

Contaminated fruits: Make testing kits easily available



PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN

I am glad the fuss about contaminated fruit and vegetables is continuing. I am a passionate admirer and consumer of both in this dear country!

Having heard that a particular supermarket was particular about not selling contaminated fruit and vegetables, I peered at their bananas. “Are these chemical free?” I asked. “Yes,” said the young assis-

tant. “How do you know?” I demanded. “Because I checked them this morning!” he said with a smile. “How?” I asked.

A few days later, one of the managers showed me a little cardboard box with some liquid in a bottle that you paint on to the skin of the item and it tells you if it has had a chemical on it. “Is it expensive?” I asked.

“No,” he laughed.

If a youngster employed by Rahimafrooz can check what he sells every day, why cannot govern-ment inspectors do the same in markets round the country, even dabbing at items in trucks that they stop on the roads? This is not rocket science - though it does demand the integrity of officers who do not receive a bribe and wave the vehicle on....(Maybe that's the equivalent of rocket science here...)

Better still, can government subsidise cost-only kits that can be on sale in shops and encourage us customers to buy and use them ourselves. That would tell the business that we are serious!

Even better, get the kids involved and sell them through schools! “Mummy, the mangoes you bought yesterday were not chemical-free!” Now there's pres-sure!

Angela Robinson
Baridhara DOHS
Dhaka

Protect forests, plant trees to mitigate climate change

Scientists estimate that existing fossil fuels (oil, gas, coal) will be in short supply by 2050 and will totally end by this century's end, unless large scale discoveries are made. Nuclear and hydro-powered electricity generation is less popular because of environmental reasons. Wind, tidal and solar power generation are the best alternatives. Of the three, solar is the best choice.

For Bangladesh, with scarce resources, solar power generation is the best option for the future. Many big and small companies have already started this business and solar power usage is rapidly spreading all over the country, espe-cially in remote areas. The government is to be commended for the initiative but more large scale efforts are required if industries are to benefit from this.

We can not ignore the importance of preserving our existing forests and plant-ing more to maintain 25% minimum forest area for a healthy environment. We must realise that without forests and trees, climate will change, pure water sup-ply will be adversely affected, crop production will decline and millions of spe-cies of flora and fauna that nourish our planet will become extinct, as will the human race. A person must face severe punishment if he cuts down a tree with-out planting five saplings. Those who are responsible for protecting the forests but fail to do so should also be given exemplary punishment.

Aziz Ahmed
Katasur, Mohammadpur
Dhaka

Bangladesh can play its trump card now

The government has decided to construct the Padma bridge with its own resources. It may be presumed that now they can not come out of the self-created trap. However, I have a suggestion to the government. Very often our defence strategists, civil society and political leaders say that our proposed deep sea port at Sonadia is strategically very important for this region and is also very lucrative for giant international power players for their global interest.

If my assumption is correct, then time has come for our government to play the trump card by inviting international donors to construct the deep sea port tagged with Padma bridge under a single package. In doing so, we may also do a little bit of tail twisting of international power players who (as our leaders say) always twist our tail to dictate terms in their favour.

Zabedin
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Ensure proper disposal of medical waste

Medical waste is highly infectious and hazardous. They may carry the germs of dreadful diseases like hepatitis B & C, and HIV/AIDS. The problem is growing with ever-increasing number of hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres in the major cities of Bangladesh.

The scenario of medical waste management in most of the hospitals and clinics are not satisfactory in our country. Traditional and out-dated systems of waste management in health facilities are practiced and their improper dis-posal leads to environment pollution and creates public health hazards.

Lack of awareness, appropriate policies and laws are primarily responsible for the improper management of medical waste. The process of collection, segregation and disposal of medical waste is not performed according to stan-dard practice. So people are exposed to the danger of such wastes.

It is very important to ensure patient safety by keeping the health centre clean and environmentally sound. The improvement of waste management in clinics and hospitals is essential to minimise the spread of infectious diseases.

The government and medical authorities should take all the necessary steps to ensure proper disposal of toxic medical wastes.

Nishat Sharmin Seou
MBBS 5th year
Rajshahi Medical College
Rajshahi



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Clear the streets of beggars

This is in reference to the letter written by Md. Rashed Ahmed titled "Let beggar rehabilitation project work." I would like to commend Mr. Ahmed for such a well-written letter as he has highlighted an important problem of Dhaka city which requires immediate solution. Beggars literally attack the tourists visiting Bangladesh and compel them to give them (beggars) money. Thus international tourists get a very bad impression of Bangladesh. Our government has made a good decision to spend the taxpayers' money for a good cause. It is important that beggars get removed from the streets in order to uplift our image to the rest of the world.

Aminur Rahim
New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka

Blind bikes risking lives!

Your Thakurgaon correspondent Rubayat's report and the real life photograph published in your pages says it all! With no front or rear lights, plying in the dark is quite rightly a disaster in the making! This needs to be overcome; the sooner the better. What is needed is for the vehicles to have two low-powered lights with good reflectors fitted on two sides at the top in the front, and two or three highly polished reflectors on the mid level at the back of these battery operated bikes. The back reflectors (without any bulbs) will reflect back the head lights of the vehicle that is coming behind the easy bike, and identify it. This can be a viable option, with little load on the battery, for safely driving in the dark. This option should be tried out immediately. This provision will greatly increase the safety of these vehicles, particularly at night. I believe this may become an effective solution for the problem. It needs to be given wide publicity to create awareness among the users of easy bike.

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

Gone are the good old days

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ministers and senior Awami League leaders are constantly reminding us that in the language movement of 1952 and in the Liberation War of 1971, the people of this country succeeded to achieve their goal and so they would be able to build the Padma bridge with their own money.

But they have forgotten that it is not 1952 or 1971, it is 2012. Gone are the good old days when people were honest, sincere and patriotic. The golden sons are no more who would do anything for the sake of the country and even would not hesitate to dedicate their lives for it.

Now morality and patriotism have no space in people's life. To fulfil their greed, people can go any length. Killings, extortions, tender manipulations, grabbing prop-erties, taking bribe from the jobseekers and students, who are trying to get admitted, have become the norm of the day.

Our foods are contaminated with harmful chemicals. Recently, 14 children died in Dinajpur and Thakurgaon eating poisonous lychees. This is the condition of the country.

So how could we expect that the money collected for the Padma bridge would be utilised correctly and will not be devoured by some unscrupulous people?

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Murderer considered innocent

The other day a local television channel broadcast a news which I would like to share with the readers of this daily back at home. Here in Houston, a man was caught red-handed by his master while attempting to molest his daughter aged around 5-7. The father of the underage child became very angry witnessing the incident and beat the molester of his daughter to death.

If something like this had happened in Bangladesh, the police would have arrested the person and convicted him as a murderer. Contrary to this popular practice, no charges were brought against the father and he was considered innocent, who killed a man in self-defence. The police chief of the county commented that the man acted in self-defence and while doing so, he killed another person. Anyone in his position would have done the same thing and as such, he is considered innocent.

The neighbours also gave their verdict in favour of the man who killed his helper in a bid to save his underage daughter from being molested. Hail to the United States of America, where law rules supreme. This is what Islam emphasises most but regret-tably no where in the Islamic world does law rules supreme, rather it is tyranny.

Saleh M Ayub
Houston, Texas, USA

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined “Govt is ready for donations”

Anonymous

It is a great step taken by the PM for build-ing the bridge with our own money.

Ferdous Jalil

If people are to give money, they should know how it is being spent.

AJ Khan

Good opportunity for Zakat payers.

Asis Shams

We want to see the unedited WB report first.

Ali

I wish to pay on monthly basis through my credit card from Toronto, Canada. I don't care where the money goes but I consider it as my moral obligation to fund.

Arun Dutta

I am not sure why they are asking for dona-tion instead of offering equity participation in this lucrative project under certain guidelines.

Joinal Rahman

I am more than happy to contribute to this great cause. However, what assurance do I have that this money will not be gobbled up? It is time we practiced 100% transpar-ency within the administration -- fire any-one who has any involvement with corrup-tion, to create an example.

Reaz Hassan

The government has already opened the doors for collecting voluntary contributions for Padma bridge project. How is it possible for the fixed income government employ-ees to make one month's salary as donation when they are so much hard up due to the double digit inflation?

Khurrum

The government can't just open an account like that. Why doesn't the government issue Padma bridge bonds? So people can make an investment they can actually reap returns from? In that event, people will really invest.

Manju

There are some people who always look for negative sides even in a positive effort. I fully support this kind of noble effort. I wish to donate as much as I can. So all of us should participate in this noble effort and should show the whole world that jointly we can do anything because we are such a nation who achieved our liberation through a bloody war.

Abdul Aziz Mir

Now government should make public the letters of the World Bank.

Md. Abir Hossain

We welcome the decision taken by the gov-ernment to implement the Padma bridge project with its own fund. The government should make a monitoring cell from the very first moment to monitor the whole process lest there arises any allegation of corruption in the future.

Amdem, USA

By asking donations for the construction of Padma bridge, the government is opening more opportunities for widespread corrup-tion. It should stop this process immedi-ately. Before asking for donations, the gov-ernment should publish the reports and letters of the World Bank, sent to the govern-ment.

Nasreen Ahmed

Constructing the Padma bridge with inter-nal resources of Bangladesh is a very bold step. I just want one assurance that if I want to contribute to this remarkable venture, then I will have the freedom to deposit my donations to specified bank accounts and I will also have the right to see the audited accounts so that I can see where the money