exports. But the owners of the garment factories are yet to recognise the contribution of the workers. They are still ill-paid.

The rainy season is knocking at the door. Soon we will see thousands of female garment workers walking to their workplaces in the rain. They will return home drenched in the rain. It is not at all acceptable that a garment worker cannot even afford an umbrella to save her from the sun and the rain.

I urge the owners of garment factories to provide umbrellas to their workers. It will not cost much but ensure attendance in dry condition. It would increase their productivity as well.

Mohammad Ashraf Hossain

Ramna, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

Reduce our suffering

Regarding load-shedding, a reader and Sir Frank Peters ask: 'why are we suffering unnecessarily?' (Daily Star:16.04.2012). And that's what we all want to know and have a right to know.

We have to accept the horrific problem of load-shedding but why the extra uncertainty, frustration and suffering? That makes no sense whatsoever and clearly indicates gross incompetence and bad management by the authorities responsible.

When Sir Frank first proposed the solution, I was completely astonished by its simplicity and the ease with which it could be applied. I could not help wondering why all this time I have been going along with the misery without questioning like him if it's really necessary.

If we must suffer for lack of electricity and unfortunately we must let us reduce everyone's suffering and misery to the bare minimum. If this government cannot give us the electricity we need, it should at least be predictable about the timing of the load-sheddings. Then at least we will have some order in our lives and less frustration.

Eng. Mohiuddin C. Aziz

Uttara, Dhaka

What a shame!

It seems our politicians do not care about people. If they had cared, they wouldn't have indulged themselves in corruption like this. It is a shame. Suranjit Sengupta has left us in shock and awe.

Cantara Wali

On e-mail

Minister's surprise visit

An article on the example of direct approach by a minister was published in the pages of a local English daily on 6th. April. It was a unique, interesting and quite relevant step, for improving our system of governance. Its practice will prevent corruption--our biggest evil, and help resolve problems in a more direct and effective manner, without the protective walls of bureaucracy! It could be tried out as an effective way to remedy the various wrongs in our bureaucracy.

The honourable education minister's unannounced visit to BRTA was indeed a very realistic approach to tighten up office performance. I am sure that the few hours he spent in the office, has enabled him to learn more about the 'happenings' in BRTA.

He could never have got such feedback, in months of meetings and innumerable number of memos as practiced by the bureaucracy!

This is an excellent and novel approach from the minister, and I congratulate him for his initiative. I believe if this practice is followed by all our ministers, including the honourable prime minister, the effectiveness of the government will increase substantially and people will regain their faith in the government.

We should introduce this practice of random visit by the ministers, to their various departments, at least once every month.

The results will be unbelievable, and the government will reap the full benefit of it in the next general election!

S.A. Mansoor

Dhaka

We are disappointed!

The country is buzzing with the sensational news about the seizure of Tk 70 lakh from the Railway Minister Suranjit Sengupta's APS. It is believed that the APS and a general manager of railway were taking the money to Suranjit Sengupta's house, which could be the bribe money taken from the job-seekers. We remember Suranjit Sengupta's remark about the share market collapse. He said, "it is like keeping a cat to guard dry fish." So this scandal surrounding him took us by surprise.

The minister seemed very uneasy and short-tempered when speaking with the reporters of different media, which is really unusual.

We demand that proper investigation is conducted so that the true picture is unveiled and the guilty people are brought to justice without showing any favour.

We hope that the government will not play the same old record, declaring it a plot of the opposition 'to foil the war crimes trial'; it would be the last straw.

Nur Jahan

Chittagong

Investigation or farce?

Investigation report in our country has become a ready tool to give respite to the criminals. If the criminals have the blessing of ruling party affiliation, they are not arrested forthwith because "it's not right to punish someone before the charges are proved against him," rightly said by our Railway Minister Suranjit Sengupta when he was asked about Faruq and Mridha from whose car seven million taka was recovered.

But in the case of others Rapid Action Battalion is very rapid and efficient. They then pounce on the real or imaginary criminals with the full force of quick justice using so-called cross-fire. It is very unfortunate that a dizzying number of our valiant soldiers were killed and their female family members were violated at Pilkhana for two days and we did nothing to save them rather we saved the killers by a hazy investigation report. We don't know who were behind the Ramna Batomul and 21st August massacre either. Investigation reports are formed as formalities, while the underground criminals go on with their mission.

Tinku

A blessing for prisoners!

A news report says that in Aceh province of Indonesia, 63 prisoners left through an open gate after the recent quake of 8.6 magnitude that triggered a tsunami across the Indian Ocean. In fact, guards left the prison gate open during the tsunami alert. They became afraid remembering the 2004 tsunami in Aceh that killed 170,000 people in the province. But this time the province experienced a minimal damage due to the improvement in warning systems. And the tsunami alert has appeared as a boon for the prisoners. The police are now looking for the prisoners.

We hope the Indonesian authorities would consider pardoning those prisoners who return to the prison on their own.

Mobarak Ali

RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP



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Suranjit is back

Govt makes him minister without ministry hours after his ouster; twisted version given in railwaygate probe; driver still missing (April 18, 2012)

A nice trick...

Tipu Sultan

The report says that the driver is missing. Is the government trying to find him or hide him?

A Bangalee

The controversial decision has broken our heart.

Shibli

By reappointing Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Hasina closed the lid of Pandora's Box. To me, it is not a good sign for the country. There is no doubt that there was corruption in the railway recruitment process.

PM's action is deplorable. Nothing has been done about the corruption. The crime was condoned (rewarded?). Other ministers may speed up their

corruption. PM's action encouraged corruption instead of preventing it.

Amdem, USA

The bold step that Hasina took by sacking the railway minister was a sign of maturity of politics and democracy in Bangladesh. It could be an example for the future governments to emulate. However, I am frustrated hearing this news. People of Bangladesh want a complete and transparent investigation into this case.

Akhtar Hossain

Where is the driver? Proper investigation is needed to find him out.

Ashif Hakim

We were astonished at the

prompt decision of the PM. Maybe she was directed by an invisible power to take him back.

Elihan U.K.

This is just disgusting! What is more shocking is that some are shamelessly supporting Sengupta. Blind supporters are worse than corrupt politicians.

SH

Whoever does not like my siding with Mr. Sengupta, should bring hard evidence and take him to the court. If you got evidences against him, gather them and work with like-minded people to impeach the man. No mob justice for Mr. Sengupta or anybody else!

Dev Saha

The resignation of Sengupta was a drama staged by the ruling AL government. It was just a game of the government to turn aside the people's attention. Now the PM has made him a minister again without portfolio. It's not a good sign for democracy.

Zafar Benzadid

I just became astonished after reading this news. He has resigned from the railway ministry but he is brought back as a minister without portfolio!

What a mockery with the people!

Bizoy

After a scandalous resignation if Suranjit Sengupta had to be reinstated as a minister after 38 hours at the behest of a country, can we call our country a sovereign state?

Md. Gholam Mustafa

The government could have shown an impartial attitude instead of appointing him as a minister again. This unfair gesture of the government will pave the way for rampant corruption as the politicians know that they will be protected if they do anything wrong.

Amir

For the sake of fair investigation of the cases and realising overall sentiments of the majority of public, PM could have waited until the investigations were complete. Such decision by the PM will raise questions about her judgement on important issues.

Mohammad Rahman

So, the impartial investigation to unearth the facts behind the railwaygate scandal has been finally blocked by this latest move of the government.