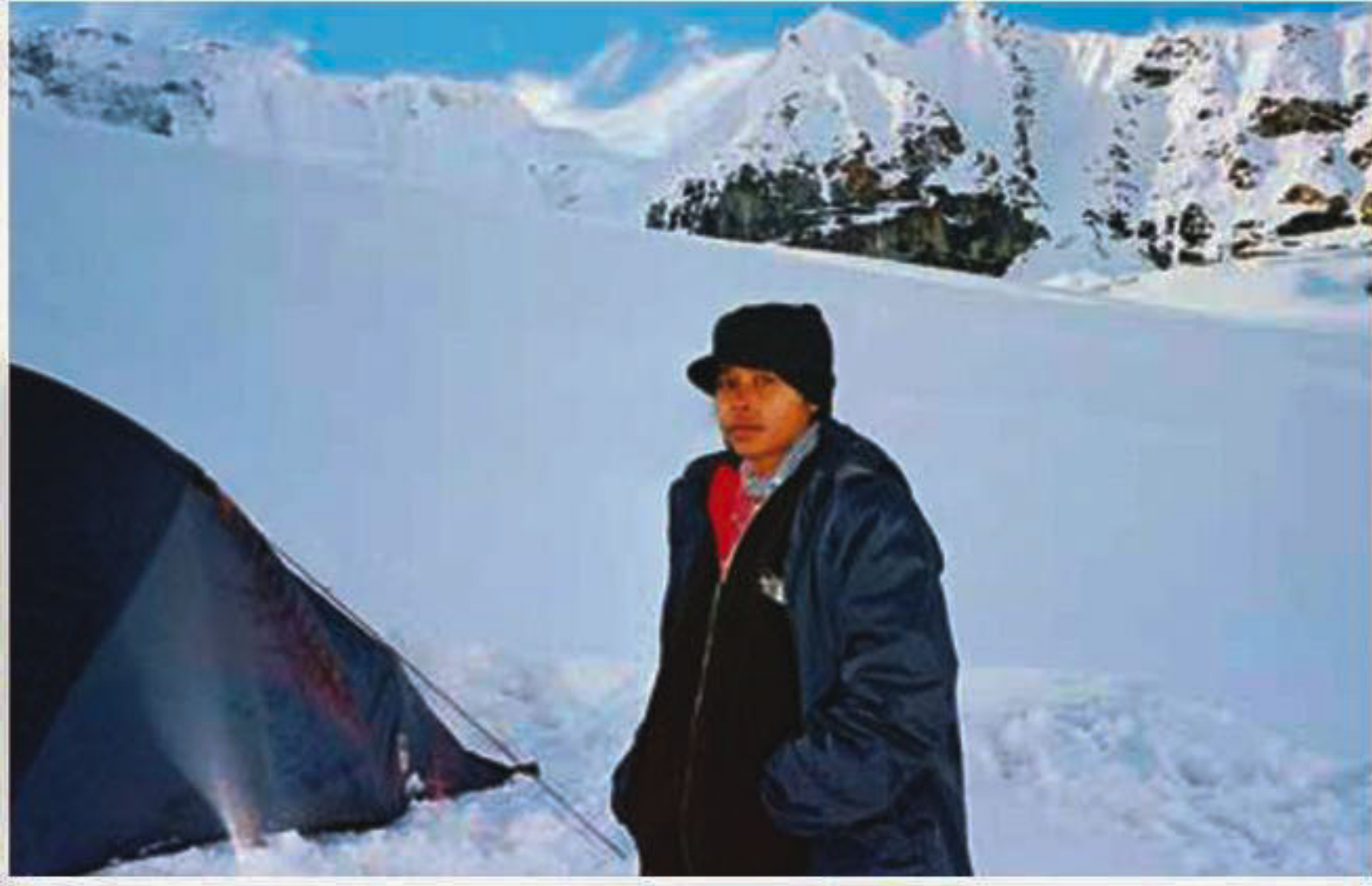


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 200 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Hats off to Nishat Majumder



Hats off to Nishat Majumder for becoming the first Bangladeshi woman to scale the Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world. Nishat, you have proved that a woman can do everything that a man can do. You have become a part of history. We are very proud of you. And we praise your parents who allowed you to fulfil your dream. We also appreciate the good initiative taken by the mountaineering club. Again, congratulations!

Mahabuba Ferdousi
Lecturer of Political Science
Monija Rahman Girls' School & College
Gandaria, Dhaka

Risks of Azithromycin

A news item published in The Daily Star on the 18th of May was very interesting and needs consideration. The study report says that Azithromycin is a bad drug that increases death risk. There are similar drugs that are safe for heart. It is time the health ministry did something about this medicine as this antibiotic is readily available in the market.

Shafkat Rahman Arib
Kids Tutorial
Circuit House Road, Dhaka

Our millionaires, are you listening?

The article by Professor Rashiduddin Ahmad (May 18th) made delightful reading with its account of numerous worthy people who laid aside privilege and personal profit in order to perform acts of public service in the only way they thought proper. The article was inspired by the example of Sohel Taj, wishing to retire from politics and reject the income he was being paid, which, the writer said, was an attitude surely inspired by his father, Tajuddin, first prime minister in exile, who set an example of personal austerity and honesty.

Another example he chose was that of Tony Benn, the longest-ever serving MP in the British Parliament - 50 years. The writer says he was the son of a big landlord when, in fact, he was the son of a hereditary peer and inherited a title - Viscount Stansgate! However, he wished to enter the House of Commons, in keeping with a tradition on both sides of his family and in the Nonconformist Church tradition that upheld the best sort of involvement in politics. Besides, he considered the House of Lords to be 'the British Outer Mongolia for retired politicians'! He fought successfully for the law to be changed so he - and others - could renounce their titles in order to enter the House of Commons.

How nice it is to contemplate people who have this mindset, in a world where so many grasp at political power for personal advantage when the world needs those who make personal sacrifices for the benefit of all as a normal part of being human!

Wouldn't it be nice if some of the 23,212 multi-millionaires in Bangladesh known to the Bangladesh Bank (that Professor Muniul Islam reported in his article of May 20th) began to pay the income tax they owe so that the fewer than 1000 people paying personal income tax to the tune of one lakh taka in the 2011-12 taxation year became a great flood of those releasing funds for the benefit of this dear country - instead of pocketing it for themselves?

Angela Robinson

"Goom" (forced disappearance) syndrome!

Mysterious disappearances have now gripped the country. Every day people are disappearing and in most of the cases they do not reappear. This sort of disappearance cannot take place in a civilised country. So I believe we are still uncivilised. All of a sudden anybody can lose his/her near and dear ones. If such disappearances continue, then the whole nation will live in constant fear and become mentally ill. Enmity may be the main reason behind disappearance. Enmity may exist among friends, neighbours, colleagues at work and among members of the ruling parties or opposition.

But mostly innocent people are often the victims. Disappearance of newborn babies from hospitals and clinics, disappearance of drivers from their vans, trucks, auto-rickshaws and taxis on highways or city streets and kidnapping for ransom etc. take place almost every day. It is the responsibility of the government to look into the cases seriously and do something to bring relief to the citizens. My suggestions are: law and order must be maintained. The police should be more alert and the guilty must be punished. Otherwise 'Gooms' will continue.

Kazi Mizanur Rahman
Gulshan-2, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

We have passed more than four decades as an independent nation but still we could not build a strong infrastructure because of political instability, corruption, nepotism, and lack of political and administrative goodwill. Most of the people of our country still live under the poverty line. Three sections of our people are contributing greatly to our economic development but are neglected by the government. Firstly, our farmers have been working hard to meet the food demand of the country. Secondly, the migrant workers are sending their hard-earned money to the country which is the biggest source of our country's foreign currency reserve. Thirdly, our garment workers are doing an outstanding job and contributing a lot to our economic development. But it is a matter of sorrow that our farmers and garment workers are struggling most to make both ends meet. And our migrant workers are passing a troubled life abroad. If the government can not provide them support to live a healthy life, we as a nation can never prosper.

S. M. Imranul Islam Rajon
Sr. Reporter
Weekly Shikkha Bichitra
Dhaka

Water shortage at Dhanmondi

We, at Road 9A of Dhanmondi, Dhaka, have been without any water supply for the last two weeks. We have to buy our water every day. Efforts to solve this problem have gone nowhere so far. We have borne the calamity with stoic patience, but we are at the end of the tether. I earnestly request Dhaka WASA to restore our water supply as soon as possible. Democracy without electricity is bad enough; without water, it is simply unendurable.

Iftexhar Sayeed
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

What actually happened that night?

A report published in a daily says that four BGP officers on May 9, 2012 gave written statements to the probe body and were all quizzed. They came up with identical descriptions about the cash haul in the night of April 9 from the microbus of former railway minister's assistant personal secretary.

At another place of the report it has been written -- "They said they allowed the microbus as it carried a sticker of Jatiya Sangsad. They also said they did not search the microbus, although the driver had shouted that there was illegal money in the vehicle. They claimed to the probe body that none saw the money."

We are feeling exasperated by this news. Why did the BGP personnel not search the microbus after the driver sounded the alarm and how did they find the money if they did not search the vehicle?

Ensure a better life for toiling masses



PHOTO: AFP

There is also a contradictory statement about the release of driver Ali Azam. The BGP personnel said that they released Ali Azam along with the three others, but Commandant Enamul Huq, who was in the microbus and was detained by the BGP, said that BGP did not release Azam. Then what is the truth? People want to know what had happened to Ali Azam. Till now he is untraceable and people are becoming suspicious.

We pray for his safety. May people know from him what actually happened on that fateful night.

Nur Jahan, Chittagong

Nationalise non-govt. primary schools

The government promised that all the non-government primary schools would be nationalised. But the government has not taken any action yet to keep its promise. What is the reason behind this attitude? The primary schoolteachers who had protested for their rights were beaten seriously by the police on 15th May 2012. A teacher also died because of the brutal attack. We condemn the government for taking such a tough stance against the primary schoolteachers. We should realise that the primary school teachers are the builders of the nation. In other countries everybody respects the primary teachers and they get a good salary for a decent living. The government should take steps to nationalise the non-govt. primary schools.

Md Ramim Hasan
Islamic University

Mass hysteria and public awareness



PHOTO: STAR

Very often we read in the newspapers that many people especially women and children in different areas of the country fall sick at a time. The patients fall down suddenly and become unconscious with convulsion. Of late, it happened in Matiranga upazila of Khagrachhari. According to a newspaper report, at least 32 people fell sick there in a couple of days. Most of the affected people are teenaged boys and girls. It has been learnt that after regaining consciousness, the patients become weak and feel pain in the body. They also behave in a strange manner.

There are people in our society who have superstitions. Fake fakirs often take advantage of this situation and assure the victims and their relatives of treating the patient by driving away evil spirits. Doctors say that during times of anxiety and tension, mass psychogenic illness breaks out among the people who lack tolerance. Also, the sickness is aggravated by poverty and malnutrition.

If mass hysteria occurs in any area, conscious people of the locality should come forward to help the affected people and bring them under medical care. The authorities concerned should publicise the actual causes behind mass hysteria in the affected areas.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road, Gopibagh, Dhaka



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

No bail, again

33 opposition leaders stay in jail as sessions judge's court too rejects petition in arson case (May 24, 2012)

The court's decision on bail is right.

Farzana

The law made by BNP has now become a boomerang to them.

Nasirullah Mridha, USA

The opposition party never believed in good politics. They were in power when people like Kibria and Ahsanullah Master were killed and the August 21 grenade attack occurred. Khaleda Zia's sons were the most corrupt people in the history of the country. Before

1/11, BNP and its coalition created the election commission and subsequently many people were killed. We did not forget those days.

Fayed

The opposition leaders are now trapped in the plot of political immunization by the ruling party. BNP itself is responsible for this as its leaders literally destroyed all the instruments of democracy when they were in power. People still remember the way they conducted the mock election and manipulated the

appointment of chief justice. AL fought and won. Now it is their turn. Let them prove that they can survive in the face of all conspiracies. People will choose the party that expiates its sins or mistakes through sufferings, struggles and sacrifices.

Md. Russell Talukder

Arrest, oppression and bail rejection are the signs of an autocratic regime. It is now a matter of time before we would see a dishonourable exit of the ruling party.

Jumana Sarwar

The procedure of getting bail should be more stringent.

A reader

It is clear that the ruling government's intention is to destroy BNP and simultaneously make these highly respected and popular leaders refrain from taking part in the next election and also to weaken the party leadership. The cases were submitted with heinous inten-

tion and there have been lots of inconsistencies. It proves how much damage the government has done to the judiciary system of the country, which is considered the last resort for people to get justice. However, it will do no good to the nation.

Rahim

The case is motivated and vindictive and a move to punish the opposition political stalwarts. It is also known that no court can permanently deny bail to its citizens. Sooner or later, they will be out as free men. If they come to power next time, the present opposition is likely to pay back. Whether AL likes it or not, political dialogue has to take place, and there will ultimately be changes in the constitution to accommodate opposition's views. The present government will have to pass the necessary amendments. I call upon the AL government to start the process of dialogue without delay. We really do not want to see the country in turmoil.