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Come in aid of the cold-stricken



PHOTO: STAR

The northern districts have been caught in the grip of the biting cold wave. Thick fog shrouds the districts all the day. The sun is hardly visible. The people of Panchagar, a district known as the daughter of Himalayas, Nilphamari and Naogaon are the worst districts by the cold snap. Hundreds of newborns afflicted cold-related diseases are undergoing treatment at different hospitals. Some have already died. The poor people are the most

affected ones by the cold. They don't have warm clothes like blankets and shawls. We request the rich people across the country to stand beside them.

Md. Sairul Islam
Lecturer in English
Jahangirpur Girls' School and college
Mohadevpur
Naogaon

What are we learning from our leaders?

Sheikh Hasina recently said Khaleda Zia plays with snakes and roams around with a basket full of snakes. Sheikh Hasina as a prime minister should not say such things. This also mocks the profession of snake charmers who are nomadic people in the countryside. And their source of livelihood is snake.

We do not expect such comments from her. It is also sad that her followers clap hands when she makes such comments. What will we, the kids, learn from our leaders? Curse words and blame game?

Tozo and Bonnie
On e-mail

What has happened to Khairul?

I have never lost the habit I developed when a principal, of scouring your pages for inspiring stories of good people to share in my morning assemblies. ('Five Minutes with Mrs Robinson' is still available!)

I see a cutting from November 27th and wonder what has happened to Khairul Hasan, 38, from Piruzali in Joydevpur. He was a second floor quality inspector at Tazreen Fashions and, with others, was caught in the fire and began to run from one floor to another in a process that took many to their deaths. He, however, proved himself capable of creative, innovative, fast thinking and brave action that both school and working environments too often fail to encourage!

He was the man who saw a south-facing window on the third floor and, through it, the roof of a 3-storeyed building next door. He said he "saw a flicker of hope". He tried to remove the steel grille, could not and got others to help him. It took 10 precious minutes to get it off. He leapt across the gap (later marvelling how he had done so) found a few bamboo poles on the roof, made a bridge with them across the gap and, this way, more than 200 people were led to safety by Khairul and a few others.

If I were a factory owner, I would hunt down this man and immediately employ him, get further training for him and make him a safety inspector! He has obviously 'got what it takes'. Why should such a man lose his colleagues and his job and wonder how to support his wife and 9-year-old daughter in a rented house in Nishchintapur?

Please tell us, Daily Star, what has happened to this hero? He must not be forgotten.

Angela Robinson
Baridhara DOHS, Dhaka

What we expect in this New Year

A New Year has begun. The people were unhappy and dissatisfied about the following issues such as confrontation among political parties over caretaker government issue, murder of Bishwajit, Hallmark scandal, violent attack of Jamaat-Shibir men on police, incidents of disappearance, Tazreen Fashions fire which claimed the lives of 112 garment workers, flyover collapse in Chittagong, etc. There was some good news too: winning of Magsaysay award by Rizwana Hasan, conquering of Mount Everest by two Bangladeshi women, winning dispute on maritime boundary with Myanmar, Hay festival, development in education, agriculture, and power sector, etc.

We wish, this year our leaders will work for establishing a democratic and peaceful Bangladesh.

Md. Faruq Hossain
SM hall, Dhaka University

Preserve culture of mutual respect

Our moral and social values are eroding day by day. Nowadays in our society fellow feeling is fast declining. Now even friendship among the colleagues in an organization depends on their partisan connections. One

bloc encourages its members to disrespect members of other bloc. I strongly feel that we should immediately restore our inherited culture of respecting those who deserve respect.

The respectable persons in society should work as a role model to keep the norms and values alive among the citizens.

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

We hail the move

On the last day of the year 2012, we came to know of good news from the ruling party that the much awaited dialogue between the main opposition and the government was going to start soon. It was no doubt a positive move from the government. We expect it will put an end to the country's political unrest. The opposition should also respond to the offer in a positive manner. We want a fruitful dialogue with spontaneous participation from both parties which will be a model for the next generation politicians.

Golam Mostafa
Faticchhari, Chittagong

I want to cast a "No" vote

Late in 2008, the present government was elected by a huge margin exceeding 75% of the seats in parliament. In 4 years, this vast majority has whittled down and they just have a marginal lead as per the latest opinion poll. In another 9 months, when elections are due, the position might well be reversed as per the norm of the previous 4 elections.

In 42 years, Bangladesh has had the misfortune of being under dynastic rules and their camp followers, except when we had a president thrust upon us for about 8 years. The last caretaker government tried very hard to set things right, but they were not allowed to. Is there any collusion between the two ladies, always at loggerheads with each other and who have never sat down together and discussed national development for over 21 years? They have become permanent fixtures in their respective parties (democracy is not practiced there) and alternatively in national government. Dynasties cannot nurture democratic aspirations and at 80, I have seen most of them die nastily. The next election may possibly be my last and if



the ballot again gives me the same old two stale choices, I would like to be able to vote with a resounding "NO". But even that has been expunged from my democratic rights.

Sikander Ahmed
Gulshan, Dhaka

No textbooks for English version schools?

I am a student of Class-VIII. We read in your newspaper that all the school students of Bangladesh have got their textbooks. But I would like to inform you that the students of English version schools didn't get their textbooks! We have contacted the students of other English version schools of the country and came to know that they also didn't get the textbooks. Students of Milestone College Uttara and Rajuk Uttara Model College, both of those English version, did not get their textbooks.

A student
On e-mail

Shun street violence, make parliament functional

Nowadays, if one has to go to a certain place on any given day, the first thing he has to check is whether there is any political programme on that day. If there is any such programme, then he has to avoid some particular roads or simply stop going there. We, the mass people are scared of our dirty and violent politics. Even though we are so careful, we often fall victims to political clashes when there are sudden rallies on the roads. Political parties bring out processions on busy roads, which in most cases end up with clashes with the cops.

Of course, political parties have numerous demands but that doesn't mean they have to be violent on the streets. There are other ways to deal with the problems. First of all, both the parties can sit together and talk. The government and the opposition must hold a dialogue with each other to discuss national issues and solve the problems. That's why the parliament is here. The ongoing violent politics will only stop if all the elected members of the parliament work as one with each other.

Md. Ahsanul Kabir Palash
Department of Marketing
University of Dhaka



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Was president's permission sought? Bangabhaban asks eminent awardees of int'l prizes (January 9, 2013)

Truth teller
Do the honorary doctorate degrees fall into this category? If they do, then the Bangabhaban should also send letters to Sheikh Hasina.

Asif ul Huq
What kind of stupidity is that?

Faisal
Our current prime minister has also received such awards. It is expected that they are not excluded from this list. Otherwise, it will not be difficult to understand the motive.

Jumana Sarwar
Bangabhaban move seems to be very much targeted only to harass the eminent citizens.

N. Khan
Does the president not have anything better to do? As mentioned in this report, this provision has never been previously exercised by the government. Hence, why do so now?

Neutral
I think the recipients of the international awards are competent enough to defend.

Zahir Sadeque
If receiving awards demand presidential approval, then what about our prime minister and Bangladesh Bank governor who have received many honours from foreign countries? Did they seek the president's permission?

Sajjad Hussain
What a farce!

A. Rahman
What a silly matter! Mr. President, you have more important constitutional matters to be concerned about.

Barkat
One more misuse of power by the people in power. It is very clear that this has been done with the intention of harassing one particular person who

has made Bangladesh and its people proud. Why didn't the president office send letter to Sheikh Hasina who had received many international awards? Or does the article 30 exclude her?

Shamim H
Stupid idea and misuse of the constitution.

Abdur Raquib, London
Is there no limit to petty jealousy?

Reaz Hassan
From where has Shahdeen Malik got his explanation of article 30 of the constitution? Does he not see that article 30 of our constitution quite unambiguously states so? But it is quite funny that the state should suddenly wake up from slumber after decades and ask the distinguished recipients of title, honour and award about prior permission.

Syed Moinul Ahsan
The present prime minister during her last tenure had obtained numerous honorary degrees and awards. Did she get the president's approval before accepting those awards?

Deep Purple Blue
The issue seems to have been raised by the president's office with the intention to humiliate our national icons like Dr. Yunus and Fazle Hasan Abed.

Otherwise, the same letter should have gone to our prime minister who got the following foreign titles, honours and decorations according to her official CV:

1. UNESCO Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize -1998;
2. Mahatma Gandhi Award - 1998;
3. CERES Medal - 1999 from FAO;
4. Pearl S. Buck Award - 1999;
5. Received 8 honorary doctorates (only one from Dhaka University and others from foreign universities) during 1997 - 2000 when she was the prime minister for the first time.

I hope the president's office will issue a similar letter to Sheikh Hasina.

Neeman
Well, this is a brilliant discovery by the president's office! We know that constitutionally, the president does and decides everything except appointing the prime minister and the chief justice on the advice of the prime minister. So, has this discovery and the follow-up action also originated from the PMO?

Salahuddin Ayubi
It smells fishy to me. It appears that the president's office is now gunning for Professor Yunus and Sir Abed. Is it the president who is jealous of them or is it someone else?