

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.

Deplorable condition of Gulshan-Baridhara lake



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

I am talking about a septic tank that lies between Gulshan and Baridhara. It used to be a lake some years back, but no more. There is no water in this stagnant pool now but only thick dark stinking fluid.

Way back in 2001, the Ministry of Environment and Forest constituted a task force to go into the problems of the lake and recommend measures for their remedy. The Environment Directorate submitted its findings and recommendations of the task force in December 2001 through a covering letter No. Poribesh/Gobeshona-122/2001/2880 dated 20 December 2001 to the Ministry of Environment and Forest. Incidentally I have a copy of the report.

The task force gave nineteen short, medium and long term recommendations which included among others, provision of sewerage system in Baridhara (it is a shame that the so-called diplomatic enclave does not have this basic facility), installation of permanent arrangement for sewage disposal in DOHS Baridhara, stopping all effluents from factories in Kalachandpur and other areas, constructing bridges in place of culverts, demolishing all unauthorised structures on the lake, maintaining the lake banks including planting trees etc.

In twelve years the successive governments have not done anything and so the situation has gone from bad to worse. The volume of sewerage has increased manifold with construction of high-rise apartments. The sight and bad smell have become unbearable to the residents of the area. Will the government kindly do something?

Shahjahan Hafiz
Gulshan
Dhaka

Spirit of Bangladesh reborn

As a Bangalee, I'm bursting with pride. I feel like really celebrating. I think we all should thank Nishat Majumder, Wasfia Nazreen, Musa Ibrahim, M A Mliith and Niaz Patwary. I will never forget the great sense of euphoria in Bangladesh when Musa Ibrahim became the first Bangladeshi to climb Mount Everest. Sometime later, M A Muhith conquered the Everest. In between, Musa Ibrahim and his friend Niaz Patwary successfully climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, bringing more honour and glory to Bangladesh.

Now Nishat Majumder and Wasfia Nazreen have shown that Bangladeshi women, too, are capable of great achievements, on par with that of the men, and that's something really worth celebrating.

In a recent media report Sir Frank Peters described them as national heroes whom he welcomed as "urgently needed role models for the youth of the nation who richly deserve to be admired and respected for the honour, glory, and inspiration they have brought through their magnificent achievements". I totally agree.

I hope and pray that what we are witnessing now with Musa, Nishat, Niaz, Muhith and Wasfia is only the beginning of success Bangladeshi men and women will achieve in the future.

Through their efforts the 41-year-old spirit of Bangladesh has been re-born at last and may it live eternally. Long our live these national heroes!

Sabina Kabir
Uttara, Dhaka

Shame on our MPs!

For the first time in my life I am writing to any newspaper out of anger, depression and sadness. I feel like crying. I just do not know how I will express in words what I am feeling. How can I protest the insult to Prof. Sayeed Sir? Not only me but also my friends grew up with Bishwa Shahitya Kendro. So we do have soft corner for Sayeed Sir. This government insulted Dr. Yunus before. Now they have insulted him. This government should understand that these people are icons to the youth of this nation. What have we learnt from the government? Is there any boy or girl who will say that their icons are their MPs? I guess we won't say anything like this.

They said Prof. Sayeed has to plead forgiveness. Now I say, those MPs should seek forgiveness from the nation. Sayeed Sir does not know me nor I ever talked to him in person but I am very much sympathetic to him about what happened.

Shajia Afrin, On e-mail

We want an apology

First Mr. Mahfujur Rahman hurt the journalists by giving an awful statement regarding the murder of the journalist couple Sagor-Runi, which he should not have done. Secondly, he made a despicable remark about the people of Sylhet, calling them illiterate who are beginning to get educated. Does he have any idea what Sylhet has produced for this country? Has he forgotten that Saifur Rahman, Shah A.M.S. Kibria, Abul Mal Abdul Muhit, Nurul Islam Nahid, Rasheda Aktar, His Excellency Mr Anwar Chowdhury, Roshnara Begum and other countless names belong to this holy land? So, how dare he calls the people of Sylhet illiterate?

We demand a public apology from him so that in future he doesn't speak anything like that. He must have lost his mind otherwise he would not have uttered such baseless words against the people of Sylhet and the slain journalist duo.

Badal Hasib

Preparing for Ramadan

The pious Muslims are eagerly waiting for the holy month of Ramadan because of its immense significance in Islam.

But the trend of price hike of essentials during Ramadan creates anxiety in people. The helpless common people of our country have to be prepared for bearing the unbearable high prices of daily essentials in the month.

In fact, some immoral traders lie in wait for capitalising on the opportunity, doing unethical business during Ramadan. Inadequate stock preparation and weak and flawed market monitoring system of the government pave the way for those unethical businesses.

However, we have learnt from a parliament report that the government has ensured adequate stock of daily essentials including edible oil, sugar and pulses to keep prices of these food items under control during Ramadan. Even the government will also import some other food items to meet additional requirement in Ramadan.

We hope there would be 'no credibility gap' in the government's statement and it would be able to prove itself efficient in keeping prices of essentials under control during the Ramadan.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

The largest industry

If you were to ask anybody, "What industry generates the largest volume of sales in the world"? 9 out of 10 will answer "The armaments industry". Nothing costs less than thousands of dollars in this industry, while sophisticated airplanes, battleships, missiles etc, cost multi-millions. A dozen rich countries monopolize the manufacture and sale of armaments. The remaining poor, foolish countries (including our own) purchase.

The armament industry is big but it is still the second! The biggest by far, is the one that caters to the white wanting a tan, the black wanting white and others wanting different colour of skin, hair, nails, eyes and using them for paintings. Then those who want bigger anatomy parts and those who spend expensive hours trying to shed extra pounds acquired from wasteful junk food around waists. Dandruff is a money spinner and lotions, soaps, powders of every conceivable kind would fill million ton tankers. I won't even mention the war paint and other aids that go to beautify (?) every part of the anatomy. From the cradle to the grave, it is one long unending war to improve on nature. Women's vanity used to be blamed once, but now men and even children are not lagging behind. To help, malls and parlours have mushroomed, to cater to all needs.

This year safety net programmes have been cut, the disabled ignored and the poor taxed. Even infants' and rural Tk.10/- bank accounts will be taxed if they do not have a TIN! That being so, how could the FM spare the biggest and most environmentally wasteful industry, that is all around him, especially at the 5-star watering places where he usually says his words of wisdom.

Sikander Ahmed

Our drivers' mindset



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh traffic is something to see. On the roads the drivers always drive like they are in extreme hurry to reach their destination. They don't give other cars a chance to go past them, even if other cars blast the drivers' ears blowing horns. They don't even let the ambulances go which carry critical patients. It's like all the drivers are living in their own world; they don't care about anyone else. In London if an ambulance carrying a patient or even not carrying a patient comes to the road, the cars move to other sides or give it a pass anyhow. This shows their care for another human being. That is definitely not the mindset of our drivers. I hope the government can change the situation by enacting new laws to stop this.

Ahmed As Sami
Class-6
Anandaniketan School, Sylhet

Little candle in darkness

Congratulations on your little magazine - Star Insight! Its excellent stories are of a kind that rarely penetrate the pages of the main newspaper. Of course, bad things happen and we need to know about them but when I open Star Insight I feel, "This is the real Bangladesh!"

We read of people who, when faced with apparently insuperable obstacles, get stuck into some project, bringing a better and more hopeful life to many. They may be founding a local library, or, recently, like Ismat Ara, 'stitching poverty away', but when the right ingredients come together, there is joy, satisfaction, learning and hope for the future - though not without hard work and personal sacrifice which is a truth we all need reminding of!

It is printed on the poorest quality newspaper indicating that, unlike 'Lifestyle', advertisers do not think that possible future customers are interested in such stories - indicating the opinion that advertisers have of us! In my life-time, I have seen the shocking decline of standards (and thus a totally false impression of 'western culture') because so many media outlets have become devoted to selling audiences to such advertisers.

I remember the UK, before commercial television, when, instead of 80 channels of usually poor quality programmes, there were two BBC channels, both so excellent that you did not know which to watch. At peak time, documentaries and community programmes educated my whole generation on issues of poverty, disability and other major social responsibility issues that most advertisers, ever out of touch with the real world, consider not 'cool' enough for them...

Long may The Daily Star go on resisting such pressures! God bless Star Insight - a little candle in a naughty world!

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Face it after Eid"

Seefat

Actually both the government and the opposition party should think about the people and not about snatching power.

Freeman

Last time, caretaker government was scandalised by army. Khaleda Zia should come up with a new idea so that army can be kept out of the system.

Khairul Haque, Birmingham

Awami League is in power and it can use all state machinery including the police and RAB forces. But I believe nobody will stop the rally of BNP.

Mahmud

I never saw such strategies of government to thwart opposition rallies in our country. Yesterday our country turned into a big prison.

Anonymous

Caretaker government system has been abolished, so do not cry over a dead animal. Think about the unbiased interim government.

Naabaj

BNP leaders want to save the war criminals through this agitation programmes while they don't have the legal right to be citizens of Bangladesh because they are the agents of anti-liberation force.

Sarder Tanzir Hossain

BNP is gaining ground day by day as the government has failed to keep its promises.

Hasanul Karim, Dhaka

Ok, we understand that hartal is bad for our country. But what did the government do yesterday (11 June 2012)? Wasn't it worse than hartal? The government halted all major transportation in the country to thwart the grand rally.

Hafeejul Alam

The days of rallies and agitations are over and outmoded. Instead, BNP chairperson may please declare her future programmes if voted to power. People want to know if she would continue to associate with the religion based political parties and if she would again try to establish her sons in the political power-base. A clean and democratic BNP without fanatic elements would definitely get people's support in a massive way.

Fuad

I think it's a prudent decision taken by Khaleda Zia. The isolated government is now afraid of a free and fair election. We want to see the reflection of our vote in the election. We want a change without delay.

Babul

Hartal, agitation would bring nothing but disturbance in public life. The innocent public have nothing to get whoever goes to power. We saw corruption in both AL and BNP rule during last 20 years.

Mehran Kabir

Khaleda Zia's demands are our demands.

Kazi Salim

BNP never responded to government's invitation to discuss the amendment of the caretaker government system. BNP leaders have all through shown their negative attitude towards all the government's proposals, invitations and democratic approaches on national issues. Parliament is the right place to discuss national issues. This is the democratic norm.

Iftikhar-ul-Awwal

Rather than taking steps to reinstate the caretaker government system, government in the last three months increased repression and unleashed a reign of terror to hit back at the opposition and their supporters. Having failed to govern and maintain law and order and feeling the pulse of the people, they have now taken a determined stand to control and manage the next general election through an interim government headed by the AL. This is undoubtedly sinister and unacceptable as no