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# Malala's bravery



PHOTO: AFP

Malala Yousafzai had been campaigning for girls' education in Swat Valley. Swat Valley of Pakistan, two hundred miles from the capital Islamabad, and once a favourite tourist spot, is now a place of horror. According to Hamid Mir, a renowned Pakistani journalist, Malala's intelligence and bravery are surprising and admirable. This young activist campaigned for girls' education in the militant dominated valley and was uncompromising until she was shot. Her campaign made her an icon of peace too, as she was always a critic of Taliban's wrongdoings, especially of shutting down girls' schools. The holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasised the education for both males and females. He also said to go abroad for education. Islam encourages education but in the name of Islam Talibans are opposing girls' education and have shut down about four hundred schools, which is a shame.

Malala has fought for girls' education and her fight has some resemblance to that of Begum Rokeya Shakhawat Hossain, a famous campaigner of girls' education in this subcontinent at the beginning of twentieth century. Malala realised the dire necessity of education. Girls' education is a prerequisite for an enlightened society. We salute Malala's bravery.

**Md. Faisal Bin Karim**  
Lecturer, Dept. of Pharmacy  
Primeasia University  
& **Md. Fahim Bin Karim**  
Comilla Zilla School

## Best wishes for Barack Obama

The whole world is holding its breath to see the outcome of the presidential election of America, because America as a super power has a hold over other countries. We hope and pray for President Barack Obama to be re-elected as he seems to be a wise, capable, trustworthy, and understanding person. May our wish be fulfilled.

**Nur Jahan**  
Chittagong

# US elections and climate change issue

A recent article of this daily entitled "Hurricane Sandy, climate change and some thoughts" says that the words 'climate', 'warming' or 'greenhouse effect' were not used once in the recent US presidential debate cycle for the first time in 24 years. Neither President Barack Obama nor his rival Mitt Romney is talking about climate change in their election campaigns. Whereas, undoubtedly, this is one of the most critical issues of our time.

Anyway, recently hurricane Sandy killed at least 55 people in the USA and still millions are living without power. And this is on track to be the largest storm ever to hit the East Coast, with damage estimated at tens of billions of dollars. Besides, studies say that in 2011 the 14 most severe weather events in the country cost the US close to \$140 billion.

Of course, climate change issue should have been on the meeting agenda focusing the election. Voters should ask the presidential candidates to disclose their plans for tackling this global problem. Scientists and the media are still struggling with how to communicate the complexities. Naturally, silence on this issue in the US election campaigns would make their struggle harder.

As the USA is one of the major contributors to global warming, the country can not ignore its responsibility to help find out a solution in this regard.

However, we express our deep sympathy for the cyclone victims of the USA from Bangladesh, one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change.

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



PHOTO: AFP

## Ingesting liquid nitrogen!

An article on the subject, sourced from Guardian News (UK), was published in a local English daily on 22nd. October; pointing to the grave danger the extremely cold liquid nitrogen poses. It seems to be a new, but harmful and dangerous fad in some bars in the West!

Hopefully, we as Muslims avoid any type of alcoholic or other drinks that is bad both for the mind and the body! Unfortunately, it makes me wonder under what medical ethics, except for a fat fee, our doctors prescribe and the narcotic department issues permit' to Muslims to take alcoholic drinks on medical grounds, without even examining them or carrying out any pathological tests? This malpractice should be totally banned forthwith! Surprisingly, even our political parties with religion as ideology have not taken a stance against this widespread corrupt and immoral practice! One wonders why? The extreme cold of boiling Liquid Nitrogen, if imbibed, is dangerous!

Who knows the next fad in the West may be drinking Liquid Oxygen, as a tonic! Already, there are some Oxygen bars in the West, where one can breathe in pure Oxygen, of course at around ambient temperatures, to relax!

**Engr. S.A. Mansoor**  
Dhaka

## Pursuit of wealth

Mammon is the ancient god of money and wealth. Isn't that what virtually all the world worship above anything else? The rich and the powerful prey on the poor and the weak, just as they always have. Globalisation just gives them more opportunity to do so, and they're very happy about this breakdown of national borders. After all, if workers cost too much in one country, then you can just move your factory to another country where they cost less and are willing to do almost anything under any conditions to have a job. And if you have trouble there, you just take your money and go elsewhere.

They call it capitalism or the pursuit of wealth, but in many cases it's the worship of mammon and the pursuit of greed, and the poor people who are hurt or oppressed by the rich are modern-day slaves in all but name. The rich reap what they sow and the poor rise up and overthrow them. So they're robbing and robbers all the way along the line --not a bit of difference from highway robbery of the olden days when they just stopped caravans and robbed them at the point of a gun or the point of a spear. It's happened in every great rich civilisation, every great World Empire; some poorer or less powerful nation finally overcame them, or their own poor overcame them.

**Ted Rudow III, MA**  
Encina Ave

# Indirect causes of maternal death

Every day 20 women die during childbirth in the world. Apart from medical issues, there are some non medical issues (indirect causes) that should be taken into serious consideration to reduce maternal death. Studies show that 35 percent mothers die due to non medical causes. Non medical causes include superstitions, age-old beliefs of elderly members of the family regarding pregnancy and birth rituals, women's lack of decision making power, poverty, low rate of female education, unfriendly hospitals, discrimination, religious barriers, early marriage and so on.

Still, especially in the rural areas of Bangladesh expectant mothers are not allowed to seek ANC (Ante Natal Care) on religious grounds and some other social reasons. Elderly members in the family compel the expectant mothers to eat less so that the child in the womb will become smaller and the delivery will be easy, which is causing severe malnutrition to both the mother and the child.

Poverty is the root cause of all types of inequalities that needs to be eradicated, otherwise we will not get satisfactory results in this case. Early child bearing is one of the major causes of maternal death which is



PHOTO: ZAHEDUL I KHAN

happening due to early marriage. Besides, most of the service providing agencies are not women-friendly. However, a very little research has been done so far in the field of indirect causes behind maternal death. So, more research should be conducted by both the government and other stakeholders to recommend the ways to root out the indirect causes of maternal death for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

**Md. Musfukur Rahman Jony**  
Assistant Director:  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Light House, Bogra

## Save the life of a teacher

I on behalf of the former students of Batch '94 of Barura Hazi Nowab Ali Pilot High School, Barura, Comilla, would like to draw all the ex students' kind attention to the helpless condition of our favourite teacher Syed Ahmed. He has been suffering a lot since a fatal accident when he was on his way to his residence. It will not be an exaggeration to say that he is the best teachers of our beloved school.

Our school has reached the peak of its success for his tireless efforts and invaluable service over the years. He has taught us to dream but his very personal dream has remained unfulfilled. He has shown us the way to go beyond the limit. He is now imprisoned within the four walls of his village home and confined to bed after the serious accident.

He badly needs financial support to bear the high medical expenses for his treatment. By this time he has sold almost all his property. Admittedly, debt to a guru is by no means repayable; we can only acknowledge it. Therefore, let us stand by him. Let us try to save the life of a path-finder. Let us help ease the agony and sufferings of a real hero of our time.

**Mohammad Atiqur Rahman**  
Khulshi  
Chittagong

## READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's *The Daily Star* news report headlined "Jamaat activists clash with cops"

**Abul Hashem**

What a one-eyed report!

**Naabaj**

Jamaat and Shibir, the anti-Liberation forces, are active again in the country with the agenda to stop war crimes trial and other cases of terrorism in the name of Islam.

**Nazmul**

If it is a pre-planned activity, then what were our intelligence agencies doing?

**Moloy Sarker**

Politics of Shibir should be banned.

**Mong Pru**

When demonstrators go berserk and set fire to buses or any other property, they are not actual demonstrators and there is no democracy in it. They are criminals, whichever party they may hail from. It was the duty of the police to use force because they were not demonstrators, rather they were peace breakers who caused immense suffering to the people. Jamaat with various names such as JMB, Huji, etc., has proved that they are cancerous for the forward journey of Bangladesh. Rigorous action must be taken against them and their leaders must be nabbed and quizzed for their role in these anti-state activities.

**Firko**

Political parties in Bangladesh do not practice democracy. Any country having more than 50% Muslims should not have any Islamic parties because religion based political parties create violence. We need Islamic educational institutions rather than Islamic parties to learn Islamic teachings properly.

**M H Uddin**

It is apparent that the attack was pre-planned. They brought out the procession with bamboo sticks and bricks which doesn't represent a peaceful way of protest. Both parties (police and Jamaat) knew that they would fight but police did a bad calculation and they paid the price. Some people are openly supporting the most notorious war criminals.

**Niloufar Sarker**

It is shocking that Jamaat and Shibir can cause mayhem with such impunity in support of the war criminals who worked against our independence. It is even more shocking that some of your readers think they have the right to do so. What's wrong with us?

**Iftikhar-ul-Awwal**

My own understanding is that this is just the beginning of dissent movement by Jamaat -- soon to be followed by BNP. Why should the public face so much inconvenience? Is it not democratic and also much more convenient to arrange discussions among these political forces so that we get respite from cockfights in the middle of the

## Pacific beetle cockroach invades Hawaii!

Just now I have completed reading an exclusive report by Marisa Yamane of KHON2 (Hawaii's news leader) wherein she covered the odd event of invasion of a neighbourhood in Ewa Beach, Hawaii by thousands of pacific beetle cockroaches (*Diploptera punctata*). Residents are in great sufferings due to the massive invasion of the bugs. Entomologists have been called in to identify the insects and the reason of their sudden invasion. Pest control measures have been taken but the infestation is still on!

*Diploptera punctata* is a type of cockroach which is only known viviparous in the genus and used particularly in molecular research into allatostatins (neuropeptide hormones in insects).

Meanwhile it is hoped that residents of Hawaii will soon get rid of the bugs through proper application of modern and indigenous pest control methods.

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