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# Govt decision on medical admission



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

The government's recent decision of not taking admission test to select deserving students for admission into medical college has created mixed-reactions among intellectuals, educationists, guardians, teachers and students. The health minister made it clear that candidates would be selected based on their SSC and HSC results, replacing the existing system of competitive admission test.

The government has come up with this idea to put an end to coaching business, thereby restricting many eligible candidates from getting admitted. From our previous experience, we know that a lot of non-A+ holders made their way to famous institutions like government medical colleges, public universities and so on, based on their individual merit. What will now happen to these otherwise meritorious students?

Why can't we stop coaching centres? Why do we have to deprive the innocent brilliant students? If coaching centres are bagging money from the candidates in the name of admission preparation, what about bringing their immoral business to a halt, imposing existing laws? Agreed, it is difficult but not impossible.

With a total capacity of around 2200 seats available in government medical colleges, the number of candidates with GPA - 5 in both SSC and HSC--are at least ten times the seats available. Even the number of golden GPA holders are more than the seats available. So what to do? Selecting them based on their age? What, under the sun, can be more ridiculous than this?

The proposed process in turn will result in corruption, commotion and discrimination. To ensure a transparent and just admission procedure, admission test is a must.

**Sarwar Hussain**  
 Statistical Programmer (SCBD)  
 Sylhet

## Fallout of August 21

The August 21, 2004 grenade attack on Awami League rally changed the nature of politics in Bangladesh. The political atmosphere has become more violent than any time before. This inhuman attack has destroyed our long hope for good politics. The seed of distrust has turned into a full-grown tree. At present our two major political parties have adopted the formula "The more you fight, the more you gain in politics." They are continuing with their old culture of rivalry and there is no sign that they might come out of this shortly. Violence is also common among activists of the same party to get position in the party. Now it is well established among political parties that money, muscle power and violence are the only means to come to power. The people of Bangladeshi are peace loving. If peace doesn't prevail in society, the political parties will lose public support very soon. The time has come to think about it. The two parties should forget all past conflicts, sit together, and save the country.

**Jabunnaheer, Dhaka**

## Load shedding returns!

Over the last two days, starting from 29th. August, the curse of load shedding is back in our locality behind the Gulshan First Market in the residences along the Gulshan South Avenue. The short lived respite of Ramzan and the Eid holidays has vanished. Despite the new rental liquid fuelled plants, we are again back to square one!

One wonders how the load was managed even during maximum demand period of 6 to 10 pm during Ramzan? Was it by starving the REB, and keeping the more vocal Dhaka residents happy? Only the PDB and DESA know the underlying reason for this short happiness, and the dreaded return of load shedding in this hot weather. Can it be possible for PDB and DESA to ease the misery till the end of September or mid November at most, when it will be hopefully cooler, and the misery will also be somewhat ease? Can something be done, now that higher tariffs are reportedly round the corner?

# Tragic road accident

It is a matter of shock and sorrow that thousands of people get killed in deadly road accidents and many others get maimed and disabled every year. On 28th August, a student of Dhaka University was crushed under the wheels of a bus at Shahbag intersection. The dream of his family was also crushed with his premature death. In protest, the agitated students came out on the streets and vandalised vehicles and whatever they saw before them, causing panic among the unsuspecting commuters. Why are these terrible road accidents occurring so frequently and why do the government keep silent as if nothing is happening? We can not tolerate any more loss of life; we don't want to see any more road accident. We urge the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to stop road accidents.

**Badsha Solaiman**  
 Zahurul Haq Hall  
 University of Dhaka



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Retirement age of our politicians

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad said removing the two ladies (Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia) from politics is necessary to move the country forward. Charity begins at home. Octogenarian HM Ershad may kindly remove himself first from politics to set example and open the door for the younger generation to move the ailing Bangladesh forward.

Not only for Yunus, our government may also fix the retirement age of our President of the Republic, our finance minister and others to build a digital Bangladesh.

**O H Kabir**  
 Wari, Dhaka

## Eid in Kolkata

This year as I was on a personal trip to India, I had the opportunity to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr in Kolkata. It was great! Muslims in Kolkata celebrated Eid with due religious fervour and gaiety. Although there were some false SMSs spreading rumour that there would be some disturbances during the Eid congregation, the Government of West Bengal took strong measures and the Eid was celebrated without any hindrance. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in a statement said: "None of us wants peace to be disrupted. Do not even try to set the house on fire. We have given shelter to our minorities. We will not tolerate this." (The Hindustan Times, August 21, 2012). The Muslim religious leaders also expressed their firm conviction in maintaining peace.

All the Eid jamats were held peacefully and the greatest festival of the Muslims was celebrated with enthusiasm and entertainment.

**Professor M Zahidul Haque**  
 Dean  
 Faculty of Agriculture  
 Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University

# Give Armstrong a wink!



PHOTO: AFP/NASA

Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, died on 25 August 2012 at the age of 82. He walked on the Moon on 20 July 1969, famously describing the event as "one small step for [a] man, one giant step for mankind."

We have learnt that Armstrong was a modest man and taciturn in nature. In a rare television interview in 2005, he said he did not deserve the attention he received for being the first man on the moon, just steps ahead of fellow Apollo 11 astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin. He also added, "I wasn't chosen to be first. I was just chosen to command that flight. Circumstance put me in that particular role."

However, with the Russians already sending men into space, US President John F. Kennedy had promised in 1961 to have a man on the moon by the end of the decade. The Americans were determined to fulfil this pledge. And particularly it is Armstrong and his team who fulfilled Kennedy's promise within that decade.

The great achievement of Armstrong inspired generations to reach for the stars and etched his name next to one of the great milestones of human discovery.

We pay profound tributes to this great and humble US astronaut. In this context, I reproduce a request drawn by his family: "Honour his example of service, accomplishment and modesty, and the next time you walk outside on a clear night and see the moon smiling down at you, think of Neil Armstrong and give him a wink."

**Mobarak Ali**  
 RK Mission Road, Gopibagh, Dhaka

## New immigrants' dilemma

Some Bangladeshi people, especially those living in the UK and USA have a tendency to discourage people to go over there for immigration. Most of those people have gone to the respective countries in the mid eighties or early nineties. They remain busy all day with Bangladeshi satellite news channels and discuss the political and socio-economic condition of the country. They also keep themselves occupied with all sorts of Bangladeshi cultural programmes and their respective Samities such as Beanibazar Samity, Kurigram Samity, North Bengal Samity, etc. They are living in those countries, raising their children, getting all the facilities provided by the respective governments but yet, they don't consider that country to be their own. They come to Bangladesh and speak evil things about those countries and how difficult it is to survive there.

Having stayed there for decades, they plan to come back to Bangladesh and start a new life. As an ex office manager in a diplomatic mission for years, I know how difficult it has become for people to resettle in Bangladesh. I, with all my respect to their patriotism, would like to say, please do not discourage people who wish to settle there as they too have the wish for better life, at least for their offspring. If you can't help them, please don't discourage them. Being a new immigrant, I have had quite a similar experience.

**Badal Hasib**  
 On e-mail

## Darker side of the internet

Though internet has brought about drastic changes in the realms of entertainment, education, information, and social interaction, it has a dark side too. It has been found that excessive use of internet isolates the users from the real world, pushing them away from their own friends and families. This has also been identified as a major cause of depression.

**Miton Kumar Gupto**  
 Phulbari, Dinajpur

## READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Quader slaps railway staff"

### Dr M A Obaydullah

A minister like Obaidul Quader should have the power to dismiss the staff.

### X. Gomes, USA

By slapping the employee, the minister just brought himself down to the employee's standard.

### Robin

At last a Bangladeshi politician takes a stand against corruption.

### A. Rahman

A few days ago I praised the minister. Today I condemn him. The minister could have taken any official action against the corrupt train attendant but slapping him.

### Secular

It is easy to set an example by slapping someone from the minority community. I would like to see extensive action against corruption. Then it will be truly believable that government is serious about the issue.

### Pokraj

An educated person can not slap another person. A minister always has all the instruments to punish a guilty person, instead of taking law in his own hands.

### Mizan

If this had happened in any civilised country, the minister would have been sued for physically abusing the train attendant.

### Md. Tawheed Mamor

Bangladesh Railway has been losing its reputation because of a few corrupt staff. It is great that our communications minister is trying to stop corruption in this sector. If our minister goes ahead this way, one day the railway sector will turn into a profitable one.

### Shaikh Wazir

Obaidul Quader is trying his best to improve the condition of this sector. For a long-term solution, slapping or transferring corrupt staffs will not be enough. Rather daily operational system is needed. However, I praise the minister.

### M. K. Alam

Quader is the only minister who has the courage to take bold steps. He set a rare example. Thanks to the minister. Please go ahead, people will support you.

### Taj Hashmi

This is for the first time that a minister hit a government employee. In any country with some semblance of law and order, such minister would have lost his job. This is a disgraceful incident.

### Raihan Sharif

We all can understand the minister's frustration at the lack of progress in his campaign to modernise the railway, but publicly slapping an employee was perhaps taking it too far. However, this minister has to be commended for taking reform steps seriously.

### Ashraf Ali Arman

I am not a supporter of Awami League but I salute Obaidul Qader, the railways minister. All the people should have guts to do this.

### Jumana Sarwar

The comments by the Prothom Alo readers suggest that people liked the incident. However, this incident and the reaction of people suggest that ministers as well as the public don't have any faith in our justice system. Otherwise, a responsible person can not take law in his own hands.

### RNY

If slapping a staff can fix it, then, how many slaps would be required for the most cor-