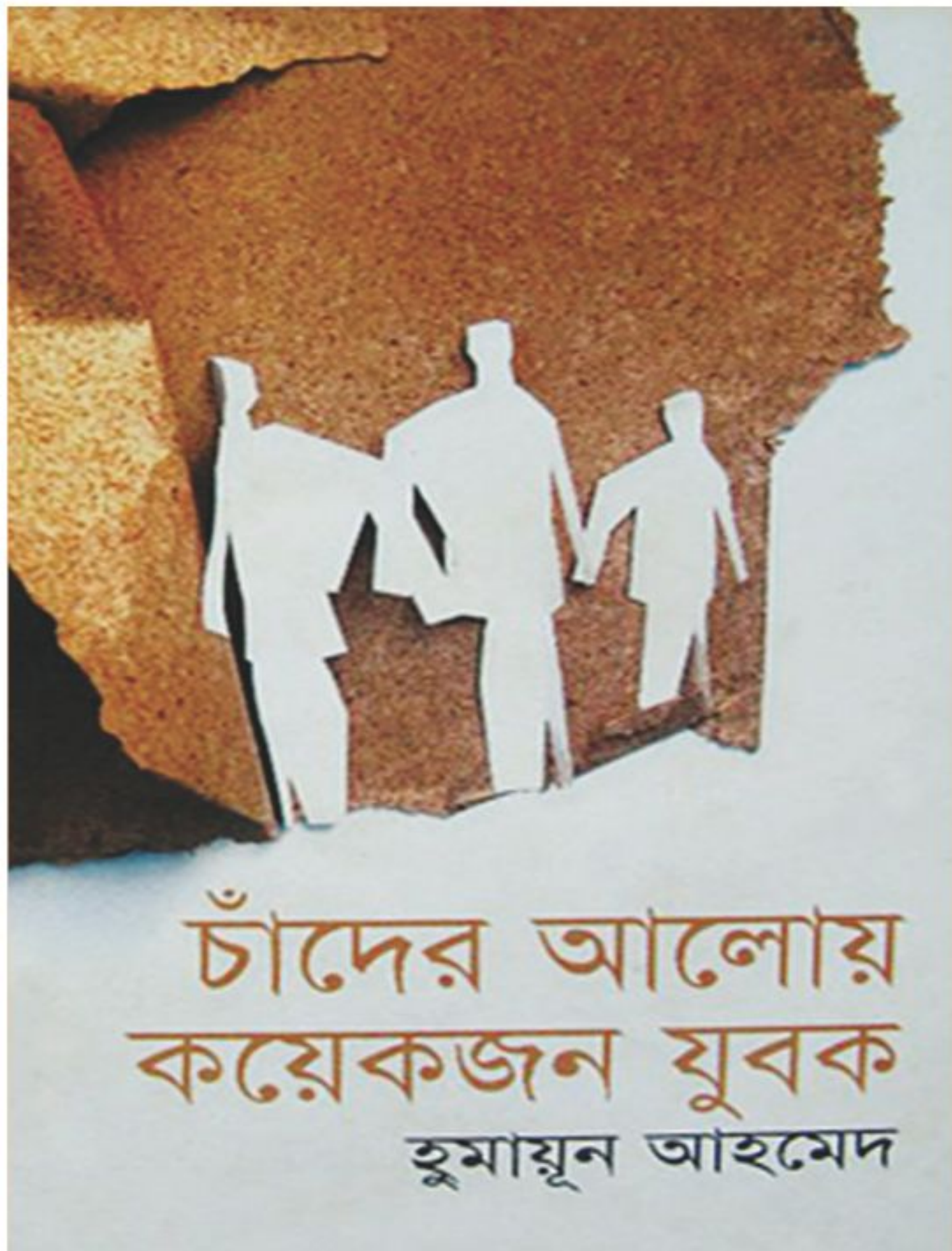


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 200 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Author with the golden touch



I have been a fan of your writing since I can remember. It all started with 'Aelebele' and never stopped. I have spent countless sleepless nights reading your books. Sometimes they made me cry and often they made me laugh. Your writing has shaped different stages of my life. It has taught me to dream and wonder. Even today when I walk on the street in a moonlit night it reminds me of "Chader Aloy Koyekjon Jubok" and makes me wonder what strange events might be taking place in this mysterious city!

Each of your books has left a lasting effect on me. There is no story which I have read only once. Your characters are immortal who live in an eternal world created by you. You may well be on your way to some place that is truly a "Never-Never Land" but your characters will always keep your legacy alive. As my eyes often became moist at the end of many of your stories today when I have realised that you have put down your pen forever, tears are streaming down my eyes like rain drops. May you shine wherever you remain.

Md. Shafat Imtiaz
Banani, Dhaka

He was like a star shining in the firmament of Bangla literature. For almost four decades he entertained the readers--both young and old--with his repertoire of writings which include novel, short story, science fiction and drama. His TV serials Ei Shob Din Ratri, Ayomoy, Kothao Keu Nei etc were equally popular. In the eighties and nineties his dramas shown on BTV were enjoyed by all people. He also produced some acclaimed films. For many years he had been the centre of attraction in the Ekushey book fair. Needless to say, he got the Midas touch as far as creativity is concerned.

We all pray for his departed soul.

ZabedWali
On e-mail

New Men to ensure women's rights

The article 'The long road to maternal care' by Shaveena Alam was painfully good but failed to say that 'women's problems' affect everyone and so are men's business also!

Fathers need to check that men and boys do not get the lion's share of food and that their sons, in learning to treat the women of the family with respect, know they are practising treating all women with respect. It is men who need to know the dangers of under-age motherhood (taught from the local pulpit?) and thus take responsibility for the long-term health and happiness of young girls. Men's intervention is needed to stop the gossipmongers who demand girls have got to be married below legal age limits and break the power of wicked old women repeating stories about pregnancy that are terrifying and untrue.....

When a woman is pregnant, it is the men who should demand medical check-ups and proper nutrition and is it not the job of the senior men to take both silly little boys and vicious older ones who misbehave with local girls to their families, warning that, next time, it will be the police? Any man seen 'groping' a woman on the bus, should be thrown off it by common consent of the men passengers! Let us dream about how much better behaviour would now be, if, for the last few decades, men around the world who think they are a cut above the rest, had behaved in such ways....!

If women join the paid workforce, it may bring appreciation for the extra cash but, on its own, does it always result in those changes of heart and mind that benefit family and community life and continue, even when the woman is unable to find employment?

In my life-time, many men world-wide have so totally changed their attitudes and behaviour to their women and children that they are called 'the New Men'. (I have met 'western' men whose first marriages have failed and, realising how selfish they had been, they have quite different family relationships in their second marriage.) Others continue to behave badly so the work goes on.

However, the men who most need to change are those who ignore and despise what any woman tells them! Do not most men need to be taught by men?

Angela Robinson
Baridhara DOHS
Dhaka

Dirtiest Dhaka in 40 years

Please have mercy on those who have to commute into or through Dhaka city. Dhaka for the last three/four months has been the dirtiest ever! A lot many times there has been pictures printed in the DS as well as in many other newspapers. Yet there is absolutely no action! This inaction, and couldn't care less attitude is intolerable and killing the people. The sight and stench and blocking of the road coupled with terrific traffic jam is the blessing we are all living with.

No one road in Dhaka today is without the beautiful sight and 'aroma' of waste.

Each and everyone is the victim of such condition. We really do not know what are the waste management authorities doing and what are their answers.

Waste is seen to be removed between 8am and 11am -- prime time for people to move for work. Nowhere in the world is this done at this hour of the day. The waste is allowed to rot into stinking liquid posing serious health hazard!

The honourable High Court may please look into this basic problem and issue order to professional to arrange for timely and proper disposal of wastes. I have no more words to express my disgust at this inaction and un-professionalism. The most incompetent people are in the chair to sleep over this.

Syed Imtiaz Ali
Banani
Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

Abul Hossain's resignation

On July 21, 2012, an open letter of former communications minister Syed Abul Hossain to the people of Bangladesh was published in The Daily Star. It was about Padma bridge. In the long letter he wrote many things to clear himself of the corruption charges brought against him concerning the bridge.

We do not know why suddenly he decided to write this letter; it is meaningless to us; he wasted his time and energy and the newspaper its space. People do not want to hear his explanation; they want to see the World Bank's letter written to the government.

He failed miserably as communications minister --- roads were so dilapidated that drivers had to call strike --- people demonstrated against him and asked him to resign but he was unperturbed.

By reading his letter it has become clear why the communication system fell apart. At one place he wrote: "It took ten years to do the ground work of Bangabandhu bridge, it took only two years for the same work of Padma bridge." Syed Abul Hossain was so busy with the Padma Bridge Project that he had no time for solving other problems of his ministry. Roads became death traps; during Eid holidays many people were unable to go home to celebrate Eid with their dear ones. Does he know that roads which are in a very deplorable condition are now called 'Abul roads'?

Syed Abul Hossain should have resigned when his name came up with the Padma bridge scam.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

'30 minutes' maximum power cut'

Government's '30 minute maximum power cut' formula, published in almost all English dailies on July 17th has 'built in' contradictions and 'good excuses' incorporated in it, to cover all eventualities.

The PM's energy advisor reportedly stated that there will be 'uninterrupted' electric power supply during Sehri, Iftar and Tarabi prayers. For Sehri occurring well past midnight, this should be no problem, as it is the time of minimum demand period between midnight and six in the morning! However, Iftar and Tarabi prayer take place during the maximum demand period, when power need is highest.

The advisor also reportedly said that: "if necessary, we will pro-

duce around 6500MW against the demand of 6000MW during Ramadan." Were not the key words 'If necessary' and 'around' incorporated to cover for all or any power supply shortfall? Further, the advisor had also stated, as reported in the dailies: "if the consumers use it (electric power) wisely". So any shortfall can be passed on to 'unwise usage by consumers', the safe way out!

After all that was said, mostly based on notes and memos from the ministry to DESA and PDB, with possibly nothing being done, for that would have been surely trumpeted in the report. However, the 'proof of the pudding, is in the eating'. So let's see how does the "uninterrupted power pudding" taste, which can only be evaluated during and after Ramadan.

Engr. S.A. Mansoor
Gulshan

Unholy alliance in the holy month

The holy month of Ramadan is like a month-long divine training programme for the Muslims who are taught not only to abstain from food at day time, but also to keep themselves aloof from all sorts of greed and lust, to shun all nastiness in thoughts and actions and to develop and nourish in themselves the virtues of righteousness, honesty, benevolence and aversion to extravagance and worldly pleasure. But it is a matter of great regret that during this holy month Bangladesh, overwhelmingly a Muslim majority country, becomes a happy 'hunting ground' for the businessmen who swoop on the helpless consumers to squeeze out money by intentionally hiking up the prices of all essentials. Producers, hoarders, wholesalers, middlemen, retailers -- all of them seem to have formed an unwritten alliance among themselves for shameless profiteering taking advantage of the increased demand of essential commodities.

No government in our country has ever been seen to have taken stringent measures to undo this 'unholy alliance' of unscrupulous traders. We, the common people can only pray to Almighty Allah to shower blessings on our businessmen so that they can realise the futility and irreligiousness of illegal and immoral money-making by profiteering in the holy month of Ramadan.

Md. Mohsin Ali
Nutan Courtpara
Kushtia



PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN



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

RMG worker unrest Buyers want wage review Labour minister for ration system (July 26, 2012)

Farid Ahmed
International buyers should increase the price of garment products instead of pressurising the government and BGMEA.

MH Uddin
It's not a good sign that buyers are insisting and putting pressure on the government to take steps to quell the frequent unrest in the RMG sector. We always fail to uphold our supremacy over outsiders. The owners and government should take immediate measures to put an end to this issue.

F Islam
The suggestions of international buyers have to be

seriously considered by the government. The wage earners' money is being increasingly eaten away by the ever rising house rent and essentials price. This is enough to create social unrest. There should be some mechanism to control house rent and other pressing difficulties of the average consumers of the urban areas.

Surprised
The minister made sense when he asked the buyers to increase their purchase price. It's not only the issue of increasing wages, but as the minister said, if we subsidise their expenses (house rent / basic commodities), then it's a win-win situation for all.

What the major buyers can do, since they are all so worried, they can help the government in building cost-effective housing communities with fixed rent strictly for the garment workers. The government has already increased the tax on garment export. I am sure we can come to a solution.

Md. Abir Hossain
Garment workers are the life of Bangladesh. They contribute greatly to run our economy smoothly. Unfortunately, they are paid most probably the lowest wage. The garment owners should re-think their (workers) legitimate demand of increasing wage as the inflation is rising. It is high time the government took steps to solve the unrest in this sector.

Jumana Sarwar
Once in a while, the living condition of the garment workers is shown in the western TV documentaries. These documentaries are very disturbing. The world wide economic crisis has put pressure on western political leadership to create more jobs in their own countries. Therefore, it is not surprising that they will exert pressure on

countries like ours so that our competitive advantage diminishes. The love for our garment workers is secondary. However, we must align ourselves so that we don't kill our golden goose.

Iftikhar-ul-Awwal
The RMG workers who are catering for the international market deserve a wage readjustment. I had written earlier and I reiterate again that their wages must be adjusted with the rise in prices of commodities and house rent. Due to economic stress, recently there have been strikes (and lockouts) and those were quelled with promises on the part of the government. But neither government action nor any move from the industry leaders is visible. We are worried and should not be surprised if labour agitation takes a serious turn due to indifference and greed of the entrepreneurs engaged in the trade. The nation, it may be mentioned, is well aware of the excuses of the BGMEA and BKMEA but those are lame excuses to pocket excess gains at the cost of workers. I also fail to understand the sympathy of political leaders for owners rather than workers. Is it