

No more RMG deaths!



PHOTO: RASHED SUMON

We do not know how to express our shock and pain at the Rana Plaza incident, in which nearly 400 people are reported to be dead till now. The government must take proper steps so that we will not have to mourn at this sort of tragedy any more, which happened due to sheer negligence on the part of greedy people like Jubo League leader Sohel Rana.

We have learned that the garment workers were ordered to come to work to defy hartal and it was

like passing a death sentence on them. We were also dumbfounded by the home minister's comment to the BBC that the opposition pickets shook the pillars and gates of the building, which was one of the reasons why it collapsed. Was the building made of cards that it disintegrated through mere shaking? The government should punish all those who are responsible for this mass murder.

Nur Jahan, Chittagong

Power to the people!



MUNEM WASTIF / DRINKNEWS

Many Bangladeshis, including those with little schooling, are quite capable of supervising building sites to see that regulations are complied with, in the absence of competent officials, aren't they?

Why not make it compulsory to print clear building regulations on a notice board next to a building – or re-building - site, along with the phone number to ring if any errors are suspected. State on the notice at what times people can have access to the site. Have another public notice board where the 'official' observer has to sign (legibly) and put a date that all is well so that he/she takes responsibility.

Some time ago, you printed a story about a bridge being built in a country area and someone knew that every concrete pile had to have 10 metal rods. When the local people saw there were only 6, they forced the authorities to make the builder re-build it! Good!

Angela Robinson
Baridhara DOHS, Dhaka

Bangladesh's poor image

For the last few days, the Houston Chronicle has been publishing reports with pictures, comments and reviews on the recent building collapse that killed nearly 400 people and injured hundreds. While commenting on the tragedy, Charles Kernaghan, Executive Director of the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights, said, "You cannot trust many buildings in Bangladesh; it is so corrupt that you can buy off anybody and there won't be any retribution."

On April 26, 2013, the Houston Chronicle published a report on page A8 with a picture of a man clad in a shirt and lungi steering out of a hole. The caption says, "A Bangladeshi rescuer looks on from a hole cut in the concrete at the site of a building that collapsed Wednesday in Savar, near Dhaka, Bangladesh." Seeing this picture, one of my co-workers said to me, "Don't you guys have shoes in Bangladesh, how come they are all wearing sandals? What about the hard hats and the steel-toed boots, meant for the rescue workers?" I simply could not answer him when a majority of our people perhaps still remain bare-footed even to this day.

Well, this is the picture that the outside world has about Bangladesh. Who is to be blamed for this? The government or the entire nation? It has already been 42 years since liberation, but so far Bangladesh has miserably failed to portray itself in a positive manner. It is high time we changed this poor image of Bangladesh into a positive one. All the 160 million Bangladeshis should do whatever it takes to achieve this goal.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Houston, Texas
USA

"Men hardly understand women!"

An interesting news item was published in this daily recently: researchers at a German hospital discovered that male volunteers looking at photographs of human eyes were better at guessing the 'mood' of the person in the picture, if the person in them was also male. They also found that when looking at a pair of male eyes, amygdale -- a portion of the brain that has been found to be involved in emotion -- was more active than when looking at women's eyes. Scientists believe that emotional reading happens mostly through the eyes. The researchers suggest that their results show that men are better at reading the emotional state of their fellow men than they are at doing the same with women.

It is clear that men have been dominating women only by muscle, not by brain. If men used the brain to understand women, they might have learned how to read women's moods.

However, we hope through continuous determined and cordial exercises, someday men will overcome this limitation and become real partners of women.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road
Gopibagh, Dhaka

Chicago Council on agri innovation

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs recently released a report that examines the implications of the increasingly influential roles of Brazil, China, and India in global business, agricultural research and the limited national research capacity of developing countries. It stressed the need for more international collaboration and investment in agricultural research to safeguard productivity in the field of agriculture to meet future food demand.

Sharing of agricultural knowledge among different countries of the world can effectively increase

agricultural productivity and ensure global food security.

While extending my sincere appreciation to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs on its initiative, I would request the council to establish a global network to enhance and exchange agricultural knowledge.

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

Who runs the country?

Running a business requires a lot of knowledge; economics, accounting, human resource, marketing, distribution, public relations, and a lot of other myriad components. If running a business requires so much knowledge, imagine what a person needs to know to run a country. Of course, you don't need a doctorate in every field to run a country, but an educated enough mind to understand the effects of decisions for each of the fields, for each aspects of the country. Fortunately, we have, in our country, people who are educated enough to run the country, who know the virtue of knowledge and its application for the future of the country. Unfortunately, none of those people are in power. None of them are in a position to directly affect the journey of our country.

Unfortunately, the people in control of our future as a nation came to power not because of their knowledge. How can we ever expect a brighter future of Bangladesh? Maybe we should have a separate policy for our policymakers... like having actual doctorates from abroad and putting their academic background as the number one criteria for promotions. I wonder who are actually running our country.

Asifur Rahman Khan
Sr. Creative Supervisor
Asiatic MLC

Punishing the killers

Time has come to break the tradition of impunity. People who are responsible for this mass murder in Savar should be dealt with properly. If the government fails to prove its sincerity in punishing the culprits irrespective of their party affiliation, people will not forgive them. The Awami League must rise above its own selfish interests and set an example of justice in this case. At the same time, the BGMEA also needs to prove that it does not only see to the interest of the owners, but that workers' lives are also important to it. In a factory every machine is under insurance coverage, but not the workers' lives!

Kabir Hossain Taposh
Banani
Dhaka



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Electric vehicles and CNG-run vehicles

Electric vehicles do not pollute, do not contribute to global warming, and do not make any noise. They do not consume natural gas or petrol. They are easy to operate. At present these vehicles are plying on city roads without any registration and their drivers do not even have any license. If these vehicles are legalised, this will also be a major source of revenue for BRTA.

It is known to the authorities that at present they are recharging their batteries from the national grid at no cost. However, if battery recharge stations are

set up, like those of CNG filling stations and petrol pumps, these vehicles will recharge their batteries from those stations. This way illegal use of electricity to recharge the batteries will stop. If these battery-operated auto-rickshaws can replace CNG-run auto-rickshaws, it will not only reduce the consumption of natural gas but also reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Aminur Rahim
New DOHS, Mohakhali
Dhaka



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



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Owners probe owners' fault

BGMEA investigation always comes to a zero
(May 01, 2013)

Mofi

I believe majority of the owners consider these poor workers heartless machines and treat them inhumanly.

A2ZWorldTravLR

The heartrending deaths and injuries, and the consequences for the victims' families are beyond comprehension. The response of the authorities (delays, lack of resources, refusal to accept foreign help, etc., etc.) is inexplicable.

Mohammed Khan

I would like to thank the reporters for the special report on BGMEA. I do believe that BGMEA is fully

responsible for the Savar tragedy. Why did it not seal off the factory immediately after coming to know that the building had cracks and was going to collapse? They can not avoid their responsibility.

Iftekhar Hassan

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed." -- Mahatma Gandhi

Let BGMEA first comply with the court order and demolish their own building which was built on illegally occupied land.

Reaz Hassan

Most garment owners exploit the poor. They dictate the

terms of employment and hire and fire them at their will.

Sangsad gets first female speaker (May 01, 2013)

Ash C.

Congratulations to the first woman speaker of Bangladesh.

Mohammad Nurul Hoque

Congratulations, honourable new speaker. The speaker is the guardian of the parliament. According to her CV, she is the best choice available to the government. Her education, research and other qualities will help her in performing her duties. I wish her success.

Niloufar Naseem Sarker

Congratulations, Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, on becoming the first woman speaker of Bangladesh. This government's effort to put women in crucial positions is laudable.