

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.

Make paddy cultivation profitable



KAKOLI PRODHAN / DRINKNEWS

Every government or political party talks about the betterment of the farmers but does not look into their problems deeply to really solve it. Moreover, it has become a popular style of the politicians and the leaders of many organisations to speak for minimising the plight of the farmers but in reality they do nothing.

However, a recent report of this daily says that good yield of Boro paddy in Kurigram has failed to bring smile to the farmers due to its low market prices. It says that a farmer has received 16 maunds of Boro paddy from each bigha of land, which can be called bumper production. But the farmer has to incur loss this season as its price is about Tk 8000 in the local market while its production cost is about Tk 9000.

In fact, if the paddy price does not increase this season, the farmers will lose their interest to cultivate paddy the next season. It may be mentioned that the government's paddy purchasing plan will not benefit the farmers because it would buy only 1.5 lakh tonnes of paddy and 9 lakh tonnes of milled rice. Farmers do not sell rice but paddy. So the millers and the middlemen will reap the benefit. Moreover, the government's rate is rather low for the farmers.

We urge the government to adopt an all-out policy for making paddy cultivation profitable.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka

Disrespecting nation's icon

A few days back Syed Ashraf Islam, an influential minister in the cabinet, launched a scathing attack on Dr Muhammad Yunus and undermined his pioneering work in micro-credit and his winning the Nobel peace prize. The minister did so in presence of the prime minister. What is really shocking is that the PM a few months back recommended Dr Yunus as the president of the World Bank for his achievements in micro-credit and women empowerment. Any opinion of a minister in a public platform should be considered the government's opinion. I beg to ask whether the PM's recommendation of Prof. Yunus as a candidate for World Bank presidency was real. Syed Ashraf's comment was instigated by Hillary Clinton's opinion that the US government hopes that Bangladesh government would not interfere with the Grameen Bank's activities. Dr Yunus is one of our very few global ambassadors and it is really disheartening to see that the current government is undermining the very individual who brought immense fame and goodwill to Bangladesh instead of giving him the recognition he so much deserves.

Sadman Mahmud Chowdhury
DOHS Baridhara
Dhaka

Tipaimukh, Teesta, and BSF atrocities

On May 12, 2012 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the people to elect her in the next general election so that she can win over the dispute of maritime boundary with India. But people are more concerned about the present disturbing issues which the government has failed to settle with India. These are: Teesta water sharing deal, Tipaimukh dam, and killing of Bangladeshis by BSF. Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna said that the Teesta deal has to wait as India is trying to develop a political consensus.

We have heard that India has already started to build a dam at Tipaimukh. And after repeated protests from Bangladesh, Border Security Force (BSF) of India is regularly killing Bangladeshis at the border. India said that it has asked BSF not to shoot, but the killings are going on unabated. It is unbelievable that the BSF dares to ignore the order of the highest authorities!

Therefore, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina must solve these three serious problems first, before telling people that if she comes to power again she will come out victorious in the 'maritime boundary' case with India. She is now in power, why is she failing so miserably in solving the above mentioned disputes with India?

Bangladesh should uphold its dignity and never bow down to injustice or pressure of any sort.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Yunus and Nobel peace prize

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraf Islam has said that Dr Yunus having worked in economics and receiving a Nobel prize in peace is proof enough that something is really wrong. This may sound very convincing to the general mass. We are a very gullible nation and a population deeply divided into two camps.

Without giving much thought and trying to know the facts, we just voice whatever our leaders say because we belong to one party or the other and try to prove our allegiance.

Being a nutritionist, I can instantly cite two persons who had a profound role in the field of nutrition and received Nobel prize in peace. One was Linus Carl Pauling. He became famous in the field of quantum chemistry and molecular biology. His experiments in mega dosing with Vitamin C and preventing flu like symptoms became controversial and repeated research throughout the world could not prove his theory unanimously. But that did not stop his receiving not one but two Nobel prizes (1954) including one for Peace (1962).

He also received the Lenin Peace prize in 1968. The second person, also an American, was Norman Ernest Borlaug. He was an agronomist and is considered the father of the Green Revolution. He invented the high yielding variety of wheat which saved billions from hunger and helped remove poverty amongst the poor farmers. He received his Nobel prize in 1970 in Peace and not Chemistry although his major work was in genetics. He was also given the Padma Vibushan award by India in 2006.

Their long list of world awards is a matter of envy for any Nobel laureate and some of us feel proud to find Yunus as one of the contenders. Let our political leaders do some homework before they cry hoarse over wrong issues.

Prof Mamunar Rashid
MBBS (DMC); MS (Columbia, NY)
DPH (DU); PhD (Cambridge, UK)
Principal
Ibrahim Medical College

Our unique country

Our country has attained uniqueness in many respects. It is the only country in the world where:

1. One can fill 100 kgs of anything into a 50 kg bag! Otherwise how could 5 lac Gas Guzzling Monstrosities fit into roads with capacity of 2-2.5 lacs!
2. Vehicle drivers think they have discovered a novel way of dispersing traffic jams by blowing their raucous horns as loud and often as possible!
3. Dozens of people disappear regularly without trace or reaction. But if an elected "pensioner" even with a murky past disappears, you have weeks of hartals, arson, bombings, vehicle/factory bashing, rioting, etc!
4. Our elected "pensioners" spend more time insulting honoured national personalities than at their jobs!
5. Ministerial chairs have seats with Super Glue. It is impossible to resign and even if forcibly done, you still get all your perks and salary!
6. If the impossible happens and the seat is wrenched away, there is an instant revolving door to another ministerial chair with OSD status, just like bureaucrats!
7. The legislative and executive branches of the state seem to be in a state of inertia. The judiciary is doing all their work!

Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Gulshan-1
Dhaka

Where have all the boys gone?

The result of the SSC examination is finally published. Some students are overjoyed, some are not. Pundits are debating if the higher pass rate reflects the increasing quality of education. As I was standing near the newspaper stall waiting for my bus and browsing the newspapers, I remembered one facebook post: "Only female students sat for SSC exams this year." Right after the SSC examinations began, someone posted the front pages of the major newspapers on Facebook, all of which had the pictures of girl students attending the examination.

The user commented that he searched all the newspaper sites but could not find a single photograph of the boy students attending the exams. And when the results of the SSC examinations were published, the same thing happened again. Smiling faces of the girl students, and of course the pretty ones, were published in all the newspapers!

Saif, Dhaka

Cancellation of Padma Bridge loan

The World Bank has cancelled the loan for constructing the Padma Bridge because Bangladesh government did not take any action against the greedy elements which came to power for swallowing public money. Padma Bridge if constructed could have benefited millions of people for millions of years saving millions of hours of travelling. We the Bangladeshi people are born with poor luck and so we have no right to dream about something new or modern and we are destined to remain poor!

Kazi Mizanur Rahman
Gulshan-2, Dhaka

World Bank made its data fully public

It is heartening to learn that as part of the new Open Access Policy, the World Bank has made all its research data and publications accessible to everyone. They have just 'Creative Common'ed all their publications' in a new Open Knowledge Repository. Under this privilege, anyone can distribute, reuse, and build upon the bank's published works, even commercially, as long as the bank is given credit for the original creation.

This is indeed a very encouraging move towards expanding development knowledge and academic research.

While sincerely appreciating the World Bank, I hope their knowledge will now be shared by people around the globe for enhancing development activities.

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

The "VC-ious" web of JU

A detailed report was published in your front page on 10th May about the frustrating example of in-house politics of the ruling party extending its vicious tentacles into the JU campus. It is a sad and sordid affair initiated by the JU management, as reported. They are virtually running a dictatorship, come what may.

Is the Chancellor of the universities not aware of the facts? Can he not take decisive action to restore the atmosphere of strict education at the campus? It is a sad saga of shabby politics of the ruling party, for which general students are suffering. JU, run by the taxpayers' money, has now become a seriously sick arena of dirty politics!

Woeful Voter
Dhaka



Readers' instant comments on The Daily Star Online reports. Log on to thedailystar.net to leave your comments.

Opposition top shots in jail

Court terms charges against 33 leaders non-bailable; violence erupts; hartal called for today (May 17, 2012)

The government is playing with fire and pushing the nation to long-term troubles. Please avoid this anarchy.
Sengupta, Canada

Democracy indeed! Wholesale imprisonment of opposition leaders is plain and flagrant persecution at best.
Roni Rehman

Is this democracy?
Nazrul Islam

Expressing people's demand is the right of the opposition leaders and they should express their demands in a peaceful way. The political leaders

should have got bail from the High Court. The lower court refused them bail. The party in power has the intention to exercise undemocratic authority. On the other hand, the opposition is damaging people's properties in the name of hartal, which is hampering our economic growth. The nation wants to get rid of such undemocratic practices of the major two parties.
Mayen Uddin Tazim

People of Bangladesh, please rise to oppose the autocratic ministers who are against democracy and only interested in cash and corruption.
Gulshan

The country is locked into a vicious cycle.
Limon

Why are these guys allowed to swing from their vans and make such a show of their arrests?
S khan

Once again the Awami League has shown how fair their government is! The law and order situation is in a very critical condition.
Jahangir

All of you are national heroes. Nation will respect you because you are fighting for public interests.
Hussain

We shall continue our peaceful protest because we are in millions and you have no jails to keep us all locked in forever.
Manzoor Ashraf

Bangladesh is going towards an uncertain future. Both AL and BNP should change their mentality. Mass people should not suffer because of their personal conflict.
Md. Emdadul Islam, Hathazari

Are the people of Bangladesh going to accept this totalitarian regime? What are the civil societies in Bangladesh going to do?

Anonymous, USA

So we are heading towards one party rule! The court order was expected. If it is called 'Democracy', then it was better to have dictatorial rule.
Shoaib, USA

The ruling government is leading the nation towards a civil war. Police, Rab and other law enforcing agencies could not find out the killers of Sagor-Runi, Aminul and others. They also could not give any information about Ilias Ali. But within a few days they could identify the people who were behind torching vehicles during hartal. What a drama! None of the leaders who are arrested were present during the incident and there is no evidence that those leaders were involved in the incident. Now common people can easily understand what is going on behind the scene.
Nazrul Islam