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.

### Why Bangladesh is in the INS list?

Who is responsible for the inclusion of Bangladesh's name into the list of nations (prepared by the USA Administration) whose citizens when entering America should be monitored up-close? The Bangladesh Government blames the main opposition party. The main opposition party, however, blames the government. But truly, Bangladesh's past 30 year's history is responsible for its recent predica-

If the nation had veered in the path of secularism and if the nation would not have built countless madrassahs in the last quarter century, then Bangladesh's name would not be in the list, at least now. Look at Malaysia. The country's name is not in the list. However, there is not telling which country will be next in the line.

As Bangladesh government is reeling from the enlistment of its country's name into the dreaded list, the mollahs have become vocal one more time. Remember in November and December, 2001, when America was dropping their massive "Daisy Cutter" bomb all over Afghanistan including the Tora Bora Mountain, a section of madrassah students and other mollahs' belonging to myriad Islamic Organisation would hit the street with oversized posters of Osama bin Laden chanting "Death to America" and "Death to Bush". All of these definitely played their part in putting the name of Bangladesh in that short list.

Bangladesh has a long way to go to restore its image as a nation of tolerant people. This is what happens when people forget that they are living at the dawn of a new

Oindrila Aditri Rajshahi University, Rajshahi

### Regarding cricket

As an ex-crickter of Bangladesh it was not at all surprising to assume that the performance of the Team will be so disastrous as it has been  $in \, the \, ongoing \, World \, Cup.$ 

The team selection process was not only poor, but it became clear that the selectors were either making a team in order to achieve personal gain or they have no clue and capability to select a team competent enough to perform in the World Cup. It is all the more shameful to learn that none of the selectors has vet resigned from the Board after the pathetic performance of the Team.

The President and other members have little knowledge about cricket. They might be fit to run a local club but not the national

But whatever has happened has happened, now we have to hire competent people to run the Board, comprise a good team and try our best to regain the glory we once had.

**Yaffie** Brooklyn, New York, USA

### My experience with the INS!

As a Bangladeshi expatriate I had to register with the INS due to the recent US homeland security measures. I approached to the INS office with much of the apprehension and left with a sigh of relief. It was a pleasant experience.

I was led to the INS office at the Federal Building in downtown Chicago. It appears that they set up this office very recently just for the interviewing process. I was greeted with pleasantly and assisted courteously by the clerk at that office. The clerk handed me a form to fill it in. This form is consisted of Name. address, telephone number, name and address of the educational institute if the registrant is on student visa, name and address of the employer is the registrant is on work visa, date of arrival in the US. After I handed it in to the INS clerk, she reviewed my passport and the pending adjustment of status report and jotted down few notes on the form. There were less than 30 registrants from different countries waiting for their interview on the day I went there. Some of the registrants brought in attorneys along with them to represent them, which I believe is not necessary. I had to wait 30 minutes before I was called in for the interview. After taking an oath, I placed my work authorisation card, adjustment status receipt issue by INS, driver's license, business card, Social Security Card, credit cards, and a letter from my employer before the INS agent. The INS officer reviewed all the identification and put them on the computer system. She asked me about my current address, how long have I been there, number of years I have been with the current employer, two contact persons' name and address. After the finger printing and photo were taken, she anded me an instruction package. was given a registration number or Finger Print Identification number to be used for the future reference. She wrote it down on the I-94. It was more of a loading the information on their computer system than an interview. The entire process took less than 20 minutes. I was treated with dignity and in a professional manner.

James Rozario, CPA Chicago, Illinois, USA

On March 7, I went to Pittsburgh for the INS special registration for Bangladeshis

I went with one of my friend/big brother and we were asked identical questions and went through identical procedures. All the officer did was basically fill in a database for me. He asked me questions, I answered and he entered in the

Then they took a picture of me. And then they took both of my index finger prints. That's all.

Because my visa expired, and I

own territory like Padua and Talpatti. So we have lost some of our territory to our closest neighbour India. Bangladeshi people on the border area are loosing their

lives to trigger happy BSF. Recently India has started spreading negative propaganda regarding Bangladesh relating ISI and Al-Qaeda. Surprisingly enough, both our government and private media failed to take bold steps to support Bangladesh defending its position let alone fight back. Here we are loosing in this psychological warfare initiated

India is such a big market, our export to India totals only around 5 hundred crore taka. Our export oriented companies are loosing their competitiveness in Indian market due India's various tariff, para-tariff and non-tariff barriers. Our companies that sell products in local market are struggling as India is dumping their cheap goods in Bangladesh. We are loosing to India in terms of economy also.

Not only cheap goods, India is now trying to dump its own citizens to Bangladesh We don't have anything to loose. If we don't sell gas to India, if we don't give transhipment facility to India, if we start imposing anti-dumping tariff over Indian goods, shouldn't it be the right thing to do?

tion of America wanting to start a war with Iraq, only for the simple reason that oil was the prime issue. However, the Financial Times (26th February 2003) had a column in which it stated that "the cost obtaining oil was far more than the earnings". This column gave the reasons and calculations for the war not relating to oil. One reason

obtained - if USA defeats Iraq." This made me confused until I attended a recent lecture. I asked my tutor why third world debt could not be forgiven. It was because the shareholders' of the Banks (who are lending money to developing economies) are not willing to lose out on the profit they're making, by allowing the banks to do such an act. Although part money could be forgiven, but

this is still not happening.

was that, "if USA were to have a war

with Iraq, the cost of the war is far

more greater than oil that shall be

Referring back to the war on Iraq, the USA is a hyperdominating developed country. It can make a lot of money, in the long term, if they can wage a war on Iraq. On one hand, after the war, Iraq may be of equivalent to a third world economy, which means that it would have to borrow from the first world countries (or the IMF). Since the rate of interest would probably be a hefty amount (such

everyday to my office these days.

KM Zubair Sadeque

Duquese University, USA

ine the problems I would have faced now if I were to commute

nightmare. First, rickshaws were banned from part of Mirpur

Road. Then there was this ban on 2-stroke three-wheelers.

These are welcome moves no doubt. But has the authorities

arranged for adequate alternatives till date? We don't have

adequate number of CNG auto-rickshaws or taxi cabs to fill up

the gap. We have experienced the fiasco of making CNG

meters mandatory. Again, it's a welcome move. But couldn't

the authorities make sure of adequate supply of CNG meters

before making it compulsory? And there is always this problem with the metered fare and the reluctance of drivers to go on

It is unfortunate that such a big city like Dhaka (in terms of

population) does not have a well functioning public transpor-

tation system. Inadequate number of buses and absence of a

cheap mass transit system (underground train like Calcutta or

train service like Bombay) make the lives of Dhaka dwellers a

living nightmare. Probably those who can afford a private car

(that too are expensive nowadays because of the high duty) are

all the more happy because they now have more roads off-limits to rickshaws and three-wheelers!

This is ridiculous on the part of the government to ban 3-wheelers from the Bijoy Sarani to Sheraton crossing. The CNG

auto-rickshaws were introduced with a lot of enthusiasm only

recently and now its movement has been restricted! And the decision came when we, the common people, have started

Did the Government conduct any survey before taking such

a serious decision in the name of "reducing traffic jam"? Did

the policymakers think about the middle-class people who

extensively rely on these convenient, cheap and comfortable

transport? Does anyone of those who took this decision have

to use this type of transport? Have the policymakers ever thought of the loss incurred on the owners and the drivers due

to this ban who have already been suffering much because of

taking the advantage of this comfortable transport.

lack of sufficient number of filling-stations?

For the common people of Dhaka city, it is becoming a

they lift the sanctions imposed on Iraq that has killed numerous Iraqis and has crippled their econ-

And finally, the US helped Israel to become a military superpower and the US itself has weapons of mass destruction. What about disarming these two countries? Sameer Ahmed Khan Mojlish Dhanmondi, Dhaka

### The "second resolution"

Tony Blair now conceded that the 'second resolution" is less likely to pass than ever before. If Blair had spent even half as much energy to find a peaceful and just diplomatic route to the Iraq crisis (which most informed and watchful observers would agree is more manufactured than real) he could have spared the world much of the current agony and anguish as well as much of the frustration and discord he succeeded in generating though perhaps inadvertently so. Yet his foreign secretary, too clever for comfort, too articulate to be legible, strives on to spin his webs of fumbling logic; his latest jibe is to find the French rebuff as "extraordinary". Indeed!

Extraordinary deceit evokes equally extraordinary disclosure.

impact. Yet, when mere hoping is not clearly enough as is evident; what else can one do? The world peoples must rise and cry to be seen and heard; the people must also deny to the global corporate oligarchy economic rewards, as much and as best as they can for example by worldwide boycott of trade and commerce. Hussain, Dhaka

### Iraq crises inside out

The UN Security Council is an organisation, which specialises and is primarily responsible under the UN charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. The resolutions passed by this council binds on all the member states. The permanent members of the council are in power to 'veto" a substantive decision by voting against it. The Charter of the council has the power to maintain peace and security. However the collective use of force as a military sanction does not operate in the way intended.

The Charter does not allow the council expressly for "Peace Keeping Force" but the International Court of Justice in a 1962 case found that the council has legitimate power for implying this force. This force is deployed usually after cease-fire has been agreed upon. So this force is lightly armed and is not an army, fighting an opposing

The first step of the UN Security Council regarding the Iraq Crises was taken on the 8th of November of 2002. It was strengthening the weapons inspection regime for Iraq, giving Baghdad a final opportunity to comply for the disarmament obligation.

The resolution number 1441 establishes an enhanced inspection regime for Iraq's disarmament, which is already proceeded by the (UNMOVIC) and (IAEA). In the recent meeting held on the 7th of March 2003 the statement presented by Mr. Hans Blix and Mr. Mohammed Elberadei said that the chemical, biological, nuclear and ballistic weapons are being destroyed under the alert eyes of the (UNMOVIC) and (IAEA). Iraq has shown signs of healthy cooperation and there are alternatives than war.

The statement declared the security inspectors has obtained rights to freeze sights, and conduct interviews without the presence of Iraq government officials

Though there is a light of peace glittering bright but US President Bush and Prime Minister of Britain Mr. Tony Blair are showing great interests in waging a war against Iraq. Even it is without the consent of the Security Council.

On the other hand UN secretary general Mr. Kofi Aannan has declared and repeated his warning that the war without the consent of the worlds political and diplomatic sector will put its legitimacy in

Khalid Rahman, Dhaka

# Alternate view of Iraq issue

I would like to present my view to the Iraq situation.

a) Saddam has had 12 years to disarm. This disarmament is an international requirement. The difference between Saddam and others is that he is willing and able to use these WMD.

b) If George Bush did not deploy US troops to force the issue no progress would have been made even

c) The French claim to be on the side of peace. They would not even have a voice in this were it not for the US bringing the matter to the council

d) The US has toppled dictators and tyrants in other venues before. Actually for 2 countries, it resulted in them becoming the #2 and #3 economies in the world now -

Japan and Germany. e) US supported Muslims in Bosnia and generally there are also a lot of Bosnians freed from Milosevic as a result of that and also living in the US and doing very well profession-

ally and financially. I think instead of forcing pressure on the US to not to go to war, the world should be pressuring Saddam to step down and save his people the agony of being his pawn yet another time. We all agree that the heart of the problem is Saddam and unfortunately the issue is becoming clouded where people are forgetting that this is the root cause of this problem.

Hashem, On e-mail

# Ban on CNG auto: What next?

I was rather surprised to read the news of banning CNG threewheelers between Bijoy Sarani and the Sheraton Crossing. One can easily imagine the increased plight this will cause to the commuters. The rationale provided by the authorities of reducing traffic jam can hardly be a justified reason for such ban. The authorities are simply re-locating the traffic jam from the VIP road to elsewhere.

Not long ago, I used to take this route everyday to my office by auto-rickshaw. Although, it was not a comfortable journey at all (because of the smokes, noise and the heavy traffic), I could at least reach office relatively quickly. I can hardly imag-



No CNG= Less traffic!

lost my passport earlier in the year, I showed them a photocopy of the visa that I had, a new passport I made from New York consulate and a new i-94 card that I got from INS earlier. The officer was very polite and supportive and we did

ot face ANY problems. After everything was done, the officer submitted the form and a random tracking number came on the screen. He wrote that number on my i-94 card. That is called the FINS number. Till the next registration that will be valid. All my information will be available to all embassy officials all over the world

#### What else can we loose?

India is taking away major share of water from various common small and big rivers that exist between two countries unjustifiably. So we are loosing valuable water resource

We Bangladeshis sometimes emotionally say that we will defend every inch of our territory from foreign aggression. But that fact is we have no control over our very

Rajib Uttara, Dhaka

# Peace!

Imagine vou are a citizen of Iraq and you have experienced military and economic atrocities since 1991 for no good reason except that your country is run by a dictator like many other dictators in the world and except that your country has oil resources! See in your mind's eye the helplessness of the Iraqi people at this moment of war

the protection of innocent people, my humble request: Please try your best to prevent this cruel war. Mahmudul Hasan

For the sake of humanity and for

University of Portsmouth, UK

# "Why oppose the war!"

I would like to thank Dr. Zeljko Cipris (March 14) for talking on behalf of me. It was a very wellwritten letter, also mentioning a very great figure in the UK - Mr. Tariq Ali.

I would also like to make a few more points, in regards to this "socalled" war on Iraq

A few days ago, I had this percep-

as 5%), Iraq would be struggling to repay the interest, let alone, the loan! On the other hand, USA would get the oil plus turn Iraq into a weak developing economy struggling to pay the cost of the

Samia Rahman London, England

Md.Ashequl Islam

IBA, University of Dhaka

## A perfect instance of hypocrisy!

President Bush has now been saying that he would wage a war against Iraq even without the UN backing. It has now become crystal clear that disarmament of Iraq is not the actual goal of the Bush administration but to control Iraq's oil resource.

The UN weapon inspectors have now been in Iraq for over three months and yet they haven't reported about any weapons of mass destruction. Even after Iraq started to destroy its Al-samood missiles the US kept complaining that Iraq has failed to cooperate with the UN inspectors. The US is trying to establish its dominance on the Middle East. Bush and Blair have been saying that by getting rid of Saddam they will be liberating the Iraqi people. Then why don't

While Tony Blair is sobering up and lately been introspecting, his secretary in an "extraordinary" bit of wisdom, now blames the French (and others who fail to endorse the British second resolution) for actually hastening the war on Iraq. Why? Simply because he has made up his mind to go to war and any-one unwilling to give him the cover he seeks can only shorten the time

Thus he so sleekly (he presumes) shifts the blame on those who are staunchly trying to avert the war. What a catastrophe!

When a great power finds itself in a situation like the present one, it becomes even more necessary for that power to exercise prudence and caution, not out of infirmity but because of strength. This is a time in history when the American people (so recently wounded) must be spared from volleys of misinformation and contrived propaganda, must be delivered rom the constant fear for security bordering on paranoia, their diminishing civil liberties and legal protection restored and not curbed. The world as a whole must be spared the horrors and devastation of war that uses overwhelming and indiscriminate force with unprecedented humanitarian

# "An American opinion on Iraq crisis"



Let there be peace

This is in reply to Erin Hanson's letter (March 13). How preposterous that the US is about to liberate the Iraqis. And most of the Americans believe that this war is a just war. How can a war be just when there are other means to resolve the crisis? Unfortunately, the other road, the peaceful route doesn't include Saddam from handing power over to the Americans. The former US President Jimmy Carter, winner of the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize, believes that this will be an unjust war. For a war to be just, it must meet several clearly defined criteria

Bangladesh isn't the only country protesting the war against Iraq. A war will not liberate Iraq, but will only bring misery to the people and kill many civilians. According to Gen. Tommy R. Franks, commander of American forces in the Persian Gulf, mililary targets are near hospitals, schools, mosques and homes.

Bangladesh did take the streets in the '90s and sacrificed number of lives not to mention the Independence War. The Americans did not help us back then because the real reason is that it had no American interest at all. Either financially or

Mohammed Islam, Manchester, UK

I think your argument based on the comparison between independence of Bangladesh and crisis on Iraq is problematic. Bangladesh independence movement and other struggles for democracy were built on people's aspiration, and people were the only means to achieve that.

In contrary, the USA-led war against Iraq does not strengthen the people in Iraq, nor the civil society there, rather this is full of conspiracy. This rhetoric of democracy seriously undermines the credibility of the US early argu-

The world cannot afford such an expensive democratisation! I am sure you have the statistics how many human have already died after the US-led sanction over Iraq, for the US government aspiration to install a democracy there. On the other side, the US has very poor record in helping other countries' democratisation and human rights.

Idea to install democracy from outside and with unjustified means is not creditable and has no moral ground. Hundreds years of political thoughts does not support that--you can check in library.

Khurshid, London

This letter is a response to Mr. Erin's comment on Iraq crisis. Attacking Iraq with the intention to topple Saddam

Hussein's regime is the weakest of all pretexts given by the US president. It is USA that provided the technological know-how regarding biological and chemical warfare to Iraq during the '80s. With the US help, Saddam Hussein successfully applied biological and chemical agents to Iranian soldiers as well as his own Iraqi people. The US government didn't feel repentant for Saddam Hussein's reckless acts but now the US government has become very much sympathetic to the Iraqi people. This is nothing but the same old American style double-standard.

Mr. Erin should not have any doubt about the feelings of Bangladeshis they have regarding our autocratic government. I also believe that many Bangladeshis have no sympathy for a cruel dictator like Saddam Hussein but at the same time they also believe that regime change is an internal matter of Iraq. That's why the Bangladeshis took to streets in the 90s and sacrificed their lives rather seeking help from the USA. In addition to this, during the struggle of Bangladeshi people against the oppressions of their autocratic government, the USA did not show any interest that it is showing for the Iraqi people.

Mr. Erin Hanson questioned, "Didn't you take the help of the Indian Government to free your country from the oppression of Pakistan government?" This question sounds to me as if we poor Bangladeshis sought help from India and India liberated Bangladesh in one fine morning. The fact is, we Bangladeshis indeed sought help from Indians and with their support we continued guerrilla war for long nine months. Yes, India actively took part in our independence war only after it was attacked by the Pakistani forces. Our freedom fighters fought side by side with the Indian army against the Pakistani

Md.Mamunur Rashid (Rajib) Uttara, Dhaka
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Mr. Erin Hanson, I happen to be of Bangladeshi origin, now American. I lived through the entire terror period of 1971 in Bangladesh under the brutality of the Pakistan Army.

You have completely sideswiped and decimated the entire situation into an incredible, overtly simplistic situation. There is incontrovertibly no comparison between that fight for freedom of Bangladesh with the present Iraq situation. The facts of that is unassailable. Let me quote some.

The people of Bangladesh took up the fight to freedom from within. India provided military support in the form of weapons to the freedom fighters who fought a guerrilla war since that was the 'best' way to fight a formidable force. They did not participate in it from the onset. They did not amass a overwhelming armada and equipment that can obliterate the people and the country. They joined the war only after the Pakistani military government made the fatal mistake of attacking India. Yes, the US decided to support this repressive occupiers with military aid instead of opposing the genocide. In spite of the then US Ambassador

Archer K. Blood (I think) sending a message describing the incept of the horrific genocide on the night of Mar. 25th, 1971, in which 10,000 people were killed in the capital city that night. Yes, the US Govt. ignored their own officials.

I could, and many others could go on and on. But to make it all short, the circumstances of that situation and today's Iraq crisis are totally incongruent. So disparate that it merits not an iota of any comparison.

And last of all, like hundreds of thousands of Americans which includes me, oppose this unilateral, unjust and immoral impending attack on Iraq. America is now my country, too. I have every right to dissension without reprisal for my concerns for the betterment of America today, tomorrow and everyday. I think of America's future for future generations not just here but the rest of the world.

K. Kabir, NY, USA

# **Coaching culture**

Over the last two decades, the coaching culture has made a strong ground in Dhaka City. Even the directors of the coaching centres have formed the association to make their ground too strong to be abolished somehow or the other. I am writing this letter for the people who are willing to seek help of a coaching centre particularly for IELTS, TOEFL, SAT etc. preparation to make them conscious of this very coaching culture with the help of a bitter experience of mine.

Sometime ago, I went to a well-known coaching centre for TOEFL preparation with great enthusiasm. But just after attending a few classes, my eagerness was replaced by disinclination. I realised that it is no use learning English with a teacher who does not Abu Zafar Md. Saleh

Later, I got to know that this teacher memorised some notes and would deliver the same notes and lectures in every class. Most of the coaching centres bear the same condition with a few exceptions.

For the people who are interested particularly for TOEFL, SAT, IELTS, I suggest buying some study materials, practising themselves and examining performance with the help of a friend or someone else. If anyone thinks that he must need the help of a coaching centre, I suggest considering going to a coaching centre as a last resort and choose it very carefully. I also draw the attention of the conscious section to this alarming state of our coaching centres.

know English better (if not worse) than I do. Senapara Parbata, Mirpur

