

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Mosquito menace



In search of human blood!

There has been a lot of correspondence on mosquito menace in the Letters Page, perhaps not exhaustively about its solution.

I remember that once our Professor of Logic at St. Gregory's college (renamed Notre Dame College) casually observed that somewhere in Australia they had installed a machine which continuously created sound of mating call of female mosquitoes, and millions of male mosquitoes rushed into it and met hasty death.

That was in 1951, and the technology must have improved a lot by now. We should explore the subject, and see if we could install such machines in Dhaka, then in other places.

SMS Zaman, Dhaka

With all the hue and cry on the subject at least one good thing happened in the long last. The H'ble MPs in the "Sangsad" session of 2nd March along with the Deputy Speaker in chair on that day reported to have echoed the same painful experience of relentless mosquito bites. Even in the highest seat of our law-makers having all the measures taken against the menace, no one seemed at all happy with the situation although no ruling from the chair was said to have been allowed in the case on that occasion.

The saga of this hitherto untold sufferings of the Dhakaites is certainly not a new thing and it is indeed the accumulated result of many years' indifference and negligence on the part of the authorities concerned as well as the citizens' and the civic-society in particular. Somehow it does not help us if such a misery is only discussed and find its place in media reports without any result. And now that our law-makers have taken cognisance of the menace seriously, we naturally expect this issue will continue to shake up all the concerned to make Dhaka a mosquito-free zone as it had been many years ago during the time when Late Habibullah Bahar Chowdhury was the then Health Minister.

However no temporary solution of this great nuisance/health hazard (from dengue/malaria) will be of any use unless we can achieve a sustainable long-term relief to make this capital city really fit for human habitation. Priority wise, this must be considered as important as the measures taken against air pollution. As for the citizens and the civic-society, creation of public-awareness against the dangers of mosquito menace combined with fostering the much-needed cleanliness-culture through all possible ways (including sermons during regular after-prayer gatherings in mosques/churches/temples/pagodas) must be considered and inculcated. We must not also stop making constant appeal until similar action-plans like anti air-pollution steps are set in motion against the mosquito-menace for the best interest of all the Dhakaites.

Z. Rahman, Gulshan, Dhaka

expect a fair election where terrorists are in the race unless we ensure the security of the voters. Police could do a little as political influences are creating hindrance on the way of their functioning.

Oli Md. Abdullah Chowdhury
Mirarmaidan, Sylhet

INS registration

Ever since the Immigration and Naturalisation Services (INS) of USA included Bangladesh into the list of countries requiring special registration, the imagination of thousands of Bangladeshi nationals were captured with the thought of what may come their way during the registration.

The five of us, all international students at Texas A&M University, went to the INS office in San Antonio on Friday the 7th of March, 2003. The experience has been a good one and this prompted me to write this letter and share the experience with others, who may be anxious to go through the process.

Sharif M. Faisal
College Station, TX, USA

Add more photographs in the Internet edition

I would like to request you to add more pictures in your Internet edition to complement the articles. It would make reading the articles online as informative as reading them directly from the newspaper, not to mention lending an air of sophistication to the online edition.

I don't want to drop the tried cliché of "a picture says a thousand words", but would like to say that it gives the other 500 words a certain boost.

Fardeen, Uttara, Dhaka

Who should be our next cricket coach?

It's high time that BCB started thinking of appointing a new foreign coach (Richard Pybus?) for our cricket team. At least initially our own coaches could do the job (better than the third grade Mohsin Kamal). Our own coaches have proved to be pretty good in several of previous cases. Also, our boys should undergo a crash course in spoken English to understand that language. That will help them understand the valuable instructions imparted to them by the foreign coaches and well wishers. Besides it will help them to properly answer questions put to them after every match. Then they won't have to use words like 'obviously', 'yah', 'gnaa', etc. in wrong context or won't have to blabber inaudible words to get out of the question trap as fast as they lose their wickets.

For God's sake Mr. Ali Asghar, please do not experiment any more. Please accept the experts' advice. This is a national crisis. The more you experiment the more you would drown our cricket into the mire.

Wahid Shafi, Dhaka

Neglected Uttara

I have been living in Uttara for over a decade or so and throughout these years, I have noticed no significant improvement of the area at all. The inhabitants have been nominating a ward commissioner for the area. But till today, his contribution in the developing the area have been a total failure.

The drainage systems are getting worse and the drain water floods the roads during the monsoon. Do people vote to these Ward Commissioners to serve their own selfish needs? Why do these people promise one thing before the election and do another after they are elected?

Minhaj Ahmed, Uttara, Dhaka

Bureaucrat's weapons

A lot of noise has been made about The Daily Star not publishing any pro-war articles. However, it must be noted that almost every day, there are some letters in The Daily Star arguing in favour and against any war on Iraq. How many times do you see any letter arguing against Israeli terrorism or US double standards published in CNN, Washington Post etc? Recently some US celebrity dared to express their opinion against the war and now they are being threatened with hate-mails! Another man was arrested in the US simply for wearing a T-shirt with some reference to "peace"! Oh let me remind you, US is a democratic country!

On 6th March, a letter from the Chief News Executive of CNN - apparently defending CNN against an earlier article by Robert Fisk was published by Arab News despite hundreds of allegation from Americans that Arab News is anti-Americans, anti-Semitic and biased! I guess the only time when you are not anti-American is when you bend-over and let your homeland to be used as launch-pads or military bases! These excuses of anti-American and anti-Semitic are used so ridiculously, that they even call some of their own American people as being anti-American, simply because they dare to disagree with the hypocrite's views. Many Jewish people who disagree with illegal occupation are also labelled as anti-Semitic. But the point is; who cares?

Azad Miah
Oldham, UK

Male-female relation

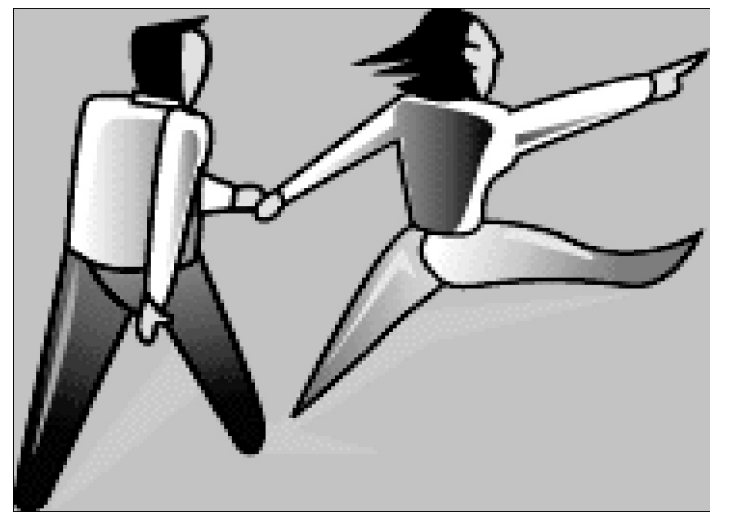
I continue to hear, from all quarters and countries, how more boys than girls are school 'drop-outs' and how, on the whole, young women do better at university than men. At the same time, the level of violence (or at least the level of reported violence) against women is continuing to rise. I cannot help but wonder whether there is a connection between these facts and if there is anything that those of us who have the interests of young people at heart can do to help.

I suspect that the more girls are educated, the more unobtainable they appear to certain young men except via violence. Many of us rejoice to see schoolgirls swinging confidently down the road, laughing and chatting to one another, but to lads who are not merely less educated academically, but with no social skills at all, they must seem distant and inaccessible goddesses. After all, so many boys in this culture have little opportunity and, sadly, in some homes, little to encourage them even to have a conversation

with a female at any level that some would consider 'normal'. They go around in gangs where the level of conversation about girls hardly bears thinking about. So how do such boys have a chance with an 'educated' girl? How can we help their frustration not to turn to violence?

I have to say that I am delighted to see boys and girls in many co-educational schools learning to enjoy perfectly normal, friendly relationships with one another. I also see brothers and sisters obviously sharing their lives in a positive way that will surely help both to understand other members of the opposite sex in future. I would like to see more games and sports that could be shared by both as there is nothing like a games-field for revealing character flaws and so encouraging good sportsmanship and teamwork!

Angela MV Robinson (Rev Mrs)
The British School, Dhaka



A good relation is the best solution

"Hypocrisy and racism of terror!"

I couldn't agree more with Yamin Zakaria's comment (March 7). The 'West' is famous for twisting words. They know exactly how to use or not use words exactly to their advantages. Or maybe they reserve that right as it is their language!

These days, uttering the words 'Jihad', 'Islam', or even 'Allah' in public in the USA could bring you enough troubles. And if you dare use such words in a place like, maybe an airport, only God knows what awaits you. It is because these words have found places in the wrong side of the Western world now.

You say one word against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, you would instantly be labelled as an 'Anti-Semite', which is one of the worst names you can call someone in US. Most people won't even know what that actually means, or how it relates to the Middle East conflict, but you will earn a bad name anyway. Major newspapers and news sources used to flaunt the word 'Suicide Bombing' when they happened in Israel, but when questions arose about the situations that lead people to choose suicide as means of resistance, they have resorted to words like 'Homicide Bombing' or 'Terror Bombing' to describe the same thing.

Shafiqat, USA

"Hypocrisy of Bush and Blair"

This is in reference to "Hypocrisy of Bush and Blair" by Mohammed Islam (March 9).

I am writing mainly because Mr Mohammed Islam gave inaccurate examples to slate Tony Blair. Mr. Islam says that Tony Blair can't afford to pay the fire-fighters of the

next three years. The increments are far greater than that they were getting under the Tories.

The British Government has far more money in its coffers and it's a sign of prudent management that you don't go and spend that money willy-nilly and stoke up inflationary pressures in the economy.

On balance I do agree with Tony Blair that Britain should attack Iraq and get rid of the monster Saddam Hussein and restore freedom and democracy in that country.

And yes there were over a million people on the street of London marching and protesting against war but it's still a right decision for Blair to assist the USA in this matter, and a democracy like Bangladesh should also assist the US and UK in this.

Finally, I wish them lots of luck and pray that it's done quickly and with minimum loss of human life.

Manzoor H Ashraf
Kensington, London

A just war

It is always very difficult to wage a just war. We know that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and he only

should do more for the pro-war camp as it's in our country's long-term interest especially when the USA and the UK needs our help at this critical juncture.

Support from Bangladesh would be greatly appreciated as Bangladesh is the only TRUE DEMOCRACY in the Muslim World and the American and British public will never forget this support. They have given us so much in the past, and it's our turn to give them something in return.

Manzoor H Ashraf
London, UK

Iraq attack

There was this news on March 8 that there was an open declaration of Mr. Collin Powell where he told that they could attack Iraq a lot early if President Bush asks for it. He also added in his declaration that USA do not bother about the decision taken by the Security Council of UN. Aren't all these a fake game played by the US?

I know my allegation against the US would be entertained by them. But it's my request to the world body to do something and save the

Politics is the art of the possible. That is what we have been told. Think again. Now has it become the art of the impossible? At least that is what Mr. Bush and Blair have made it to appear thanks to their relentless effort to make this impossible case for war against Iraq - a war that the rest of the world refuses to be convinced of. The logic of war is being forced as much as the principles and rules of international law and order is being turned upside down in the post 9/11 world.

Few facts are in order. For the past twelve years, the so-called "cat and mouse" game actually was a strict sanctions regime - draconian by the past UN standards - accompanied by almost seven years of inspections and destruction of numerous arms caches throughout Iraq (until 1998 when UN was obliged to withdraw the its weapons inspectors in the face of US bombardment). These inspections were protracted with no end in sight much to the exasperation of Iraq. Now after nearly thirteen years of sanctions, over a million deaths, still substantially damaged civilian infrastructure, and clearly insufficient "Oil for Food" programme, there is this war on the people of Iraq - a war that the world at large finds unnecessary, immoral and plainly not in order. Yet, the politics of Bush and Blair would have the world believe it is not so; it is even their moral duty and right to wage this war to save the world and now to liberate the people of Iraq by bombing them to death and yet more destruction of their assets - all of which is necessary to export freedom and impose democracy a la American style.

For those writers who choose to be naive, when did the US or the West for that matter, liberate the people of Asia and Africa or Latin America until they were able to wage a struggle often at great cost? Algeria, Vietnam readily come to mind; there are numerous more. And also, America did not come to liberate France and Germany in the World War II purely for altruistic or humanitarian reasons; it has other motives that served its interest very well.

In a historical analysis, there is no such thing as a benevolent tyrant; tyrant in all its forms and at all times must be resisted, must be reversed and defeated though this may not be accomplished by military means alone. The other voices and struggles must be maintained as relentlessly and stridently as by those who lust for war and dominance taking advantage of unequal states and a world out of balance. That is bad enough but not sufficient reason to become even worse.

Hussain, Dhaka

Government ads

In typical Daily Star fashion, the news-item on the distribution of government ads doesn't tell the whole story. The whole crux of the matter is who owns the *Dainik Dinkal*?

One can assume from The Daily Star item that government advertisements are motivated in part by editorial content of the papers. But it is essential to know who owns these papers to get the whole story.

Gora
Dhaka

Anti-war rants

Of course it came as no surprise to see the big headline on the March 7 issue, "Anti-war chants grow louder". According to the news-item people of all ages and from all walks of life rallied about the place, causing economic loss and traffic jams.

Was the anti-war protest really attended by people from all walks of life or were they the same bunch who cheered Bin Laden after 9/11? Satyajit
Dhaka

"Save Buriganga"

It is really distressing to go through the report "Where all the sewers run". At the same time it is also frustrating to notice that most of the people are solely blaming the government and different institutions for this menace. But it is our 'civic sense' which can save Buriganga because all the moral initiatives are stirred by this.

Gullive
Indira Road, Dhaka

but the main reason is very easily visible. It seems that oil is more expensive than blood these days.

On the other hand Mr. Hans Blix reported in the UN Security Council meeting held on 7th March that the biological destructive weapons Iraq held is being destroyed under the supervision of UN. He added that Iraq has cooperated in peaceful disarmament and they were positive to avoid a war. He said that Iraq's progress cooperation is tangible and material and cannot be termed deceptive. Mr. Elberadei stated that during the last four years Iraq has deteriorated in industrial capacity. He added that survey access has been gained to 75 facilities in Iraq. He said that though evidences pointed that allegation on Iraqi imports of uranium from Niger are unfounded but the above points will be scrutinised and will be re-investigated. He concluded that peaceful disarmament is possible and there is other alternative to war. The members also announced that countries like Russia, China, Syria, and France strongly stand against war and invite the American Government to come forward into mutual and peaceful understanding with Iraq. Collin Powell, UN Secretary General Kofi Anan and other representatives also chaired the meeting. But President Bush declared that America would go to war even without the Security Council's consent. He said that war would be waged in the time period of ten days if Saddam Hussein did not surrender.

Khalid Rahman
Dhaka

Hirok Rajar Deshe



The Hirok Raja of 21st century?

It is quite obvious that President Bush will not stop at anything to wage a war against Iraq. In his latest statement Mr. Bush said that this war is for the safety of America and the world from the mass destructive biological and chemical weapons which Iraq holds without prior consent.

But I think more than that Mr. Bush is focussing on the

fact that Saddam Hussein tried to kill his "father". We can portray Mr. Bush as Hirok Rajar a character from Satyajits Ray's film "Hirok Rajar Deshe". But the only difference between the two is that Hirok Rajar did not let the people of his kingdom live in peace whereas President Bush is doing that universally. Though his excuses for the war were very strong

UK decent wage and that he can't even spend on transport, can't even spend on schooling, can't even spend on hospitals. But for war he has billions!

Let me tell you that the UK Government has the money to pay the fire-fighters but why should the fire-fighters get inflation busting pay-rise which will allow other government department workers to claim the same leading to runaway inflation. Moreover it's not that the fire-fighters are lacking manpower, there are 70 people applying for one advertised post so this tells you that in a free market economy the pay is right and just. The UK Government has promised more money to the fire-fighters provided they except modern work practices. And schools, hospitals, transport (rail and road) etc are also getting billions of pounds in

gives lip service to Islam. So those who give sermons in mosques in support of him are misled and misinformed.

I would like to think that I am a liberal and I tell you that I have no sympathy for Mr. Bush Jnr nor for Mr. Tony Blair who perhaps is the smartest of the two after all he is a lawyer; their double standards especially interrelation to Israel, Cyprus and Kashmir is very unfortunate.

But I would support them NOW because it's our only chance to get rid of this evil dictator and I pray that it would be the beginning of democratisation of Middle East so that at least Israel cannot claim the sole democracy in the Middle East and claim sympathy from the general public.

And I feel that Bangladesh

The CEC issue

I see no reason for the government lawmakers to be so irked as to request the intervention of the President to remove the CEC. The CEC is entrusted with conducting elections in an atmosphere free from any coercion or intimidation and to that extent the CECE is well within his rights to request the Government's help in anyway he considers appropriate. The reason for this perceived debacle now lies in the chronology of events spread over the past couple of months or so where the Government has intimidated and harassed the CEC unduly in more ways than one.

The office of the CEC is more important in a democratic form of government than that of a lawmaker. Removing of the CEC will create a bad precedence and send wrong signals to future governments. However there could be more things behind the episode than our eyes can meet. Surely any vexing issues which may have caused this problem between the CEC and the lawmakers can be resolved through friendly parleys and discussions.

Shamsher Chowdhury, Dhaka

Cancelled BCS exam and some thoughts

After the shameful occurrence i.e. alleged leakage of BCS exam questions, why hasn't the PSC Chairman resigned or been terminated? And why haven't the authorities concerned taken any action against the OC of Ramna thana who refused to take the case of Imamu Haque Shamim, a student of Dhaka University, who went to the police station with a copy of leaked questions to make a GD entry?

A student from Sylhet needs minimum 1500 taka for one night-stay in Dhaka. Who would compensate the loss meted to thou-

sands of examinees who came from different parts of the country to sit for the cancelled BCS exam?

Mohd. Eklas Uddin, On e-mail

Why did the PSC Chairperson denied in the first place that any leakage of question might have taken place?

The PSC Chairperson and all PSC members and top executives must be held responsible regarding the BCS exam scam and the Government should constitute a judicial probe body to find out who are the culprits and take necessary steps against them.

Gopal Sengupta, Canada

Deploy army in Sylhet City Corporation Election

Sylhet City Corporation Election would be held on 20th March and election campaign intensifies with the time. However, maximum candidates are showing little respect to election regulations. A good number of terrorists joined in the race of Ward Commissioner election nevertheless the DC of Sylhet in a television interview reveals that more than half centres are very vulnerable.

Even though the government didn't pay heed to the CEC's demand to deploy army in UP elections, there was a good sign of violence in many places. As terrorists are alleged to be participating in this election, they would use every single opportunity to show their muscles. In this purpose, we might recall the experience of Dhaka. Law and order situation deteriorated just after the election and some newly elected commissioners were killed.

If the government deploys army in the election booth, the voters would be encouraged and feel safe to cast their votes. We couldn't