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# Men grab women's reserved seat in bus



PHOTO: STAR

Women passengers are fewer than men passengers. There are three to six seats in each bus which are reserved for women. And it is also indicated in writing above the seats. But unfortunately, in most cases, the male passengers grab those reserved seats. Women keep standing in the bus whereas men shamelessly occupy their seats. If they protest, the male passengers start quarrelling. The driver and the helper remain silent in such situations. The government should take necessary action to solve this problem.

**Nimay Chandra Mohanta**

Adarsha Para  
Rangpur

## Financier may set timeline as condition

### to finish Padma bridge project

I wonder if the Padma Bridge enquiry is focussing on the wrong issue, trying to investigate 'corruption' and 'transparency'. As a Principal/Headmistress in Bangladeshi-run English-medium schools for over 7 of my 13 years in this dear country, I know how many Bangladeshis of the middle and upper classes are expert, by the age of about 8, at ensuring that no authority discovers what ACTUALLY happened - or continues to happen, if accused of malpractice! They are likely to improve their techniques as they get older, ensuring that the authority concerned gives up trying to punish them at all as collecting reliable facts is just too much hard work. This gives the naughty ones, at first, the satisfaction of feeling 'clever' and, later, they consider such an achievement is 'normal' for those of their status. Thus, they are outraged if punished and consider that no punishment of such 'harsh' authority is too great. What about changing the issue to one of 'competence'? Surely, the big question is, "With or without 'corruption', is the Padma Bridge, likely to be built, according to the specifications, within the given time limit?" Thus the condition of funding might be, for instance, to complete, before the end of 2013, both the Dhaka - Chittagong and the Dhaka - Mymensingh highways, according to specifications - not, as someone suggested in one of these cases, by painting the road black to make it look as though it had been surfaced correctly..... This change of focus would surely save an awful lot of time in expensive meetings that go round and round in circles. If those expected to provide this money also specified that the trial of the war criminals should also be completed by the end of 2013 - as a test of 'competence', of course - then any hostility to 'funding by foreigners', might well vanish - amidst cheers from all quarters.

**Angela Robinson**

Baridhara DOHS  
Dhaka

# Democracy turned into 'demon-crazy'!

Has violence become the catalyst for Bangladesh politics? That is the only conclusion that we can draw from the events over the last few days! It appears that political parties are driven by violence to declare their presence. And politicians are apt to come up with all sorts of excuses to justify and indulge in it!

It was vividly shown along with photographs in an English daily on 10th December. It showed opposition activists with sharp weapons and stones; while the activists of the party in power were openly brandishing pistol! This is the crux of our political activity. People and crowds for meetings are gathered using unemployed youths by providing them with food and money to flex the party's muscle! With so many unemployed in the urban areas, this is not a problem!

It is sad and depressing, that our politicians take the help of such people to create their so-called popular support for meetings and hartal, which in most cases are called without any justification. Invariably such hartals lead to violence resulting in fatalities and injuries! Ordinary helpless citizens stay away from such disgusting activities that pass for politics in Bangladesh. In fact, these demons have turned our democracy into 'demon-crazy'!

**Disgusted citizen**

Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

## Confer Bir Uttam award on Abu Osman Chowdhury

On 25 March 1971, Pakistan army launched 'Operation Searchlight' with the sinister motive of eliminating the Bengali people. Following Bangabandhu's declaration of independence, spontaneous Bengali resistance started throughout Bangladesh. The then-EPR (East Pakistan Rifles) Major Abu Osman Chowdhury of Chuadanga (Kusthia) revolted against Pakistan army on 26th March.

With the help of local political leaders, Osman organized and commanded the Bengali members of EPR, military, police, Ansar-Mujahid and Bengali youths against Pakistan military in the South-West districts including Kushtia, Jessore, Faridpur and Khulna. Chuadanga was declared the capital of free Bangladesh. Bangladesh government in exile was formed in 17th April at Baiddynathtala (Mujibnagar) of Meherpur sub-division of Kushtia district.

Despite little military resources and strong presence of Pakistan army (and Navy) in Jessore-Khulna region, Osman managed to hold the largest landmass of Bangladesh under his control till the end of May 1971. Pakistan army suffered huge losses during this period.

Compared to the news of South-East and Eastern fronts, the activities and the success stories of freedom fighters in the South-West front during the initial phase of Liberation War were more widely publicized in the world media. It was a source of inspiration and encouragement to the besieged people of Bangladesh. Osman then commanded the reorganized Sector 8 from May to August 1971. Osman was then sidelined for some petty personal reasons involving the then-Bangladesh higher military authority and as a result did not get 'Bir Uttam' award. He also did not receive his due promotion in independent Bangladesh. He retired from Bangladesh army as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1976.

Abu Osman Chowdhury always remained loyal to the principles of Liberation War. We are fortunate to have him among us

## ACC a puppet organisation!

So far the ACC could not find any case of graft in the Padma bridge project. It happened because the government did not want it. We want proper investigation.

**M. Syed**

Nawabganj, Dhaka

## A successful team work!

This year, nearly 17000 students took part in the admission test of our university. It was a huge job to smoothly conduct the admission test with our limited infrastructural facilities. Of course it is gratifying to record here that a number of schools and colleges around the area helped us by providing their premises and manpower for conducting the admission test. Complete digital methods were applied to conduct the admission test which include filling of application forms by candidates via Teletalk, computer-based examination of answer scripts, preparation of complete result, etc.

Meanwhile, credit for the successful conduct of the admission test goes to the admission committee headed by the SAU Vice Chancellor Prof. Md. Shadat Ulla. Every member of the team worked hard in a cordial atmosphere keeping the clarity of the whole process. All the teachers, officers and staff of SAU also worked with the team with total dedication. Prof. A M M Shamsuzzaman, Convener, Technical Sub-committee and Prof. Dr. Md. Fazlul Karim, Convener, Seat plan Sub-committee deserve special mention for their specialized services.

**Professor M Zahidul Haque**

Dean, Faculty of Agriculture  
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University  
Dhaka

till today. I would like to request the president and the prime minister of Bangladesh to correct this great injustice by immediately conferring 'Bir Uttam' award on Abu Osman Chowdhury.

**M. Emad**

Oxford  
UK

## Private workshops inspect vehicle state in USA

It is now about a month I have been working in a gas station at a place called Woodway Dr in Houston, Texas. This gas station has a car workshop as well and is licensed to do vehicle state inspection. One day in the late afternoon, a young man and a lady came in and inquired about how long it would take to do the inspection. The manager said 10 - 15 minutes and wanted to see the vehicle documents which include registration and insurance. Thereafter he went out to see the car to be inspected. After visual inspection, he expressed his inability to do the inspection as three of the four tires were worn out. The young man pleaded earnestly to do the inspection, saying he would replace the tires as soon as possible, but the manager politely refused. He told the man that in order to get the inspection done, he needs to replace the tires first as it is a major safety concern.

Well, has anyone experienced such a thing in Bangladesh? With BRTA being the sole authority at Mirpur for doing vehicle inspection, the answer is perhaps no. With the blessings of the middleman and speed money (bribe) all vehicles get passed, irrespective of whether the vehicle is fit for plying or not, putting the lives of the passengers as well as the pedestrians in jeopardy. Besides, it is a whole day affair, not just a matter of 10 - 15 minutes.

It is clear why the government does not contract out this responsibility to different workshops across the country, as this would deprive the government and its unscrupulous employees of illegal financial benefits.

**Saleh Mohammad Ayub**

Houston, Texas  
USA

# Driving on the wrong side of highway!



PHOTO: ABINUR RAHIM

This is a regular scene on the airport road where vehicles ply freely on the wrong side of the divide on the highway. Often this is done in front of the police but the police never give any objection. This practice is highly dangerous as there is a high risk of collision. I myself had to move out of the way in order to avoid a collision. I urge the authorities to look into the matter and put a stop to this practice for good.

**Aminur Rahim**

New DOHS, Mohakhali  
Dhaka



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### War Crimes Tribunal Justice Kabir new chief (December 13, 2012)

**Naabaj**

Moudud Ahmed, what just procedure did these heinous criminals followed when they committed the crimes against humanity? Have you asked these criminals this question before trying to foil this significant trial?

**An observer**

Conscious citizens of Bangladesh expect firm stand from BNP regarding trial of the accused persons. There are legislative provisions on what should be done in case of the judges who are unable to carry out their jobs. But

that does not mean the whole proceedings of the trial should start afresh.

**Khondaker Shahirul Islam**

We hope the new chief of ICT-1 will start the proceedings with courage and integrity and give rightful judgement against those who acted against humanity during our Liberation War in 1971.

**Selma**

We always knew that Awami League will do anything to manipulate these trials just to subdue the opposition. I

just hope that the intellectuals in Bangladesh and foreigners take good note as to what is happening here, which is totally undemocratic.

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### The Sitar falls silent (December 13, 2012)

**An Observer**

Nice tribute but I am sorry that I could not agree with the last sentence. Spring never goes away, nor does winter remain all the time. Shanker is gone and more Shankers will come and go. Nothing remains forever, nor is anything good lost forever.

**Dev Saha**

The Bengali Maestro would be deeply missed! He and George Harrison are two great heroes of 1971 for bringing up Bangladesh refugee issue on the world stage. Their moral and monetary support was indispens-

able for the nation. A great Sitar has finally fallen silent as another sweet guitar of Harrison.

**A Choudhury**

He was an extraordinary genius. His rendition of music with George Harrison in Madison Sq Garden in aid of the millions of our people stranded in India showed their devotion for the benefit of humanity.

**Shah**

I always cry when I listen to his music. It teaches me to live a life with love, sympathy and compassion. His music teaches me it is not money, wealth or power but spiritual practice that is needed to live a healthy and happy life. I will miss him every day. I pray for his departed soul.

**Feroz Mahmud Razib**

We will miss you much. God bless you.