

**The Lens of Print Media Journalism in “Op-ed” and “Editorial” Section at *The Daily Observer***

By

Md. Mahedi Hasan

16103044

Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University, Mohakhali, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

May 20, 2021

The Lens of Print Media Journalism in “Op-ed” and “Editorial” Section at *The Daily Observer*

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16103044

An internship report submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

May 20, 2021

## **Declaration:**

It is hereby declared that,

1. The internship report that I have submitted is my original work while completing a degree at BRAC University.
2. The internship report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The internship report does not contain material that has been accepted or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all of the main sources of help.

*Mahedi*

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**Md. Mahedi Hasan**

16103044

**Approval:**

The internship report titled “The Lens of Print Media Journalism in “Op-ed” and “Editorial” Section at *The Daily Observer*” submitted by Md. Mahedi Hasan (16103044) of Summer, 2021 has been accepted satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English and Humanities on May 20, 2021.

**Examining Committee:**

Supervisor:

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Seema Nusrat Amin  
Lecturer, English & Humanities  
BRAC University

Departmental Head:

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Prof. Firdous Azim  
Chairperson, English & Humanities  
BRAC University

## **Acknowledgment:**

Surviving is always a challenging part for all of us. To achieve our goals and fulfill the objectives we all have to face difficulties. And with Almighty Allah's blessing to guide us and show us the right path, everything is easier and less complicated.

The internship was the last step of my undergraduate program as a student of ENH Department, BRAC University. It was a memorable experience for me to work at *The Daily Observer*. Firstly, I would like to thank Almighty for his showers of blessings to complete my internship paper fruitfully. I am grateful to him for keeping me well and wisdom, strength. Without him, this journey is quite impossible for me. I would like to thank our honorable Chairperson Prof. Firdous Azim and all the faculties of ENH Dept. of BRAC University for giving me the proper direction and inspiring me to go on the right track. Especially, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Ms. Seema Nusrat Amin for giving me proper direction and guidelines, for her unconditional support and time-to-time feedback throughout this journey. Without her support, I might not be able to complete this report.

Moreover, I am thankful to my supervisor Mr. Shahriar Feroze, Assistant Editor, Editorial & News of *The Daily Observer* for guiding me during my internship period. I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting me, thanks to the authority of *The Daily Observer* for allowing my internship here.

Finally, I am grateful to my family for their unconditional love, tolerance, and support throughout this journey. Last but not the least; I have to mention my two closest friends Ishrak Shumayra Proma and Mantaka Ishraq who have been supporting me academically and mentally as well. Thank you both for encouraging me a lot.

## **Executive Summary:**

This internship has been completed by joining three months internship program in *The Daily Observer*. The main purpose of this internship is to observe the application of theoretical knowledge into a practical one.

The objective of this report is to scrutinize print media and journalism, especially in the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’ sectors. For starting the internship, I have to know all the theories first. Without knowing this, I am not allowed to sit for the internship. That is why I had to complete 8 major courses in the ‘Media and Cultural Studies stream and then I will be allowed for the internship. While doing an internship, I did not need to analyze all the theories, I need to know the writing style of a newspaper as I was assigned in the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-Ed’ these are the right sectors. Most of the articles came from *The Daily Observer's* official email address. We had to choose among these for the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’. At first, I faced some difficulties when I start working in this sector. But I feel privileged for my wonderful supervisor and colleagues. Apart from this, educational knowledge also helped me in my work sector I would like to my faculties who taught me the courses.

This report consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory part of the report which describes the origin of the newspaper, the rise of the newspaper, and the history of *The Daily Observer*. Here I also share my experiences about what I have learned from *The Daily Observer* in Chapter 02. What I also have been learned from my BRAC University life and my practical field, I also share this in my report in Chapters 03 and 04. Finally, I ended the report by giving recommendations and work citations to put together a good report. I have also kept ‘Appendix’ as proof of the work I did at *The Daily Observer*.

## Table of Contents

| Serial No.        | Contents                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Page No.                |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Chapter 01</b> | <b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.1:</b> The Origin of Newspaper</li> <li>• <b>1.2:</b> The Rise of English Newspaper</li> <li>• <b>1.3:</b> History of The Daily Observer</li> </ul> | 01-06<br>01<br>03<br>04 |
| <b>Chapter 02</b> | <b>Working as an Intern at <i>The Daily Observer</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2.1:</b> Basic Terms and Words</li> <li>• <b>2.2:</b> Different Sections of <i>The Daily Observer</i></li> </ul> | 07-11<br>07<br>09       |
| <b>Chapter 03</b> | <b>My Experience</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 12                      |
| <b>Chapter 04</b> | <b>Classroom Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4.1:</b> Courses that helped practically in Internship</li> </ul>                                                                               | 16-19<br>16             |
| <b>Chapter 05</b> | <b>Practical Application</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5.1:</b> Editorial</li> <li>• <b>5.2:</b> Op-Ed</li> </ul>                                                                                   | 20-29<br>22<br>26       |
| <b>Chapter 06</b> | <b>Conclusion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6.1:</b> Recommendation</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      | 30<br>32                |
|                   | <b>Works Cited</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 34-35                   |
|                   | <b>Appendix</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 36-45                   |

## Chapter 01: Introduction

“Newspapers cannot be defined by the second word—paper. They’ve got to be defined by the first word—news.” - Arthur Sulzberger Jr.

News is important and the newspaper is a storehouse of information that covers the important issues, meetings, events, perspectives of the people’s lives, the circumstances of the whole world, and so on. In the beginning, the newspaper focused on the coverage of people's lives that extended to a person’s lifestyle, achievements, failures, milestones, and also the last stage of death. As storage of the stories, the newspaper is there at the start and end by remaining an effective medium for such record-keeping. Newspaper is a vital component as it unfolds knowledge in one sitting. It plays a significant role in giving out information worldwide. It is also an important part in providing information about incidents, accidents, events, programs, politics, entertainment, media, education, economics, business, jobs, etc. It helps in various purposes.

- **1.1: The Origin of Newspaper:**

“A newspaper is not merely printed. It is circulated and read. Otherwise, it is not a newspaper” (Park 274). During the British Colonial time, they may be found the launch of the country’s newspaper industry. *The Bengal Gazette* or *Hickey’s Bengal Gazette* was the first English newspaper published in Kolkata in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the Indian subcontinent, this weekly publication was supposed to be the first newspaper of current times. Bengali newspapers began to pop up with the monthly *Digdarshan* (1818), the weekly *Samachar Darpan* (1818), and the weekly *Bengal Gazette* (1818).



Picture 01: Weekly English Newspaper *Hickey's Bengal Gazette*

The shortage of newspapers happened in 1947 with the partition of the sub-continent and into Pakistan and India after the British rule. There was a newspaper that was supplied to the Muslim readers in British India, they transferred their procedures to Pakistan soon. In 1948, *Dainik Azad* shifted from Kolkata to Dhaka when they were in East Pakistan. An English newspaper named the *Pakistan Observer*, which was published in Dhaka in 1949. However, it was renamed *Bangladesh Observer* in 1971 after the independence of Bangladesh. There was two more renowned newspaper called *Dainik Sangbad* in 1949 and *Dainik Ittefaq* in 1953 published respectively. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the new national leaders became united in their position and became dogmatic about press criticism. The country's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman executed a one-party presidential system to reduce fundamental rights and banned all the newspapers except four ones. These are *Dainik Ittefaq*, *Dainik Bangla*, *Bangladesh Observer*, and *Bangladesh Times*. They banned all the newspapers in 1975 except these four.

At present, there are a lot of newspapers in our country. Among these, *Prothom Alo*, *Kaler Kontho*, *Dainik Janakantho*, *Dainik Ittefaq*, *Bangladesh Protidin*, *Shamakal*, *Bhorer Kagoj*, *Dainik Manobjibon*, etc. are the most popular newspaper in Bangladesh.

Apart from these, people are used to reading English newspapers also. *The Daily Star*, *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Observer*, *Daily Sun*, *The New Age*, *The Independent* are well-known English newspapers in Bangladesh.

- **1.2: The Rise of English Newspapers:**

In terms of significance and popularity, the status of Bangladesh newspapers written in English has been improving over the past two decades. These newspapers created their position with support from among the country from top to middle class and decision-makers. Hereafter, they have become significantly powerful despite their minor capacity of movement in numbers. It cannot be exactly said about the location of the first printing press was set up in Bangladesh. It is conjectured that the first printing press in Bangladesh was in Rangpur in 1847, about 335 kilometers away from Dhaka. The first printed piece from this printing press was a weekly newspaper named *Rangapur Barttabaha* in August 1847.<sup>1</sup> In 1856, *The Dacca News* was the first English weekly newspaper that was printed and published from Dhaka.

At present, *The Daily Star*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Sun*, *New Age*, *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Observer* are the top English newspaper in our country. *The Bangladesh Observer* which is presently known as *The Daily Observer* published in 1949. *The Daily Star* was first published on 14 January 1991. This newspaper takes on activism topics about environmental protection, relentless politicization through hartals or national strikes as well as inspiring creative pursuits like art exhibitions. Similarly, *Dhaka Tribune* has constantly covered events that were related to the standard position of public university

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from: "History of printing and publishing in Dhaka"  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_printing\\_and\\_publishing\\_in\\_Dhaka#:~:text=The%20first%20English%20weekly%20newspaper,was%20named%20'Bangla%20Press'](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_printing_and_publishing_in_Dhaka#:~:text=The%20first%20English%20weekly%20newspaper,was%20named%20'Bangla%20Press').

education. Besides, they also covered news for women's empowerment in the region. Among these, there are so many English newspapers in our country which maintain standards like international ones and people feel comfortable reading them.

- **1.3: History of *The Daily Observer*:**

In Bangladesh, we have both online and print newspapers. But some newspapers are available in the online version. *The Daily Observer* has both online and printed versions. There is a long history of *The Daily Observer*. This newspaper was first published on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1949. This newspaper was named *Pakistan Observer* before the liberation war. After the liberation war, it was renamed *Bangladesh Observer*. Mr. Hamidul Huq Choudhury, the provincial minister in former East Pakistan, now Bangladeshi politician, was the founder of this newspaper. The first news editor of this newspaper was Mohammad Shehabullah and after him, Abdus Salam became the editor of the then *Pakistan Observer* from 1949-1972. The newspaper was banned because of the language movement in 1952. In 1954, the paper was published again and the paper was named *The Daily Observer* till 2010. For some internal matters, this paper is closed down in 2010. But finally, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury reopened the newspaper with the name *The Daily Star* by giving the “We stand for people's rights” slogan in 2013.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Daily\\_Observer\\_\(Bangladesh\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Daily_Observer_(Bangladesh))



Picture 02: *The Daily Observer* logo

Like the other newspaper, this newspaper also has 20 regular pages with various sections like sports, editorial, business, world news, city news, countryside, art & culture, education, political, social, and many more. It has also some tabloids like “life & style” which focuses on people’s lifestyle, publishes healthcare articles by prominent doctors, fitness solutions from expertise, travelogues, and many more. There is also a separate tabloid for creative writing named “Young Observer” where the young generation can publish their inspirational stories, creative shot story writing, event coverage, art, and crafts, etc. Moreover, there is also a women section name “Women’s Own” where they can share their success stories. They have separate magazines that are published in Eid only. They also have a Bangla edition for online readers which is available on Facebook, Google.

"The modern paper is what it is because the organization of modern society is what it is" (Willey 22). The newspaper becomes an essential life in our daily life. We always start our morning by reading the newspaper. But now, technology makes our life easier. At present, it is not necessary to keep a newspaper at home every day. Now, we can read newspapers online by accessing their websites, finding them on Google, Facebook, and other online media. It has subsequently become a part of a daily routine in lifelike, waking up in the morning and picking the phone.

## Chapter 02: Working as an Intern at *The Daily Observer*

Internship means full of practical experience. Working as an intern in a newspaper gives entire writing of experience. During my internship at *The Daily Observer*, I have worked in the editorial sector, basically in the “Editorial” and “Op-ed” sectors. I have to edit more than 200 articles in my whole internship. But, among this one editorial and one op-ed has been published which is written by me. In *ENG 333: Globalization* course we have learned that every country influences each other to the range of political-cultural issues, religion, economy, etc. through strong globalization. The evolution of the print media like the newspaper is such a significant part that makes socially updated all the time. We can gain all the information from other countries through the news. We are getting news from print media like a newspaper that has become a central point. In chapter 02 of my report, I will describe the basic terms which are related to the print media and the different sections of *The Daily Observer*.

- **2.1: Basic Terms and Words:**

As my area of concentration is “Media and Cultural Studies”, I had to do a course titled *ENG 401: Editing* where I have learned some key terms that are related to print media. But there are also some different key terms which are only related to the newspaper and these terms are understandable for those people who are working in this sector. The following terms I have to keep in mind while I have to work in the newspaper sector.

- **Masthead:** it is a newspaper or magazine’s name. For example, the organization's name where I worked as an intern is *The Daily Observer*. So, *The Daily Observer* is the masthead of the newspaper because it is printed on the front page of the newspaper.

- **Plug Boxes:** these are the small boxes that carry small news, headline, and page number in a box. These boxes give the title of the news that is inside the paper. It is printed on the front page of the newspaper.
- **Byline:** author's name is written in this place.
- **Picture with Caption:** The caption is a reflection of the photo, what the photo is trying to say. It can be one or more words.
- **Cutline:** it is a sentence that describes the picture.
- **Caption:** it is a short one-two line about the photo. It is usually placed beside the cutline or above the cutline.

The image shows the front page of 'the daily observer' newspaper. The masthead at the top reads 'the daily observer' with the tagline 'We stand for people's rights' and the website 'www.observerbd.com'. Below the masthead, there are several plug boxes containing headlines like 'TIGERS FLY FOR NEW ZEALAND TODAY', 'PATENT BILL GETS CABINET APPROVAL', and 'ROUHANI FACES TRIAL OVER IAEA DEAL'. The main body of the page features several articles. On the left, there's an article about 'Papul loses JS membership' with a photo of a man. In the center, there's a large photo of a body of water with a caption about it being a breeding ground for mosquitoes. To the right of this photo is an article about 'Take C-19 vaccine, follow health guidelines: PM'. Below the central photo is a headline 'FUGITIVE KILLERS OF BANGABANDHU Govt hopes to bring back Rashed Chy by March' with a sub-headline 'PM leaves for USA to discuss the issue'. To the right of this is an article about 'City corpns failure make mosquitoes more menacing'. Further right is an article about 'Assess whether situation is conducive to reopen edn institutions: PM'. At the bottom left, there's an article about 'Wearing glasses can prevent C-19 contamination: Indian study'. In the center bottom, there's an article about 'DU students give 72-hr ultimatum to reopen residential halls' with a photo of a person. At the bottom right, there's an article about 'Univs to reopen on May 24: Dipu Moni'.

**Masthead**

**Plug Boxes**

**Picture**

**Cutline**

**Headline**

**Subhead**

Picture 03: Presenting Basic Terms in a Newspaper

- **Pull Quote:** Pull Quotes are the lines from the article written by the author which cover an important point from the main article. It motivates a reader to read the story. The lines are pulled out of the news report, written in bigger font size, and put within a box.

## 'E' for education, 'M' for misery



AHMED TASHIN SHAMS

An age-old maxim is known to the most: "There is nothing more uncommon than common sense". And, the system which perfectly paves way for this 'uncommon' notion is Bangladeshi education system. Here, teachers and job recruiters often face the crisis and therefore scream, "Have you lost your common sense?"

Chronologically speaking, students in Bangladesh are not solely responsible for such crisis; rather firstly, parents, and secondly schooling could be placed on the dock of the court before blaming the students for being in poverty of 'common sense'.

Deconstructing the usable definition of the most common word, 'common sense', it can be said that the phrase means -- having the ability to think, judge, decide, and act accordingly. Now, does it sound so

common? Rather, the action of the word demands high intelligence to perform 'common sense'.

Parents frame a child's brain with full of paradoxes since their early ages. Whatever is taught to a kid, hardly faces practical implication. For instance, everyone is known to the less used advice on earth: "Honesty is the best policy", because the yesterday's kid, today comes to know that they have flats and cars, more than once or twice in the capital Dhaka, and his or her father is a government jobholder! This is not the end. The same parents, for their sons and daughters, passionately wish to buy medical admission question papers.

However, creative thinking, to think liberally, or such thinking, which can be executed, is rarely practised in Bangladeshi education system: whether at home, or at schools.

Students study and they do not know why they are doing it. Let's do a hypothesis, Ask any kid, "Why do you go to school"? The majority might answer, "Because of my parents wish..." or "Otherwise dad will scold me..." or "to play with my friends".

Let's focus on the third point: 'play'. Aristotle became nothing but a name in this context as his words, "Enlightenment through entertainment" is very less at use in Bangladeshi education system. Blame will not go to any particular person in

authority or faculty, rather their thinking, which is also a product of the system, and this thinking can be coined as, without a hitch, 'imprisoned in age-old dogmas'. To what extent today's students are given liberty to exercise what they

utter innovative change in the teaching methodology? What could be our approach as guardians and teachers regarding educating the next generation? What steps actually we took so far to prevent education as entertainment? Yes,

works; whereas, students are judged on their research publications or proposals for higher degree scholarship in many developed countries.

There could be an 'economic' excuse behind this. Most students belong to the 'economic' struggling class and they just need a job just after graduation to support their family. Well, this is another paradox.

Suddenly, a graduate comes to know that he has to earn 'money', whereas, he was never taught what money is. He never got the subject 'money' as he was indulged into quantum physics or culture studies. All of a sudden, he becomes prey to the peer pressure, mostly done by family members. The same family

used to scold him during his teenage -- "Money is not for teens. Here is youriffin".

Let's make another hypothesis. Soon, the recent Rohingya issue will get space in textbooks, at least in graduation level for the courses like Bangladesh Studies, History, Sociology, or Political Science. But, the question is -- how many universities have attempted to take their students to the Rohingya camp for academic assignment purposes? This is what is known as 'practical learning'.

The age of memorizing information has gone to grave. Most of the urban students' pockets are weighty with 'smart' phones. The age to

evolve as 'think-tanks' has been waving since years, yet unheard, unnoticed by our so-called education policy makers.

There pops up another head, known as 'knowledge'. Using information to create a new concept is knowledge, rather vomiting others' views. The last-second hypothesis is, most schools in Bangladesh, if surveyed, would turn out as synonyms to 'haunted house' for kids.

Let's not forget the reason of the teaching methodology of ABC, where "A for Apple", "B for Ball", and "C for Cat" -- designed in a way so that kids can easily remember as these notions are not unknown, rather most friendly to them; whereas in Bangladesh, to be specific in 'adornment', Bangali kids learn: "Y for 'Agora' (Pythons), "I for 'Idur' (Irat), and "E for 'Eagle". Such frightening animal imageries for kids lead straight to the point mentioned earlier: school is synonymous to 'haunted house'.

It's not high time, we have already missed the train that travels towards knowledge. Miles to go before the next generation falls asleep. Yet, optimists believe, it is never too late.

The writer is Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature (ELL), Notre Dame University Bangladesh (NDUB), and Editorial Assistant, The Daily Observer

Let's do a hypothesis. Ask any kid, "Why do you go to school"? The majority might answer, "Because of my parents wish..." or "Otherwise dad will scold me..." or "to play with my friends". Let's focus on the third point: 'play'.

learn in their practical lives? To what extent teachers encourage students in their writing or speaking classes to watch one of their favourite films and write on it, or mimic their favourite characters, which would develop their public speaking ability? What do we mean when we actual-

fumble more before answering these questions?

Let alone school-graduates, our university certificate grabbers (or buyers) certainly lack, to a great extent, what is expected from a graduate. For instance, hardly students are made acquainted with research

Pull Quote

Picture 04: Example of Pull Quote

- **Drop Caps:** large capital letters that are used in front of the paragraph. It can be 2-3 lines long. This term brings variation in the newspaper to look the article.

These are the basic terms that people who have to work under a newspaper, must have to know about it.

### • 2.2: The Sections of *The Daily Observer*:

"The newspapers that prosper in the next century will be the ones that offer the best journalism, that master the subjects about which they write and acquire the talent and expertise to appraise and explain an infinite variety of events" (Lapham, 07).

I started working at The Daily Observer for 3 months from 15 November 2020 to 15 February 2021. As I worked in the "Editorial" and "Op-ed" sectors, daily I had to edit approximately 6/7 national and international news. For example, I edited Victory day news, COVID-19, Padma Bridge, as well as edited some sports news also. But I can create a

friendly environment for my coworker. They support and help me a lot if I made any mistakes. But *ENG 401: Editing* helps a lot to edit the news.

In the book, *The Elements of Journalism* written by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel it is stated that “the first two principles of journalism would be to the truth and its citizens.”<sup>3</sup> So, according to this statement, the main elements of journalism are ‘truth’ and ‘citizen’. All the news must provide true information which is shaped by a citizen of a particular country. In a country, the news can be based on political issues, cultural issues, situational biases, events, education purposes, etc. We, the journalists always try to gain true information of the news through citizens and verification. After that, we publish the news in a newspaper.

This paper is organized into different sections. This paper has 20 regular pages with different sections that consist of different topics. They are *Print Edition*, *Features*, *Commentary*, *National*, *International*, *Budget*, *Business*, *Sports*, *Countryside*, *Don’t Miss*, *Education*, *Eid Magazine*, *Visual*. In the *Print Edition* section, they have ‘Front Page’, ‘Back Page’, ‘Editorial’, ‘Op-ed’, ‘Business’, ‘Sports’, ‘Foreign News’, ‘Countryside’, ‘City News’, ‘News’. Various features have been published in the *Feature* section. ‘Women’s Own’, ‘Book Review’, ‘Literature’, ‘Life & Style’, ‘Observer TeCH’, ‘Law & Justice’ ‘Health & Nutrition’, ‘Young Observer’.

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<sup>3</sup> Please see: <https://www.examples.com/education/newspaper-report-writing.html>

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Young Observer

**Bangalee achieves everything through Language Movement: PM**

Prime Minister and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina on Monday said the Bangalee nation had achieved everything including social, financial, cultural and political rights through the Language ...

**Editorial**  
Biden for stronger US-Bangladesh ties

**Op-Ed**  
Fostering education

**Business**  
Price fall in large-cap drives stocks down

Stocks on Monday closed the first session of the week with downward trend due to ...

**বিশ্ব বুদ্ধি**  
মার্কটবিল বাজারে নিম্নে ঋণ সময়ে  
আপনার স্বার্থের বিকাশ বুদ্ধির নিত্যসঙ্গ

Picture 05: Feature Section in the online version of *The Daily Observer*

In the 'Women's Own' section where the success stories of women have been published. 'Life & Style' focuses on people's lifestyle, publishes healthcare articles by prominent doctors, skincare news from a Divine Beauty Lounge, fitness solutions from famous experts, etc. Another one is 'Young Observer' which publishes news on inspirational short stories, event coverage, education, and many more. Apart from these, there is also a section of Eid Magazine, this magazine has been published every year during Eid. But they cannot publish the magazine in the last year because of Covid-19.

Though, I worked in a specific section, I had a good bonding with the others who worked in other sections of the newspaper. That is why I have some ideas about the other sections.

## Chapter 03: My Experience

It was a great opportunity for me to work in *The Daily Observer* as an intern. I feel so excited and nervous at the same time because I never faced a job purpose before. This experience is not less than a first-time employee experience. I joined there on 15 November 2020. Shahriar Feroze, Assistant Editor, Editorial & News was my supervisor. I was assigned to the 'Editorial' and 'Op-ed' sections. My colleagues were also very friendly and helpful while I started working here. At first, I did nothing but after one week they started to teach me about the basic terms of newspaper, how to edit a piece of news, how to write a headline, how to edit it, how to write a caption everything they teach me so swiftly. My supervisor taught me how to write a caption for a photo. But there was some limitation for caption writing which we already learned for ENG 401: Editing course. The limitation was, I had to keep in mind the technique of the 5W and 1H (What, Who, Where, When, Why, and How) method, and I have to write the caption by following this technique with the necessary details.

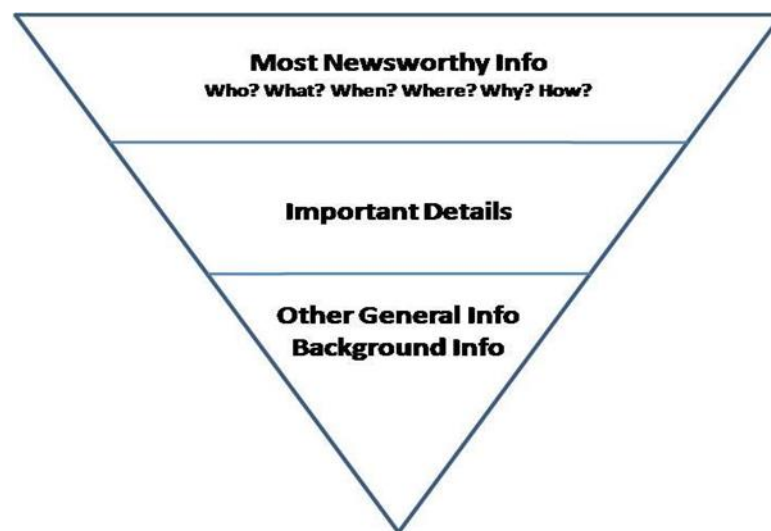


Picture 06: This Caption is written by me

They helped me to learn writing techniques and formats of editorial and op-ed. One day, they told me to write an article that will be published in the ‘Op-ed’ section. I wrote it about our Buriganga River and they liked my article a lot which was published in the Op-ed section. Moreover, I had to keep in mind that *The Daily Observer* follows British English spelling. It gave me a little bit of trouble because I always use American English in my educational institution. I make spelling mistakes several times but I adjust this change by taking a bit of time. On the other hand, I am not allowed to use an abbreviation in an article, op-ed or editorial. Because most of the readers may not know the full form of it. I have to elaborate on the abbreviation at least once, then I can use this again if I need to repeat it.

The news structure follows an inverted pyramid format. I also had to follow this in my ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’ sector because we had limitations of words. We had to write it within 700-800 words, not more than. So, when I had to start writing, at first, I had to keep in mind that I had

to write the most important issues before then the less. If I crossed the word limitation, I could omit the less important issues in the article. I learned this structure from my ENG440: *English for Print Media* course. The pyramid structure arranges the news report in descending order of importance. It gives more specification when the story progresses. It is very helpful in terms of editing because the editors can cut the less important information of the story if they think it is not necessary or restrictions of words in the newspaper. Also, readers can stop reading the news if they lose curiosity about the news by reading unnecessary issues. So, it is very important to follow the pyramid structure for writing any news, reports, and articles.



Picture 07: Inverted Pyramid Structure

On the other hand, I also had to work on the page make-up section. It was formatting printed pages that included columns, the layout of headers, footers, borders, page numbers, rules, and graphics. I was given the basic idea of page makeup. I also learned it from ENG 401: Editing course and I also got an opportunity to do the page make-up several times in the 'Op-ed and Editorial' sections.

A graphic designer had to do this. A sub-editor instructed them about the layout. After hearing the instructions, the graphic designer made the print version as a draft of the newspaper. The most sensitive reports such as killing and rape reports should be on the front page. Not only these kinds of news but also the sports news, big achievements like Padma Bridge, a big event should also be highlighted on the front page. Moreover, the other news like help-seeking news, donation news, treatment, etc. types of news are set on the bottom of the page.

This internship taught me professionalism and accepting criticism. Yes, here I have to accept criticism from others. The difference between academic life and practical life is that my faculties give me feedback in a polite manner when I make any mistake. They also correct my mistake without criticizing me. But at the workplace, they mock me or behaving harshly if I made any mistakes and I have to accept it. Also, I have learned how to complete tasks under a lot of pressure. Yes, I have learned it within a limited time. I have learned many things which I have not learned in my academic life. There are indeed a lot of differences between Theories and practical work.

## Chapter 04: Classroom Learning

“Classroom learning, as the name suggests, encompasses the merits of the setting of one traditional classroom. Classroom learning needs a certain number of participants or students to be active listeners & participate in that learning environment.”<sup>4</sup> The classroom is such a place where both teacher and students are present, where face-to-face interaction happens and which promotes an open exchange of ideas to them. Practical experience is very important in every job sector. For this reason, every student has to do an internship for gaining practical experience which tends to make differentiate between theory and practical. Without knowing the theory, it is meaningless to gain practical knowledge. That is why an internship is important to gain practical experience in the job sector.

Though I had no experience of working in the newspaper sector, my supervisor suggested to me that I might work in the editorial and op-ed sections and I was agreed with that. This internship allowed me to achieve practical experience when I completed my major courses in the “Media and Cultural Studies” stream. I had to complete a total of 8 major courses as I have a concentration in Media and Cultural Studies. Without completing the necessary amount of credits I cannot do an internship because it is compulsory to complete 93 credits before starting an internship. Different courses have different aspects of learning and different values. Our honorable faculties have taken these courses so well that we have learned many terms, theories, formats without facing any difficulties. We express our gratitude to all our faculties who guided us properly.

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<sup>4</sup> Taken from: <https://www.eztalks.com/elearning/difference-between-elearning-and-classroom-learning.html>

- **4.1: Courses that helped Practically during Internship**

Before, I mentioned that I have to take a total of 8 courses in my Media Major concentration and without completing this I cannot sit for the internship. Here I am giving a brief description of my all courses where I have learned various theories, which helps me to work practically without any hassle.

**ENG 440 (English for Print Media):** This course played an important role during my internship. In the *Copywriting* course, we have introduced a different form of journalistic writing. Editorials, op-eds, features, events, book and movie reviews all the things we have known from this course. Here, we knew about the writing formats of editorial, op-ed, review, events. Also, we know about the news value factors like prominence, consequence, timeliness, proximity, and oddity. Moreover, we also understand interview techniques, sports, and investigative journalism.

**ENG 333 (Globalization and Media):** This course is all about analyzing globalization and media. This course is a student-teacher discussion lecture-based where we have learned about theories, researchers, debates, analyzes, and so on. This course is based on the procedure of globalization that transforms in media as well as scrutinizes globalization and media's power of new technologies and transformation.

**ENG 401 (Editing):** We feel we are in a newsroom when we take the *Editing* course class. The credit goes to Roohi miss. Here, we have learned about basic terms of a newspaper about page design and layout, editing pictures, graphics, typography, and what things we have to be aware of while designing newspapers. Also, we have learned, how a piece of information is organized for news reports, how to arrange news items in a newspaper, how it will be formatted, etc.

**ENG 465 (Translation Studies):** At first, I know that this course will be the easiest course from my major concentration. But I was wrong. I just know that I have to translate some stories from Bangla to English or English to Bangla. I have to learn a lot of terms for doing translation properly. This is also a teacher-student discussion-based course where we have to translate some poems, songs, a novel portion, short stories from ‘Bangla to English’ and ‘English to ‘Bangla’.

**ENG 404 (Copywriting):** This course helps us to introduce the principles, fundamentals of persuasive writing, copywriting techniques, how to write headlines, body copy, how to grab attention from the audience, how to write an effective copy these things we learn in this course.

**ENG 331 (Cultural Studies: Theory and Practices):** it is a course that deals with the fundamental concept in cultural theory as well as scrutinize the cultural objects and activities in our society and country. This course highlights cultural politics and issues such as feminism, post-colonial perspective.

**ENG 319 (Modernism):** The concept of modernism, post-modernism, colonialism, and imperialism with historical and philosophical movements that we have learned in this course and helps us to think critically.

**ENG 218 (Postcolonial Writing in English):** It is a basic literature course for post-colonial orientation where we can read any text from a post-colonial perspective.

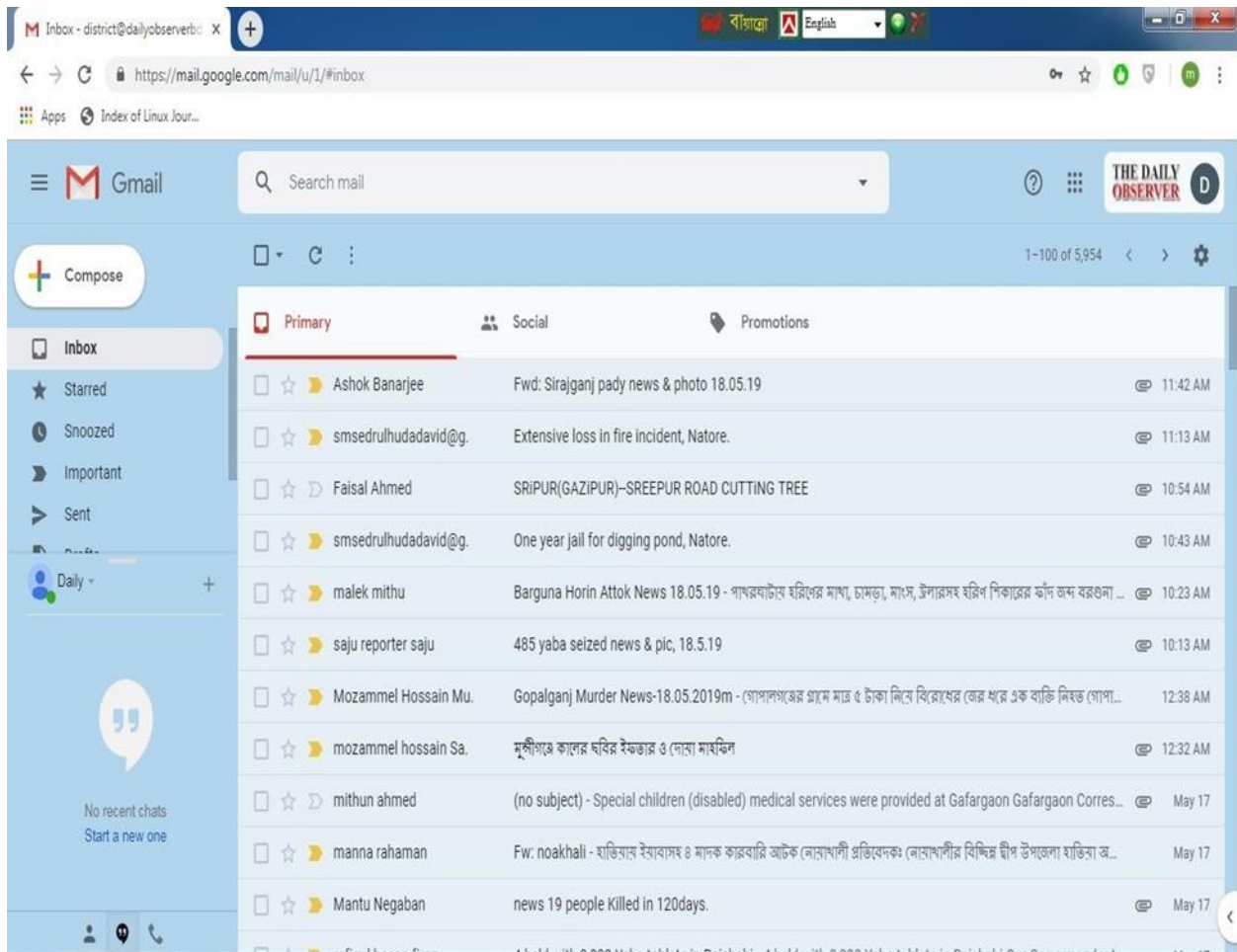
So, these are the courses that I have to complete for my internship. When I took ‘Media and Cultural Studies’ as my major concentration, I thought that it will be very easy for me as there are fewer literature-based courses. But I was wrong. Though the courses are tough, they were enjoyable. There are a lot of terms that I had to memorize and our honorable faculties made these boring, tough courses easy and interesting. When I started learning the different terms from

different courses, I thought that all these terms are useless. But now I know these terms play an important part in practical life.

## Chapter 05: Practical Application

To work in a practical field, it is very important to know the theory. Without theory, there is no value in practical work. But when I started practical work, I realize that it is also as important as the theories. These two acts are complements to each other. When I started my internship, I faced a lot of problems, especially when I have to apply these with the theories. After that, I started used to on it and tried to apply the theories in my practical work. As I mentioned that I have to work in the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’ sectors, I did not know what I have to do or what I should do as I was in a blank mind. Then my supervisor and colleagues taught me what I had to do or not in these sectors. *ENG 440; English for Print Media* course helps me a lot to know about the terms and features of ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’.

As I worked in the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’ sectors, all the news came through the official mail address of *The Daily Observer*. Among these, we had to decide which news would be for ‘editorial’ and which one would be for ‘op-ed’. We got both national and international news. National news was selected for editorial and international news was selected for the op-ed.



Picture 08: Screenshot of the Gmail homepage of *The Daily Observer*

Sometimes we used different sources for the news like *Asia Times*, *BBC*, *Al-Jazeera*, *CNN*, etc. We always got national and international news as a combination of news. For example, Corona issues were both national and international news to the world. For both ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’, each paragraph must be contained 70-80 words. We used the highest 110 words if necessary. We accepted 1200 words only for prominent writers. If the news was more than 1500 words then we had to cut at least 400 words from total paragraphs as well as tried to omit repetitions. Here I am going to give a short description of the ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’.

- **5.1: Editorial**

An editorial is an article that presents the newspaper's opinion on an issue. It reflects the majority vote of the editorial board, the governing body of the newspaper made up of editors and business managers.<sup>5</sup> “Editorials contribute to the character of a particular journal and maybe a means by which editors add their imprints onto a journal” (PehW C G, Ng K H, 612). Editorial influences public opinion and critical thinking. Sometimes it may cause them to take any action. It is also known as a dogmatic news story.

For writing an editorial I had to pick a significant topic that has relevance in our lives so that the readers felt the interest to read the news. Then we had to collect all the information and facts about the news impartially start researching. We had to state our brief opinion about the news in the style of a thesis statement and explain the issue by stating why it is important now. After that, we had to refute the opposing viewpoint by using facts, details, figures, and quotations. We also had to give a realistic solution from outside common knowledge. This helped to encourage critical thinking. When concluding the news, we had to make sure that it restated the thesis statement and we had to keep the word limit within 500 words. We could never use “I”.

“Editorials are supposed to be persuasive and are less tied by the norm of objectivity” (Lee, Lin, 335). If we have to relate all the theories to the practical work in ‘Editorial’, we have a headline whose first word will be in capital and it should contain an Introduction, Body, and Conclusion as the other news stories do. In theory, we learn that, for the editorial, they must have an objective explanation of the issue, especially complex issues. We also follow an objective explanation which is more like a complex issue. Every

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<sup>5</sup> Taken from: <https://www.geneseo.edu/~bennett/EdWrite.htm>

news has a timely news angle and we also follow this. We cover the recent national issues for our editorial topics. For example, 17th March. We tried to omit the opposition parties' viewpoints., If they gave a strong logic then we tried to refute it. Our opinion had to be given professionally. We always took a good active approach where we were always ready to answer all the questions, by using positive criticism and a proper solution. For the wrap-up, we always tried to write it solidly and concisely by giving the newspaper's opinion. All the things are included in an editorial.

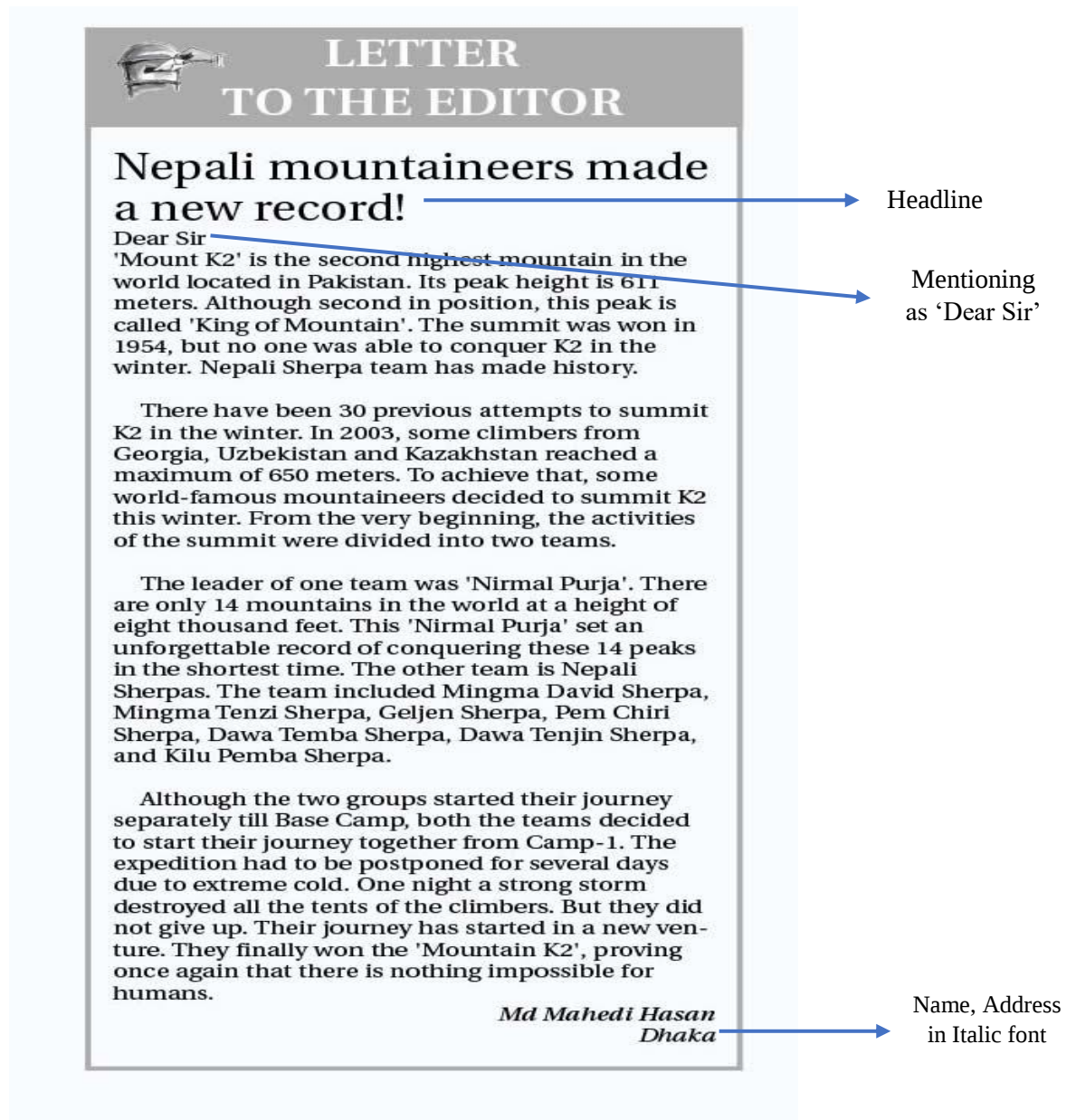
For the editorial, the maximum time we used national issues. We had a total of 4 editorial news on a page which consists of 1, 2, 3, and 4. Also, we had 'Letter to the Editor' where they wrote a letter about the recent issues to the editor. We also have post-editorial options where we understand there is still a chance your paper may need additional changes before it is accepted for publication.<sup>6</sup> For 'Editorial' we could not use any photos as it was a black and white page. Though we wanted to use a picture, we could not find any related picture of the news. Moreover, we also highlighted some quotes which were going to be published in the editorial. If we were not able to fill up the page of it, we tried to use highlighted quotation or picture in 'Editorial'. The highlighted quote should be 120 words, not more than that.

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<sup>6</sup> Took it from: <https://www.editage.com/info/editing-services/post-editorial-support.html>



We got letters via mail to publish it in 'Letter to the Editor'. When they sent the letter to us, they did not give any headline of it. We had to make a headline so that it could grab the attention of the reader. The headline should be 7-8 words, not more than that. For starting the letter, we wrote 'dear sir' and then start writing the letter. Moreover, we also had to mention the writer's name, address on the right side with an italic font. I also wrote a letter which has been published in the 'Letter to the Editor' sector.



Picture 10: 'Letter to the Editor' on 'Editorial' page

- **5.2: Op-ed**

Op-ed is an opinion editorial published in a newspaper, journal, or magazine where we can write one's opinion about an issue or respond to a news article. An op-ed is not an essay. It is something that slowly unrolls like a carpet, building momentum to some point or conclusion. It is the opposite. In an op-ed, we essentially state our conclusion first. We make our strongest point up front, then spend the rest of the op-ed making the case, or back-filling with the facts.<sup>7</sup> "Op-ed pieces are a great way to publicly express outrage, indignation, support, convictions, ideas and others emotions about current or pretending issues, activities, policies, plans or practices" (Goldman and Schmalz 302).

For writing an 'Op-ed', we had to follow some rules. For writing an op-ed, we had to focus tightly on one issue in the first paragraph briefly. Then, we expressed our opinion which was based on factual, researched, and first-hand information. It has to be timely, controversial but not offensive where we have a reason to raise the voice. It also has to be personal, humorous, and conversational which can help to make a point, as well as the topic, gives itself to humor. We had a clear editorial viewpoint for the op-ed that provided vision and understanding. Furthermore, near the end, we re-stated our position very clearly by using clear, powerful, and direct language.

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<sup>7</sup> Please see: <https://www.writing-world.com/freelance/oped.shtml>



like *Asia Times*, *BBC*, *CNN*, etc to make it authentic. For ‘Op-ed’ we also had to write the name and address of the writer in italic font.

I also wrote about a national issue for ‘Op-ed’ which is related to an international issue. Photo of my writing has been given here:

## Can Buriganga be our new Thames?



MD MAHEDI HASAN

**B**angladesh, known as a riverine country, is famous for its natural and macro scale rivers. Apart from its natural beauty, the inhabitants of Bangladesh use her rivers for transportation, communication, foreign exchange, etc. We, the Bangladeshi people are not only receiving advantages but also, we are grateful for the roles, these rivers played in the Liberation War. Padma, Meghna, Jamuna, Buriganga are some of the largest rivers of Bangladesh.

A few days ago, my visit to a place name “Kathpotti”, which is located adjacent to the Buriganga River. Even though I enjoyed my visit at its best, the atmosphere was not hygienic, polluted, and very crowded. Because of the global pandemic, I could not go far away from my home. That’s why I chose to go somewhere which was close to nature to enjoy the sunset. But what I saw was not up to my expectations rather beyond reality. It was perilous!

Earlier, I mentioned the place being unhygienic and overcrowded, it was underdeveloped too. It seemed that the area had not seen development before. I went there with expectations to see the delicate sunset but what I saw first was the kinds of stuff being taken from one spot to another by small engine boats. Since it takes a lot of time and money to cross the Buriganga by road, people use this transportation as a bypass road to save money and time. The materials of the raw market were also being transported along with that stuff and goods. Here, the retail and wholesale market can be found. The roads are very narrow and thin which makes

it almost impossible to take a bike. Launches, trawlers, small engine boats, transport boats are always available and everyday they carry a huge amount of people to cross the river. It seems impossible to protect the river.

The once famous Buriganga has now transformed into a shrunken, filthy, and polluted river. It has become like this because of the black smoke polluting the air and atmosphere which resulted in global warming and people dumping their wastes here and there.

Because of the waste and filth, the water has become really dirty which is responsible for the killing and extinction of various fishes. Similarly, the Thames river of London was once declared biologically dead by the “Natural History Museum”. After World War II, the Thames River was destroyed because the sewerage and draining system was ruined. As a result, all the domestic and industrial wastes came directly into the river just like Buriganga.

During the Victorian era, all the industries and factories were constructed on the banks of the Thames, which allowed them to discard all industrial wastes into the river. All these scraps contributed to turning the Thames into a stinky place. As a result, it hindered the reproduction process of the fishes and ended up killing some. Now, almost 60 years later, Thames is known as the ‘Jewel of London’. It is mostly famous for tourist spots, industries, and a beautiful view. After being declared biologically dead, the British Parliament took necessary steps to revive the river.

Different cleaning up process was taken by the British Parliament. Biodegradable detergents were used to keep chemicals away from the river. They used vessels to increase the level of oxygen in the water and more marine plants were planted for the cleansing of the river. As well as they started harvesting fishes in the river artificially. Meanwhile, Business Centres are located on the bank of Thames which needs transportation. Therefore, bridges have

been constructed to make the transportation and communication system easy likewise, Hatirjheel! Hatirjheel of Bangladesh has bridges that are indispensable for transportation. Earlier, Hatirjheel used to be a place covered with slums and the water was very dirty. Bangladesh Government took measures to reconstruct and develop the place. As a result of the necessary action, Hatirjheel has become a road instead of a place surrounded by slums.

To lessen the pollution of Buriganga, Bangladesh Government and citizens have to come forward together. Because of being overpopulated, industries, tanneries, factories are being constructed on the bank of Buriganga, just like the Thames. Therefore, the waste from the industries especially tanneries pollute the river. Again, domestic waste, waste of trawlers, launches, black smoke, etc. play a huge role in polluting the Buriganga. Dhaka WASA got a warning from the Supreme Court of Bangladesh for not closing the sewerage and drainage system. They got an order from the Supreme Court but they did not implement it. As a result, the condition of Buriganga got worse than ever.

Bangladesh Government should think about the condition of Buriganga since it’s high time already. Sewerage system, draining system, and industrial waste from tanneries must not grasp Buriganga. Awareness must also be spread among people so that they do not throw their waste here and there. Industries must be shifted somewhere else or steps should be taken so that industrial waste can be taken to other places. Instead of trawlers, launches a bridge must be constructed so that the waste from trawlers does not spoil the water. The citizens should also support the government to save Buriganga. If the Thames can be converted into ‘Jewel of London’ then why not Buriganga be the ‘Jewel of Bangladesh?’

*Md Mahedi Hasan is a student of Media and Cultural Studies, BRAC University*

Name & Address is written in Italic font

Picture 12: My ‘Op-ed’ writing

At first, I faced a lot of obstacles when I started writing ‘Editorials’ and ‘Op-eds’. But when I revised the rules of ‘Editorial’ and ‘Op-ed’ writing, I made it easier to write these. As I already mentioned all the news comes in the official mail of *The Daily Observer*. It is mandatory to reply to emails. Sometimes we have to re-write the news reports because we got some news reports which were written above 3000 words. After that, we edited the news and made it 1200 words. If it was not possible to make it short, we contacted the writer and took ideas via conversation, and then we had to write it in our own words. Apart from these, we also got some law issues. As the law section had been closed due to corona, we gave these issues to the ‘Editorial’ or ‘Op-ed’ sections sometimes.

## Chapter 06: Conclusion

“Journalists should be watchdogs, not lapdogs.” - Newton Lee<sup>8</sup>

‘Watchdogs journalists’ must be active in all-purpose whom they can provide all information about the current situations. They have to provide all information that may prevent the government from corruption. ‘Lapdogs’ is the opposite version of ‘Watchdogs’ where the journalists have to maintain politeness, formal and unprofessional relationships with politicians and government. Hats off to all the journalists who have been working unconditionally by forgetting about their own life and life risk. Because they bet their life in every second.

All types of media are playing important role in our daily basis life. Television, newspaper, radio all these media provide all the necessary information which we need to know in our present condition. Working as an intern in *The Daily Observer* makes me a realization the life of a journalist, in which country we live in, the situation of our country, and what happens around us, around the whole world. *The Daily Observer* is one of the oldest print media sources in Bangladesh that keep their reputation very strongly. We readers always love and are satisfied by reading their news because they prepare the news not only for the elite class people but also for the middle class who have a basic knowledge and understand English. They are the best for English newspapers but they are also well known for Bangla newspaper.

When I started my internship, I was under the supervision of Mr. Shariar Feroze. He was my supervisor and I have to work under his team. Not only I was under observation in my working

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<sup>8</sup> Taken from: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/789595-journalists-should-be-watchdogs-not-lapdogs>

place. We all the people who have been worked on the same rooftop have been observed by someone else. They are under control. Every action, everything is recorded by CCTV (Closed Circuit Television). This is such a plus point for the women for being safe. Not only for women, everyone was being in safe and recorded their all steps through it. Apart from this, I also under observation by my internship supervisor. My internship supervisor Seema miss always keeps in touch with me, knows about my progression in my workplace as well as gives proper guidance for started writing the report. I have to give an email when I completed writing a chapter and she gives feedback on it instantly. This whole observation process has been related to a theory called 'Panopticon' which I learned from *ENG 331: (Cultural Studies: Theory and Practices)*. It is an architectural work that is designed by English philosopher Jeremy Bentham. This panopticon is a disciplinary concept of jail-like structure to observe the general people. Michel Foucault showed his parameter that each organization needs a panopticon where we have to be in observation through someone. The book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* by Michel Foucault states that "The Panopticon is a radiant machine which, whatever utilization one may wish to put it to, produces homogeneous impacts of intensity" (202). This panopticon is such an instrument that gives the capacity to the watcher who looks at others.

To conclude the paper, I enjoyed a lot working on *The Daily Observer*. My team members were really satisfied with me. It was a great opportunity for me to work here because working in the newspaper sector gives me a chance to relate and apply my knowledge that I have learned from my major courses. I had learned some techniques from my colleagues and my supervisor which will be more audience-oriented. Moreover, it was a great platform for me to apply my theoretical knowledge to practical work. Apart from this, working on this organization, I also experienced much corporate decorum. However, I had no experience working in this sector but my academic

knowledge helped me to get into this. *The Daily Observer* helped me to meet new people, gather more experience, being punctual, and adjusting the workplace environment to maintain the work ethics. Working in this organization, it was a great experience for me where I have gained skill and knowledge which I can apply in future. Because, this experience I have learned writing techniques from here, which have increased my confidence level to face my upcoming professional life.

- **6.1: Recommendation**

“Newspapers are influenced by their environment, including ownership, funding, need for circulation, advertisement revenue and the readers' preference for reading like-minded news” (Wolbring, Abdullah, 275). Social media creates the greatest platform for news consumption. It has the biggest impact on newspapers also. Before, we always used to read the newspaper to start our morning for knowing what happened around the world. Now, the scenario has been changed. People started using social media where they can get faster news from Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, Twitter, Radio, Television, etc. Though, *The Daily Observer* has an official Facebook page and online website where they can update news online. When I started my internship, I observed that their social sites not too much active like their printed version of the newspaper. If they improve these sites then it will be very helpful for the readers who are working on a computer or laptop or social media all the time. I would like to suggest them to give equal importance for both printed and online version of the newspaper.

For academic purposes, it was very important to offer media courses twice a year. Because we have learned some news writing techniques and terms which are closely related to practical work. I took these courses a long time before my internship. When I started an

internship, I already forgot these terms and techniques. So, it is a humble request to my department to offer media courses at least twice a year. Also, it is very helpful to give a scope to apply the theories in practice when the courses will be done.

To conclude my internship report, I must appreciate that the guidance and help that I have been got from The Daily Observer team. Their constant support made it a satisfying and pleasing experience for me.

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## Appendix

01

# Bangladesh at 50: Setting a landmark



HABIBUR RAHMAN

**B**angladesh approaches bit by bit towards 50 years landmark of its birth. Since the glorious victory on 26 March in 1971 our country has rounded a journey of 49 years. This long period was not smooth at all to sail for Bangladesh. Bangladesh had to overcome numerous barriers and misfortunes for achieving financial stability and strength. Prolonged political turmoil hindered the country severely on its way to become self-reliant. But no barrier could be able to impede our forward rally towards development.

As a newborn country, Bangladesh had inherited a myriad of poverty created out by the perpetuated misrules by the foreign rulers. It was a gigantic task for the nation to fulfil the basic needs of its huge population with limited resource immediate after its independence as most of its infrastructures had been ruined during the liberation war. That spirit gave us vigour for making impossible possible.

Since the ancient time, Bangladesh has been an agriculture-based country. Its highly fertile land is always filled with abundant crops. Why famine and food scarcity hounded the inhabitants of this gifted land often in the past? Answer of this question will be found in the history of prolonged colonial rule, exploitation and plunder of its resources by the foreign

invaders. As a result of organized misrule by the British and Pakistani rulers, people of the country became poor and marginal.

In the very first decade of the independence different NGOs started their missions to eradicate poverty alongside government initiatives. Microfinance programme was invented through the intensive endeavours of the NGOs for the welfare of the poor and underprivileged segment of the society. Within a brief period, benefits of microfinance reached out to a vast number of people around the country. As a result, rural people specially, women got new hope and ways to lead better life by getting themselves involved in various economic activities. Microfinance proved its efficacy in reducing poverty. Realizing the fact many organizations came forward with eagerness to implement microfinance program which led microfinance as huge sector serving millions of clients.

It would not be exaggerated to say that microfinance emerged as a catalyst in transforming the life of the people who were living in dire poverty. Currently, NGOs altogether disburse small loans over lac crores of taka every year among over three crore clients. Clients of NGOs commonly invest borrowed money in agriculture, rearing of cattle and various birds, small business, small enterprises and so on. It assist decisively in creating self-employment for the clients and jobs opportunity for others.

Fame of microfinance was not enshrined within its birthplace only. It drew massive attention across the world and created new hope in the realm of international development. Many developing and underdeveloped countries adopted microfinance program following the inspiring experience of Bangladesh to contain poverty. Now microfinance is

being implemented in an array of countries of the world that has created opportunities for millions of availing benefits of financial inclusion. Bangladesh's image has also brightened as a pioneer of microfinance program--which is regarded as important weapon for poverty alleviation.

What is the most admirable achievement of Bangladesh of its five decades of independence? No doubt, the answer is success of poverty alleviation. Immediate after the independence about 80 per cent people of the country lived in poverty which has been reduced to nearly 20 per cent now. Furthermore, rate of literacy has been increased to 75 per cent from 20 per cent, sanitation facilities improved drastically, and mortality rate of child and mother reduced significantly. In respect of life expectancy and GDP growth we have surpassed our neighbouring countries. Bangladesh has also reduced population growth.

Empowering women is another vivid mark of our development. There was a time, when women of our country were mostly confined in the domestic works and rearing children. Women's education and participation in formal job were insignificant. But that scene has changed over the years. The participation of women in formal education and jobs of our country is encouraging now. From primary level to higher education women are competing to go ahead equally with their male counterpart.

Constant strive of the NGO community to bring women in the mainstream economic arena resulted in women's huge participation in formal and informal jobs currently. About 90 per cent women clients of microfinance are being benefited immensely. As a result of women's participation in socio-economic activities, poverty alleviation process got new

dimension. In addition, nearly four million women got jobs in garments industries which is playing pivotal role for the economic development of Bangladesh.

Over the period NGO like ASA has been involved in a range of activities of economic advancement and social wellbeing for its target groups who were mostly poor, while 95 per cent of them are women. These women are now much self-conscious and empowered, making significant contribution towards development of their respective families and country too. Moreover, importance of women in family and society has also increased manifold. Contribution of womenfolk for the overall development of Bangladesh in the last few decades is noteworthy.

Bangladesh has set an example for the rest of the world regarding quick socio-economic progress. Yet, some critics like to term Bangladesh progress as paradoxical. Indeed, it was a very difficult task for us to gain significant development by overcoming numerous obstacles. But the hardworking people of this country have made it happen putting all barriers and criticisms aside by dint of their commitment and patriotism.

As our country is on the eve of touching 50th anniversary of its liberation, still there are many barriers to overcome. Within next few years Bangladesh will be appeared as a middle-income nation and meanwhile it has fulfilled all conditions for that. Besides, there is a clear indication for Bangladesh that it would emerge as the 25th largest economies of the world by 2040. We deeply believe that no hurdle can thwart our country's aim to be a developed nation.

*The writer is Joint Deputy Director, ASA, Bangladesh*

# Why we chose Oxford vaccine over others?



ZUBAIR KHALED  
HUQ

To understand how COVID-19 vaccines work, it helps to first look at how our bodies fight illness. When germs, such as the virus that causes COVID-19, invade our bodies, they attack and multiply. This invasion, called an infection, is what causes illness. Our immune system uses several tools to fight infection. Blood contains red cells, which carry oxygen to tissues and organs, and white or immune cells, which fight infection. Different types of white blood cells fight infection in different ways.

Macrophages are white blood cells that swallow up and digest germs and dead or dying cells. The macrophages leave behind parts of the invading germs called antigens. The body identifies antigens as dangerous and stimulates antibodies to attack them. B-lymphocytes are defensive white blood cells. They produce antibodies that attack the pieces of the virus left behind by the macrophages. T-lymphocytes are another type of defensive white blood cell. They attack cells in the body that have already been infected.

The first time a person is infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, it can take several days or weeks for their body to make and use all the germ-fighting tools needed to get over the infection. After the infection, the person's immune system remembers what it learned about how to protect the body against that disease. The body keeps a few T-lymphocytes, called memory cells that go into action quickly if the body encounters the same virus again. When the familiar antigens are detected, B-lymphocytes produce antibodies to attack them. Experts are still learning how long these memory cells protect a person against the virus that causes COVID-19.

There are more vaccine candidates simultaneously in the pipeline for COVID-19 than ever before for an infectious disease. All of them are trying to achieve the same thing: immunity to the virus, and some might also be able to stop transmission. They do so by stimulating an immune response to an anti-

gen, a molecule found on the virus. In the case of COVID-19, the antigen is typically the characteristic spike protein found on the surface of the virus, which it normally uses to help it invade human cells. There are four categories of vaccines in clinical trials: whole virus, protein subunit, viral vector and nucleic acid (RNA and DNA). Some of them try to smuggle the antigen into the body, others use the body's own cells to make the viral antigen.

Many conventional vaccines use whole viruses to trigger an immune response. There are two main approaches. Live attenuated vaccines use a weakened form of the virus that can still replicate without causing illness. Inactivated vaccines use viruses whose genetic material has been destroyed so they cannot repli-

ties, the immune reaction should be strong. A downside, however, is that so far, no DNA or RNA vaccines have been licensed for human use, which may cause more hurdles with regulatory approval.

Also, RNA vaccines need to be kept at ultra-cold temperatures, -70C or lower, which could prove challenging for countries that don't have specialised cold storage equipment, particularly low-and middle-income countries. Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccine, nucleic acid vaccine, contains a segment of the SARS-COV-2 virus genetic material that codes for a specific protein. The genetic material can be DNA or RNA. Our cells use the genetic material to make the SARS-COV-2 protein, which is recognised by the immune system to

vaccine uses an unrelated harmless virus that has been modified to act as a delivery system to carry genetic material that codes for specific SARS COV -2 protein. The delivery virus is known as the viral vector. Our cells use the genetic material to make the SARS-Cov-2 protein which is recognised by the immune system to trigger a response.

The University of Oxford/AstraZeneca the vaccine uses this technology to protect against COVID-19. This type of vaccine uses an unrelated harmless virus (the viral vector) to deliver SARS-CoV-2 genetic material. When administered, our cells use the genetic material to produce a specific viral protein, which is recognised by our immune system and triggers a response. This response builds immune memory, so your body can fight off the virus in future. Protein subunit vaccines include harmless pieces (proteins) of the virus that cause COVID-19 instead of the entire germ.

Once vaccinated our immune system recognizes that the proteins don't belong in the body and begins making T-lymphocytes and antibodies. If we are ever infected in the future, memory cells will recognize and fight the virus. The coronavirus vaccine developed by the University of Oxford is highly effective at stopping people developing Covid-19 symptoms, a large trial shows. Interim data suggests 70% protection, but the researchers say the figure may be as high as 90% by tweaking the dose.

Pfizer and Moderna vaccines showed 95% protection. However, the Oxford jab is far cheaper and is easier to store and get to every corner of the world than the other two. So the vaccine will play a significant role in tackling the pandemic. It uses a completely different approach to the vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna, which inject part of the virus's genetic code into patients. The Oxford vaccine is a genetically modified common cold virus that used to infect chimpanzees.

It has been altered to stop it causing an infection in people and to carry the blueprints for part of the coronavirus, known as the spike protein. Once these blueprints are inside the body they start producing the coronavirus' spike protein, which the immune system recognizes as a threat and tries to squash it. Lastly, the cold chain system and low cost, will be better serve our purpose in case of Oxford vaccine, give a thin edge over others.



cate, but can still trigger an immune response. Both types use well-established technology and pathways for regulatory approval, but live attenuated ones may risk causing disease in people with weak immune systems and often require careful cold storage, making their use more challenging in low-resource countries. Inactivated virus vaccines can be given to people with compromised immune systems but might also need cold storage.

Nucleic acid vaccines use genetic material either RNA or DNA to provide cells with the instructions to make the antigen. In the case of COVID-19, this is usually the viral spike protein. Once this genetic material gets into human cells, it uses our cells' protein factories to make the antigen that will trigger an immune response. The advantages of such vaccines are that they are easy to make and cheap. Since the antigen is produced inside our own cells and in large quanti-

ties, the immune reaction should be strong.

Viral vector vaccines also work by giving cells genetic instructions to produce antigens. But they differ from nucleic acid vaccines in that they use a harmless virus, different from the one the vaccine is targeting, to deliver these instructions into the cell. One type of virus that has often been used as a vector is adenovirus, which causes the common cold. As with nucleic acid vaccines, our own cellular machinery is hijacked to produce the antigen from those instructions, to trigger an immune response. Viral vector vaccines can mimic natural viral infection and should therefore trigger a strong immune response.

However, since there is a chance that many people may have already been exposed to the viruses being used as vectors, some may be immune to it, making the vaccine less effective. Viral vector

Dr Zubair Khaled Huq is Family Medicine, Gerontology, Public Health Specialist

# Enough process, what we need is peace

FAISAL J ABBAS

**T**he best analysis of why the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is so dysfunctional is that it has always been plagued by too much process, not enough peace. If anything is to be learned from the UAE and Bahrain's normalization of ties with Israel, it is that peace can happen quickly and the process can come later. Of course, one cannot compare more than 70 years of occupation and the legitimate calls to end it, as is the case with the Palestinians, with almost no hostilities whatsoever between Israel and Gulf states.

Yes, there are divisions between Fatah and Hamas. Yes, there is corruption in the Palestinian Authority. Nevertheless, as US President Donald Trump's adviser Jared Kushner has pointed out, the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity. When will they learn that every time they turn away from the negotiating table, the pie only gets smaller? Compare what was offered to them in 1999 and what is being offered now - and to this day, every time they are offered less, the Palestinian leadership seems to want more. The loss of historical Palestine is indeed a hard one to bear, but the Palestinians - indeed all of us - must put emotions to one side and embrace the reality.

But the fault is not all on one side. By

expanding illegal settlements and continually adding insult to injury, Israel makes it impossible to reach a viable deal. As the UAE demonstrated when it asked for freeze on annexation of swaths of the West Bank, Israel needs to learn that there are rewards - and worthy ones - for acting responsibly, in a way that encourages a peace deal rather than undermines it.

So, will Saudi Arabia follow the UAE and Bahrain? If I had a few dollars for every time I've been asked that question, I would be a wealthy man. The truth is Saudi Arabia is a sovereign state and it doesn't really beat about the bush when it comes to its positions - so should there be a change in policy, everyone should rest assured that Riyadh will make it public.

So far, it has made its position clear: It remains committed to the Arab Peace Initiative, which Saudi Arabia itself pioneered in 2002, stipulating a Palestine state with its capital in East Jerusalem in exchange for normalization of ties with the Kingdom (home to Islam's two holy shrines) and all other Arab states. Despite this position being affirmed time and time again, many Western pundits over-analyze it: they are split between those who think Saudi Arabia would never recognize or normalize ties with Israel, and those who seem to believe Riyadh is secretly rushing to do so.

Much of this confusion, of course, is deliberately sown on the other side of the Arabian Gulf. Many people might be led to think that Saudi Arabia and Iran share the same views about Israel. That is neither true nor fair. Iran and its proxies are on record as wanting to throw Jews into the sea and wipe Israel off the map. They use this rhetoric to justify their destabilizing behavior in the region and their deployment of armed militias - which, far from "liberating" Jerusalem, instead occupy four Arab capitals.

On the other hand, Saudi Arabia's official position has always been reasonable, and never anti-Semitic. Simply, Riyadh has always opposed the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories as defined by the UN and international law. For decades, it has advocated peace and gone out of its way to end Palestinian divisions. Of course, nobody denies that there were elements in Saudi society who were disgracefully anti-Semitic. But in the past four years there has been serious reform of school curriculums, new hate-speech laws, and unprecedented steps toward dialogue with and openness to other faiths - a virtual revolution largely unreported by Western media.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman himself has met leaders from other religions, including Judaism, both

inside and outside the Kingdom. The Muslim World League, led by Sheikh Mohammad Al-Issa (also a Saudi) has gone far in unequivocally criticizing Holocaust deniers and encouraging a more open, more tolerant interpretation of Islam.

As for the Manama rapprochement, one of the funniest things I read was an "analysis" suggesting that Bahrain, as a tiny Gulf state, would never have been able to normalize ties with Israel without a green light from Saudi Arabia. Not only is this derogatory to Bahrain, an independent kingdom, it is also loaded - like asking: "Have you stopped beating your wife?" The implication is either that Riyadh dictates policy to Manama, or that Saudi Arabia will have an issue with Bahrain over its decision; neither of which is correct.

In the end, even if the Palestinian issue is resolved and the whole region normalizes ties with Israel, many misconceptions need to be corrected, and hate must be extracted from the equation. That won't be easy, but it starts by admitting mistakes. I hope that the agreement with Bahrain and UAE helps end hateful rhetoric against Arabs in Israeli media and books, and of course vice versa.

Faisal J Abbas is  
Editor-in-Chief of Arab News  
Source: [www.arabnews.com](http://www.arabnews.com)

## Suicides, with and without fame



SHAHRIAR FEROZE

types of celebrities those who commit suicide.

Under the first category, a celebrity commits suicide despite wider fame and acknowledgement. Under the second category, the supposed-to-be celebrity commits suicide because of failing to earn fame and acknowledgement. The red line, dividing the two types of suicide often fascinates this writer. Let me retrace the boundary purely within the broader world of acting.

In the past decade, I have personally come across dozens of failed domestic TV stars and big screen actors. Almost all of them voiced their torment agencies about industry manipulation, nepotism, director or producer played manipulation, and of course bad luck. Not even a one that I can name admitted to their proleptic and qualitative limitations.

I was a college student, when the locally famed Sonoo Shroff Shobh reportedly took his life in 1996. The reaction to those early days of mobile phones and internet was simply unbelievable. A couple of his fans reportedly committed suicide failing to tackle emotions, just barely three years

softer in 1993, death of the Bollywood diva, Divya Bharti, under mysterious circumstances, had sent shockwaves to the media industry. Even though at school, it felt like someone in Mumbai or Sholapur, the local heartbeats of that time, had committed suicide.

The truth is short, instead of becoming happiness and freedom for many - being rich and famous at the top of their game - leads to an identity crisis and ramifications on their self-worth. And it is on this point where there is a critical test on your strength of character.

The glitter world of showbiz has always been deceptive at large. The ones, who embark upon the status of celebrity, must also risk the psychological challenges linked to it.

It was a cold December evening last year, I was working at office. Suddenly one of my editorial assistants cried aloud, Rajul Puri had just died. I had absolutely no knowledge of the dead Indian actor. The 42 year old actor reportedly hanged himself. The far-fetched ripple-effect of that suicide had led a local theatre actor here to quit his job for good.

Whatever the reasons lay behind the unexpected suicides of national and international celebrities, one fact is for sure - when you are in the game of chasing fame and recognition - you have intentionally kept yourself under extreme mental pressure. If you don't know how to handle it, the representation is often deadly. Fame, recognition and accolades in the showbiz clearly establishes an actor, but a human's wider personal desire for longing to live mindfully - goes far beyond.

The essential question in this regard, what is the most important in the list of priorities for an actor in the long run? If professional success or failure turns out to be the ultimate benchmark for your living in this world - you are living a dangerously fast life by supposing all in life, since your shelf life and market value in the industry are markedly limited and uncertain.

I still remember the day when

my mother was in town when the famed Bollywood diva Parveen Babi passed away, sometime in the January of 2003. We were listening over the tragic event while having Chirano at an upmarket Delhi hotel. The actor died a lonely and painful death triggered by mental trauma and illness for years. I guess it takes painstaking balancing, between the two lives for an actor. An occupational hazard among the other screen idols is that, both success and failure can garage you to go for the worst.

However, those who dream to shine in today's complex and competitive times, wherever that may be, must realise the fact, success in the other screen comes at an unimaginable higher cost. Caught between reality and illusion, most actors today find it difficult to separate their two lives by drawing a clear boundary. These undesirable deaths are not only confusing, in many ways they become primary and secondary causes of more deaths to follow. For sensitive followers and fans, unnatural deaths of their idols cast a dark shadow questioning the meaning of life and living.

Bollywood's famed Deepika Padukone has shared a firsthand account of combating mental illness and depression at almost the peak of her career. She fortunately sought the right counselling at the right time, but not all are as lucky and intelligent as her. Lack of psychological counselling within the filmworld is one reason. The industry in recent times has turned so egoistic while spilling over with narcissism - it does not occur to anyone to sense that a colleague may be in danger committing suicide.

At the end of the day, if it is your film career drawing you near death, quit it. Before you tighten the noose or pull the trigger, remember you are encouraging every man to follow your path. Celebrity or not, you are a human first. You cannot run away from acting. Value your life. Learn to live with it.

The writer is an actor.



## Dog and dogmatism



CHINMAY PRASAD BISHNOI

**T**he dog is a very faithful and unquestionably loyal domestic animal. It is said that no other animal is more loyal to its master than the dog. To trace criminals and drug there is dog squad in police department in many countries because the dog has the keenest sense of smell. Whatever be the performance, office of the government entrusted with the duty of preventing corruption is sometimes called watchdog.

The dog has its place in literature also. Shantachandra had a pet dog named Veli. In his short story *Aothi* (The Guest) a street dog has been very passionately portrayed. Behavioural difference between human beings and dogs has been described in a poem *Superior and Inferior* (Human and Adham, originally written by Sheikh Saadi, translated by Satyendra Nath Datta). A dog bit the leg of a pedestrian which caused severe pain. His daughter rebuked him that he had also teeth, he could bite the dog. He replied that a dog can bite a man but is it fair for a man to bite a dog? The dog is also a hunter animal and guard of house.

Some dogs are wild and ferocious also. A terrible looking dog is the central character of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskinshillous*. Irrespective of rich and poor petting dogs at home is a luxury and also hobby in many countries. In many western houses pet is the only companion of an aged person. In many places of the world there are restaurants for dogs of rich people. Inversely, dog bite is the root cause of hydrophobia. Apart from all these a recent decision of North Korean president Kim Jong Un has placed dogs at the

centre of discussion in world media.

Like people of many other countries of the world, North Koreans were also fond of dogs. Rich people of the country kept dogs as a symbol of nobility and strolled on the streets with their dogs. Dog breeding was once a tradition on state television. In 2016, President Kim Jong Un presented a pair of skilled hunting dogs to South Korean President Moon Jae-in intending to convert everlasting enmity into permis-



nent friendship between the two rival countries. But Kim's North Korea is now passing tough time. The country's current economy is at the lowest level during two decades and food crisis is severe. During such crisis North Koreans are being victims of a dictatorial decision of their president but finding no other alternative they have to accept it.

More than 25.5 million people live in North Korea. Recently The United Nations has reported that 80% people there are in serious need of food. China is an intimate supporter of North Korea. Pyongyang imports most of its food from China but due to corona pandemic North Korea has closed its border with China which has aggravated the situation. Moreover, North Korea suffered from several natural disasters last year. Recently this country has been hit by flood again which has damaged crops of about 1 million acres of land. 16,000 houses have been destroyed. Amid such circum-

stances President Kim has declared in a Politburo conference that he would not seek help from outside. He has decided to stand beside the victims with relief from his own funds amounting from providing assistance from the country's reserve fund.

Though under serious food crisis President Kim is not at all interested to curb military budgets. As per his version, common people meet their demand of food by rearing animals like cows, sheep, goats and pigs but in cities

Afterwards some dogs are being sent to the zoo but many others are being sold at restaurants for selling as meat. Incidentally, dog meat is eaten in China and Korea for restoratives believing that it helps to cope with heat.

Dog meat has long been considered delicious among Koreans but that tradition is gradually decreasing. Even then, local farms raise around 1 million dogs every year to meet food-lovers' need. Many restaurants in North Korea serve only dog meat. People still keep dog meat at the top of their favourite menu. It is also known that traditionally North Koreans eat dog meat in summer and winter to increase physical and mental strength but as a consequence of presidential order both pet and street dogs are under trouble.

Different news agencies inform that owners of pet dogs are very much annoyed but nobody has the courage or way to protest openly. Interesting to remember that to meet serious food crisis in last century communist Chinese government declared different wild and domestic animals as livestock. Since then practice of eating meat of animals like bats and pangolins began in China. It is thought that diseases like SARS and Covid-19 originated from such unusual habit. At the beginning of this year China prohibited trade of dog and cat meat under worldwide pressure from animal protection groups. In spite of that dog meat festival was arranged in Yulin city (Shaansi province) of China causing death of thousands of dogs.

In this connection a poem Ekki Manger Kabini (Take of a Cock) by Sukanta Bhattacharya may be remembered. A hungry cock dreamt of huge food inside the palace of a rich man and always tried to enter into the palace but every time it was prevented. At last, one day he actually got place on the dining table of that rich man through rat.

As food, North Korea is now facing the severe presidential dogmatism.

The Editor  
Commissioner of Taxes

North Koreans are now horrified at their president's horrid decision but authorities have already identified houses with pet dogs. Pet dogs are being snatched away from their owners. Ownership of the dogs is being confiscated and those are being taken under official control.

# US Election: Impact of Barrett's nomination



MUHAMMAD  
SHARIF ALTAF

As the day of the US presidential election is drawing closer, the possible outcome is being calculated. Joe Biden is clearly ahead of Trump in all opinion polls. According to the latest ABC News and Washington Post polls, Trump is 12 per cent behind. As predicted by the British magazine *The Economist*, Joe Biden has a 91 per cent chance of winning the November 3 election at the Electoral College. But Trump has refused to promise to hand over power peacefully if he loses the election.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, a large number of voters are voting in advance this time by post. Trump has therefore vehemently opposed to the post-vote. He has been saying for weeks that the election is going to see voting fraud. The theft will be by post-vote. Democrats have been calling for a vote by post in the name of Corona, the only reason is it will be easy then for voting fraud. One will vote for another, ballot papers will be stolen, and so on.

But most surveys show that there is no evidence of fraud by postal voting. Some observers have suggested that

the Democrats would benefit more from the postal voting system. Various black voter groups (especially African-Americans) and young voters are less interested in going to the polls. Many more voters may be reluctant to go to the polls because of the Corona epidemic. They will vote if they have the opportunity to vote by post. As a result, there is a possibility of more votes against Trump in the election. That's the reason for Trump's objection to the postal vote.

A recent scenario has made it possible for Trump to refuse to agree to a peaceful transfer of power. We know Supreme Court Justice Ginsberg died on September 17 in Washington DC. To fill the vacant seat of the Supreme Court on her death, Trump has nominated conservative Federal Court of Appeals justice Amy Connie Barrett, 48 years old Barrett is a popular figure among religious conservatives. Republican-majority Senate has begun the process of appointing Trump nominee Barrett in a storm. If the appointment is confirmed, Barrett will be the third judge nominated by President Trump in the Supreme Court, increasing the gap between the majorities of conservative judges in the US Supreme Court to 5-3.

In that case, Trump can be benefited in this election through this appointment. This will allow Republicans to attract mainstream conservative voters who, while were disappointed by Trump's reckless speech but have maintained their commitment to conservative positions and values. Again, since Biden is 65 to 34 per cent ahead of Trump in terms of female voters, the

Trump campaign can hope improving its position by this female justice nomination.

On the contrary, Democrats are hoping the nomination will influence many voters towards Democrats because those who think about the importance of key issues that are likely to come before the court and those who don't accept the hasty nomination process have defined it as an impediment to democracy and highlighted the presence of the GOR. Because Republicans could take advantage of important Supreme Court decisions of some key issues for decades to come.

A case is set to be heard in the Supreme Court on November 18 to overturn the Affordable Care Act or Obama Care. Democrats say the outcome of the case will be affected if Amy Barrett's nomination as a conservative judge is finalized. Besides the Supreme Court's interpretation may change drastically in the coming days for different issues like civil rights issues including abortion rights, immigration, firearms rights, homosexuality, same-sex marriage.

If we look at the election event, we can see Trump is already embroiled in controversy over the election. Since Trump has been spreading false propaganda that the postal vote will be 'fraudulent', he could have resorted to court on fraud charges if Joe Biden wins at the end of the count. A conservative group called the 'Honest Elections Project' has run to a multi-million dollar campaign against the postal vote. Besides, if the gap between the two candidates in the election

results is too small, as in the case of George W Bush vs Al Gore in 2000, the matter will go to court. The Supreme Court now has a majority of conservatives. As a result, if they make Trump win, it will come as no surprise.

Therefore, if Barrett is appointed a Supreme Court judge before the election, it will not only be a matter of ideological conservatism, but also a matter of controversy over the outcome of the election. A Democrat senator has wanted to get this promise from Barrett so that she does not take part in any verdict regarding the election results, even if she is appointed as a judge. Barrett, however, made no such assurance. That's why Barrett's nomination is highly likely to have an impact on the outcome of the election.

But if there is a big gap in the election results and Biden is ahead in not just a majority vote but an Electoral College majority vote, Republicans are expected to lose control of the Senate too. Then both the Senate and the House of Representatives will be occupied by Democrats. As a result, Trump's allegations of vote rigging and incited violence will not be enough to give him additional benefits. But Trump would seek recourse to the Supreme Court to change any election results because of his privilege of majority of conservative judges in the US Supreme Court. So, it is uncertain right now, what is going to happen dramatically in the election. We would rather wait and see what happens.

*The writer is a student, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka*

# Is there any Method to Mr Macron's madness?



SHAHBAR FEROZE

**T**he French President Emmanuel Macron has wrongly placed France under the spotlight spreading Islamophobia. He has manifestly cut off France from the rest of the Islamic world. A number of Muslim majority countries continue to boycott French products in their countries. In an unprecedented cyber war, more than 19,000 French public and private websites have been hacked. Our hackers have also brazenly admitted their role in the cyber onslaught.

Major Muslim capital cities have been rocked by protests and processions. And all of these disruptions have erupted just because of Mr. Macron's attempt to justify the cartoons, slandering our holy prophet.

Going by the actual meaning of the idiom "There is a method in your madness" essentially means, a purpose in doing something that is seemingly crazy, but there's a reason for someone's strange behaviour too.

However, there is no method to Mr. Macron's fresh spate of heated spat on Islam. First, under the banner of 'reforming Islam' the French president said that the religion was going through a 'crisis'. Second, he has talked on a 'compatible form of Islam' which fits to French secularist



and liberal values. And third, he has repeatedly voiced his commitment to protect freedom of expression in France.

The point here, the controversial Charlie Hebdo cartoons have done more than just express freedom of expression - they have insulted the very sensitive core religious sentiment of millions of Muslims in France and worldwide.

**Freedom of speech is not freedom to slander**

I wonder how a devoted Hindu will react to similar offensive caricatures drawn out by some foreign satirical weekly magazine on their gods, goddesses or deities. And I wonder how a practicing Christian, irrespective of falling under any Christian school-of-thought, would respond to a distorted and smearing cartoon of Jesus Christ?

The satirical cartoons targeting our prophet is not an act of practicing free speech in any manner, it's a blatant attempt to foment religious riots and geopolitical conflicts to weaken the Muslim minority in central Europe. It is a sinister effort to mock and vilify Islam as a violent religion.

Mr. Macron's desperate bid to get re-elected by spreading Islamophobia is madness minus a method. His government's anti-Turkish stance in the eastern Mediterranean waters, dubious military presence in Syria and now over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is all a reflection of his anti-Islamism.

Western Democracies have long grappled with the issue of the limits of free speech, if any, to place on the expression of ideas and beliefs. The dilemma dates back as far as to ancient Greece, when the Athenians,

who had cherished individual freedom, nevertheless prosecuted Socrates for his teachings while claiming that he had corrupted young people and insulted the gods.

Charlie Hebdo's latest cartoon on the Turkish president Erdogan against the backdrop of Macron-Islam crisis is likely to trigger a wide-ranging economic and geopolitical repercussions for France. Once again this explicit pornographic cartoon too, has made a mention of our prophet. However, our prophet is long gone, but the cartoon targeting President Erdogan will only empower the Turkish president through collective condemnations of Mr. Macron across the Arab and Islamic world. It is not the Turkish president who is his enemy, but it is the Turkish President's religious identity and leadership.

No method to his madness.

A religion card of extremist diversionary tactic

Has France decided to act as the front-line state for other Western Powers to denounce Islam from its soil or has Mr. Macron waged a religious proxy war for the Western world.

No matter what, Emmanuel Macron, by now is feeling the pinch of boycotting of French goods and cyber attacks from Muslim countries. Beheading of the French teacher Samuel Paty has misled him even more. He has made the worst out of the killing. And following his lowest approval ratings this week, his weaponisation of anti-Muslim bigotry continues to backfire.

On the flipside, Mr. Macron has also revealed the true colours of free speech in today's France. His diversionary tactic to stigmatise the French Muslim minority - in order to prove that France is at the risk of losing its identity and future to alleged Islamist forces - prove the existing and growing strength of French Muslims.

No method to his madness.

**A message for Charlie Hebdo**

I have an important message for Charlie Hebdo cartoonists. For whenever you are drawing these exploding cartoons, and whatever your hidden agenda may be, please know that the most mentioned prophet in the Quran is not our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It is Prophet Moses. It is also time to renew and reintroduce your satirical and hateful slandering attacks on that prophet too.

Just dare to draw and see what

happens.

As far as cartoons and satirical expressions are concerned, my point is simple: They must not target specific religious and nationalistic sentiments. Freedom of expression does not mean to indiscriminately vilify, slander and foment violence through whatever form of cartoon you desire, and the satirical cartoons targeting our holy prophet is just another textbook example of abusing that freedom.

**Which therapy suits best for Mr. Macron**

The best form of therapy, if not mental, for the French President right now is the accurate understanding of Prophet Muhammad's place inside the heart of a practicing Muslim. Also there is no magic formula to reform Islam in France, or anywhere in the world for that matter. It is never possible to amend or alter a religious belief compatible to another country's notorious notion of free speech. And his commitment to protect freedom of speech in France, supporting the cartoons is no more than a wasted personal and political agenda.

He is in need of multiple therapies - mental, spiritual, political, and oh yes a therapy to rejuvenate his love life. Charlie Hebdo cartoonists can play an important role to stimulate their president's senses with explicit cartoons.

Madness without a method is actually the mental state of extreme anxiety. I have no clue which therapist would make the first move to cure the politically frustrated Macron.

The writer is assisted by  
The Daily



# Suicide and necessity of counselling centre



**MD SHAFIQUUL ISLAM**

**R**ecently, a student of Dhaka University named Iqram Hossain committed suicide by hanging himself with a fan in his village home. Before committing suicide, he posted a status on social media Facebook titled 'Al-Fateh'. I found out in the media that he was suffering from depression due to love affair for a long time. This is the reason for his suicide. The girl's father did not like him and the beloved did not want to continue a relationship with him. For this reason, he was depressed, that we lost a brilliant student. This loss cannot be compensated in any way.

Another example of similar case is Sapriya Das, a fourth batch student of Mathematics Department of Barisal University, who committed suicide a few days ago. I also came to know through the media while studying in college, she developed relation with Tapu, a student of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET). Tapu committed suicide a few days ago. Sapriya was socially isolated for Tapu's suicide. Her close friends think that Sapriya has chosen the path of suicide due to social reason and emotional stress. She committed suicide at her home in husband on the evening of Eid day.

Such incidents are happening in almost all over the country, which is increasing

day by day. At Jhilla Kabi Kant Nazim Islam University (JKNU), a student committed suicide due to love affair in 2018. These incidents are very sad. She was a brilliant student in her batch.

However, only in Dhaka University, 25 or more students have committed suicide in the last 15 years. There are various explanations and opinions about the cause of suicide of these meritorious students of the nation. I don't even know if the university authorities have taken any initiative to prevent such incident. However, many researchers feel that they have taken the path of suicide because of depression, anxiety about great results, conflicts with friends, dissatisfaction with parents, frustration with education and personal life, tensions in relationships and job insecurity etc.

They university has a separate department for mental health care for students who are under stress due to various reasons. There is only one permanent adviser in this department called 'Student adviser and Counselling Department'. However, many universities do not have any psychologists. But according to the number of students of the university, there should be at least one psychologist in each department. It is clear that one student adviser is not enough for all students in a university.

Again, the initiative of the university authorities to find out the reason behind suicide has not been noticed. I don't know whether the advisory office has any information in this regard. Again many students have no idea about the counselling department and what this department can do for them. However, the university authorities do not take enough initiative to raise awareness among the students. We think that the posi-

tion of permanent consultant in the advisory department of every university should be increased.

However, many students are reluctant to go to teachers with their personal problems. Some students occasionally come to teachers with testimonials, relationship breakdowns and complications, stress, and depression. Teachers also have a responsibility to provide inspirational guidance to students about the value and quality of life in the classroom and in other fields, which helps to reduce their frustration. The main ways of suicide prevention are individual and group-based psychological counselling, research on crisis and problem solving, prevention programs and practices, campus safety review, and faculty or departmental awareness. It is imperative to give support for students in special financial crises.

It is very essential to establish a Psychological counselling centre for this purpose. It is important to introduce services with its standard practice and skilled psychologists. In the early 1980s, a Good university raised awareness of the need for psychological counselling for students as a way to prevent aggression, teach students to deal personal. The first student counselling centre was established in 1981 by Professor Anwarul Kabir at the University of Aden. Later many universities established it in different countries. Psychological counselling centres should be set up in all the universities with experienced people or staff for counselling of the students.

These centres can generally operate their activities in two ways: individualized and group-based emotional support and special needs of students. The centre can play a

role in diagnosing mental illness, risk assessment and early mental health problems. So that a student can be controlled before he/she is in serious danger.

The centre can involve leaders in a large number of students on academic problems and various mental health problems in university life and disseminate them among the students. It helps in raising awareness among the students and teaching them about the strategies to deal with a variety of problems. The teachers of the department should also pay attention to the activities of student wings. Educational achievement is an important phenomenon, where cognitive activity is associated with mental illness. In addition, a major feature of educational failure is mental illness.

I think a comprehensive policy should be formulated with the advice of analysts, academics and intellectuals to solve this problem. In the light of which all the university centres will be run. The current evidence of accidents is demanding to find way to solve the problems. Otherwise it will be a serious problem for us. Many talented students may commit suicide. Parents will lose their dreams and investable resources and the institution will lose its meritorious students. The solution to these problems is not just to run a university traditionally but to think of a new administration. It is very important for the government or the authorities concerned to take appropriate steps in this regard.

*Md Shafiqul Islam, PhD Fellow, Zhongshan University of Economics and Law, Wuhan, China, and Assistant Professor, Jinnah Raji Kazi Nazim Islam University, Murshidabad, Bangladesh*



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Limit trans-fat in processed food

Dear Sir

Eating trans-fat in processed food can cause different types of health diseases, such as high cholesterol level, diabetic, cancer etc. In addition, it has been researched that trans-fat foods in the diets is a key factor of coronary heart disease.

A report revealed by the World Health Organization (WHO) shows that approximately six lac people across the globe die from coronary heart disease. As a part of global concern, WHO has strongly recommended for its 11 member countries to initiate trans-fat regulations, cooperate with policy assistance and formulate necessary law with a view to limiting trans-fat within maximum 2% in the industrially produced food items. Bangladesh is one of those WHO recommended countries.

Industrially produced food free from excess trans-fat should be ensured anyhow to extend healthy and better living. To address this substantial issue, I sincerely urge the concerned authority for taking necessary steps having no delay.

*Wares Ali Khan  
Narsingdi*

editorial@dailyobserverbd.com

## Pull out from our borders right now

**A**mid heightened border tensions in the region, now it is Myanmar that has been mobilising troops in a provoking manner near the Bangladesh border. According to recent media reports, suspicious movement of Myanmar troops aboard travelers along the international border was observed since Sunday morning. Fishing boats carried the Myanmar Army troops to different locations along the Naf River. Moreover, Myanmar army also has also positioned field artilleries at three points in the border areas.

In response to such unanticipated gathering of troops, our foreign ministry's official concerned for Myanmar has summoned the Myanmar envoy expressing apprehension. The point, however, given the Myanmar military's brutal crackdown displacing nearly a million Rohingya refugees from their homeland in 2017- Bangladesh have every reason to worry relating to the recent military build-up near her borders with Myanmar.

We were not only compelled to give food, shelter and medication to hundreds of thousands of refugees, but we were terrified at the scale of atrocity inflicted on the helpless Muslim minority community. Horrific firsthand tales narrated by the victims of arson, rape and plundering, orchestrated by the Myanmar military has left us speechless. That said - the latest move to mobilise huge number of troops is a double threat. First, it is a security threat and second there may well be another attempt to forcibly oust the remaining members of the Muslim minority members in that country.

Even though our foreign ministry has issued an official note of protest, but Myanmar must immediately pullout its troops near our borders. It has been assumed, the movement of troops may be part of Myanmar military's ongoing conflict with the Arakan Army. It is completely Myanmar's internal issue, and the least what we expect is the conflict to spill over within our territory.

What is a grave matter of concern - sudden arrival of hundreds of troops has triggered a widespread fear among the Rohingya minority in the port town of Maungdaw - close to Bangladesh borders. As the