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Oppose building nuclear power plant



PHOTO: INTERNET

From the very beginning when people learned that the government is planning to set up a nuclear power plant they protested it vehemently. Conscious citizens and experts were against it and many articles were published explaining the hazards of a nuclear power plant. We thought that the government will come to its senses and will not jeopardise the lives of 16 crore people in Bangladesh.

So, when we learned from the June 5, 2012 issue of The Daily Star that Bangladesh and Russia signed two key deals for further collaboration to develop the nuclear power sector in Bangladesh, we were shocked. We also learned that the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged speeding up the process.

The Daily Star's June 15th, 2012 issue carried an article by Praful Bidwai, in which he explained how dangerous a nuclear power plant could become -- the genetic hazard of nuclear power include radiation at each stage, cancer causing radiation is harmful in all doses, routine emissions from reactors also pose grave hazards. The problem of nuclear waste is even graver, which remains hazardous for thousands of years. Science knows no safe way of storing, let alone neutralising them.

Praful Bidwai pointed out that nuclear power is the only form of energy production with a potential for catastrophic accidents like Fukushima.

Therefore, the people of Bangladesh must protest en masse so that the government abandons the plan to set up a nuclear power plant and save the country from destruction.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Hampering the local expertise!

So foreign consultants should not be compulsory! (This was under your quaint headline 'Foreign consultants should not be must'...)

Of course! The world is waiting to cheer the moment Bangladesh proves able to run its own affairs competently and without any help at all from overseas, financial or otherwise... So why do foreign donors 'hamper the application of local expertise and the maximum utilisation of resources', by insisting on such appointments?

Forgive me for stating the obvious... I think of one foreign consultant for a major road building project in despair about it ever being finished because, honourably trying to keep the 'rules and regulations' he has been given, he suffers constant harassment by those who insist these are not necessary - and even suggest he could just paint the road black to make it look as though it has been finished correctly!

As for bridge building - the need of one foreign consultant of the past to be up at 2.00 am to check the quality of cement going into the uprights does give a teeny-weeny hint of the way that some contractors save their expenses and line their own pockets, ignoring the risks of future cracks appearing...

It seems that there are still some Bangladeshis who consider any job or project is just a 'gravy train' - an opportunity for personal profit at the expense of the country their children are inheriting. Thus there will continue to be the need to 'hamper the application of local expertise' on the grounds that some 'local expertise' is the wrong sort.....

However, there are surely highly qualified and well-trained Bangladeshis of integrity, who could be competent consultants, if the powers-that-be would only use their authority to get the other sort off their backs! Maybe some now have to work overseas, but these are surely the ones who have the right to say to donors, "Don't appoint foreigners! Give us the rules and regulations and supervisory visits - and a chance!"

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

Ministering to traffic accidents!

In Bangladesh, we have a really dedicated and devoted minister, as described in an article published in a local English daily on June 9th. His loyalty is pledged to his vote bank, where he possibly holds a life term fixed deposit of votes! Can anyone beat that?

The minister is driven by the desires of the drivers, whose loyalty he publicly and proudly accepts. Hence, no crimes for any injury or death to pedestrians caused by them, whatever be the reasons for it! The police authorities are not to question why. This is his solemn pledge to them, forget about all others. His logic is simple. It is the drivers of motorised public transport vehicles and their groups who ensure his ministerial chair, not you and I, whose safety on roads is not for him to bother about!

He is a true and totally voter-friendly politician, whose voters are organised and sustained by drivers of public vehicles. Hence the question arises, how will he carry on if and when the BNP government comes? His approach will be simple, he cannot win over BNP, then as an opposition person, he will have a strong, organised and vocal band of people for whom he will ask for all sorts of benefits and demands. That will naturally attract his group of drivers and other related supporters! For now, he is a true minister; totally and without question, devoted to the interests and desires of the motorised public carrier drivers' interests; like it or not!

Engr. S. A. Mansoor, Dhaka

Special favour for Sahara in Bangladesh!

The government has recently taken a decision that it would allow Sahara India Parivar to invest in the real estate sector of our country. The local real estate developers are opposed to this controversial decision. They are not happy because the government did not ask for their opinions before taking such a big decision. If the government allows Sahara to acquire land at government rate, which is much lower than that offered to the developers here, it will obviously create imbalance in the sector. The government should provide similar facilities to the local companies to maintain a level playing ground.

S.M. Shamim-Ur-Rashid Tushar

Department of Business Administration

Whither is Bangladesh bound?

150 million people of our nation work tirelessly and honestly every single day with the aim of enriching their lives and ask for only the most basic (utilities, security, financial stability) services from the government.

However, this AL government is taking decisions that are not only inflicting irrevocable damage on Bangladesh's status in the geo-political arena. More importantly those will create a situation whereby all the key indicators of the country will cross the tipping point....leading to regression instead of progression.

Day by day unemployment is increasing; inflation is now higher than the average figure; corruption is spreading in every single sector. Our politicians go to many developed countries but they never learn politics.

Sheikh Hasina is so aggressive and suppressive towards the opposition parties. The current government has set the worst examples of political suppression including interference in the judicial system.

The wheel of development that is being turned by 150 million souls is at the risk of being brought to a shuddering halt due to the selfish acts of this current government and its leader.

Sharmin
Clifton Group
London, UK



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Police should win public trust



PHOTO: AFP

The news of alleged crimes of embezzlement, extortion, hijacking, rape, attempt to murder etc are not merely irregularities but go right at the core of public trust. Their arrest came as no surprise as it was only natural for police authorities to bring them to task to prevent erosion of professional ethics from police stations nationwide. The police officers should be reprimanded for their inadequate supervision on the subordinates. The police authorities must be held responsible for their failure to address the incidents as these will undermine the very basis of police discipline. Administrative officials with responsibilities are accountable for the action of their subordinates. It makes no sense for them to try to evade responsibilities and accountability. Only punishment to the accused is not the end of the matter but rather the beginning of a long road for police across the country as they try to regain public trust.

People would like to see measures drawn up to ensure that order is maintained and strict discipline observed, as well as a review of recruitment policy and training procedure. It is not easy to regain reputation and public trust that has been lost. There are no miracle cures. Police officers should perform their duties efficiently without fear or favour or political pressure when they arise and keep the public informed of their achievements. The first step now must be to do their job fairly and honestly. And then only the slogan "police is your friend" will be materialised.

GMF Abdur Rob
Baridhara
DOHS
Dhaka

"Your govt. is not people friendly"

How would you feel while living abroad, a representative of a company tells you that your government is not people-friendly? Well, this is exactly what the representative of a phone company that provides inexpensive telecommunication service told me.

This phone company serves the people of 60 different countries including Pakistan and India. Unfortunately, Bangladesh is not covered despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshis live in the United States.

I asked the representative of the company why wasn't Bangladesh included in the package? He replied, "It is political." I asked what he meant by that. He said, "Your government is not people-friendly."

I then said, "Do you mind explaining?" In reply he said your government does not believe in the welfare of the people. Your government does not want you to be able to save some money and live a little more comfortably."

Well, dear readers, can you imagine what an embarrassment it is for somebody to hear all these about his government while living abroad. Feeling embarrassed and disappointed, I withdrew, telling the representative, "let me think it over and then I shall get back to you."

Subsequently, finding no other alternatives, I went for the package to talk to my friends and relatives back at home at an additional cost, which the Bangladesh government imposes on its foreign currency earners.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Houston, Texas
USA

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Manik violated constitution"

Nasirullah Mridha, USA

We hope chief justice will render a prudent decision which would not hamper the judiciary and parliamentary procedures.

Suahmed

People are confused while the speaker and the HC judge are blaming each other for violation of constitution. We hope the chief justice will decide who has violated the constitution.

Sengupta, Canada

Hon'ble speaker's ruling is a silver lining in the dark clouds. Hats off!

Ahmed, London

It is quite surprising that the chief justice has, so far, not taken any step against him. Does it reflect positively about the independence of judiciary?

Robin

I would like to see an impeachment proceeding to set an example that there will be consequence even for members of the judiciary if any situation for that arises.

Outspoken

The truth is that there are many bullies in either institution of the state. Removal of a justice may not solve the problem permanently. Fairness is needed.

Harun Rashid

The problem is nobody thinks twice before making comments. People are never careful about their limitations especially when they are in power. In other words, they talk too much without knowing the consequence.

Anonymous

It is unclear now who should govern the country and who is above whom. If a judge can not make a remark about a lawmaker, the speaker should not make a remark about a judge either.

Anon

Maybe it is about time for the constitution to be amended to allow freedom of speech.

Mohammad Nurul Hoque

Many thanks to the speaker for his perfect ruling. He took time and tried to understand the situation. That's why this ruling shows a silver lining.

Anonymous

The argument between HC and parliament is not acceptable in view of the constitution because in a sovereign country judicial system and parliament are independent organs. But I think, the speaker should be neutral in any case.

Deep purple blue

We need to resolve the issue of the jurisdictions of the legislature and the judiciary. It is clear that the deliberations in the legislature can not be questioned by any court but in this case the language used about a speaker should also befit a judge.

Upfront

Is it not fair to expect that the person or institution making the allegation shall be asked to go to the HC for interpreting the constitutional provision with reference to any case of public interest?

Wild allegations of violation of the constitution are heard almost every day without knowing who is right and who is wrong. Bangladesh needs a standard system to follow to protect the sanctity of the constitution from being violated at will.