

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.



Bias reporting and Iraq war

BBC comments the direct missile attack on shopping centre in Baghdad killing dozens of civilians as "unfortunate"; goes on to worry this will undermine the credibility of coalition claims their weapons are "precision - guided " and "smart". This is the height of callous perfidy, a very cruel joke.

May I tell BBC, your biased reporting and comments are insensitive, devoid of minimum decency; decency being a trait the British people would have proudly claimed to be uniquely their own. If death by bombing which your Prime Minister claims so loudly is to "liberate" the Iraqi people, then we request him to please spare them from your government's liberating missions; the Iraqi people are, and have been, far better off without your benign work. And since your comment does not go beyond being unfortunate mistake, let me challenge your comment with an equally callous comment to say that the Twin Tower attack was simply the "unfortunate" act by a few frenzied unstable individuals thus absolving them of their culpability.

Is Blair who is struggling so hard to be the prime mover in this campaign dreaming for Britain those days of securing a new Iraq mandate? A very distant dream surely for much water has flown down the Tigris and Euphrates since those days of gunboat diplomacy.

Hussain Dhaka

While I was thinking to write about Western media's unforgivable failure in reporting the truth about Anglo-American aggression in Iraq then I came across Robert Fisk's report on Basra. Though I knew BBC and other Western media were not authentic about this aggression in Iraq, this report precisely pointed out that the claim of "controlling Basra by the British troops" was nothing but a blatant lie.

Although BBC and other media serve the news as quoted items under credibility of names like Commander so and so, or Pentagon and as such they cannot be directly blamed. Then what are their 'front' reporters doing?

Some falsehood is inherited. In a speech at Florida, Bush said that theirs is a coalition of 48 countries. I think Bush himself cannot even name the 48 countries.

During the initial days of aggression, BBC sent news like "Allied forces were 150 km (the exact figure I could not remember) inside Iraq." They did not show any of the dead or captured Anglo-Americans. They also pictured the surrender of "a division" of Iraqi troops. In the picture what we have seen that some civil dressed Arabs under gunpoint were being taken somewhere else. Now it is a germane consideration "how such a big number of troops were able to change their military costume and where was the "green room" in the desert?" Tomy Franks claimed once "our advance is rapid and dramatic". BBC carried out its responsibility by putting these two words (rapid and dramatic) in inverted commas. To me BBC was always biased. From today it is a factory of falsehood.

M.U. Chowdhury
One-mail

"In anticipation of war crunch"

I read your editorial of "In anticipation of war crunch" March 25 concerning America's role in the war that is now going on in Iraq. Your kind comments about American values were deeply touching. More touching, though, was your accurate picture of how the war has demeaned those values.

As a proud American, I can only say that there are millions of us who agree with you and who will work as hard as we can to change what is happening and to replace the regime that has taken control of the White House by undemocratic means. I hope that we can restore the trust and faith that you and many of your readers have had in America.

In the meantime, I thank you for your clear and accurate picture of what has happened to our great country. I have shared your comments with many of my friends.

Cal Rich

Santa Cruz, CA, USA

"Operation Iraqi Freedom" - can words be anymore deceiving?

This is in reference to the letter "A question of credibility" by Esam Sohail (March 28).

The US along with other countries provided technologies to Saddam to create chemical weapons in the 80's.

Following the death of thousands of Kurds in 1988, Peter Galbraith (Senior Advisor to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 1979-1993) proposed economic sanctions on Iraq through the "Prevention of Genocide Act" to stop further development and use of chemical weapons by Saddam. His attempts were thwarted by the Regan administration because sanctions would have hurt American companies doing business with Iraq. I wonder where

hurt America's ally Turkey.

The Kurds requested the US to send them protective gears last summer fearing more chemical attacks by Saddam. The US is yet to send any gear.

I denounce the brutal oppression of the Iraqi people by Saddam. But at the end of the day, it is not Frankenstein but his creator that worries me more.

It is surprising that the majority of Americans have chosen to be

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby

"Anti-Americanism"

I would like to thank and sympathise with Kim for highlighting the difficulties being faced by Bangladesh garment houses doing businesses with the USA whilst so much anti-American sentiments have been whipped up following the outbreak of war with Iraq.

I am one of many British citi-

underestimate danger in case someone is hurt or killed, and they are blamed. Knowing this, it is very difficult for most of us to steer a path between being sensible and being paranoid.

I was in Halaughat on September 11", 2001 - and the months afterwards - the only foreigner for miles around. The local police offered me protection which was very nice of them, but I refused. (I have not refused this time.). Even

This is the right time to stop them and I believe Americans are courageous enough to do the right thing at the right moment. For god's sake my friends, there is no time ahead.

Eka Lalon
Uttara, Dhaka

About the war

First, I would like to thank you and your brave newspaper for taking a stand against the American led

War, Bush and Blair

Congratulations to *The Daily Star* for adding a daily supplement on the "WAR ON IRAQ". The contents are thoughtfully selected to give a balanced view of the war. Judging by the wide selection of news coverage from the print media, the TV and the Internet it seems that there is already a few cracks in the "Coalition of the willing" over the spoils of war. News of Halliburton's subsidiary getting the contract to extinguish the oil fires, SAA walking away with the contract for services to commence operations of Umm Qasr Docks is certainly not going to go down well in The British Parliament and the London's business community for sure!

Why else would Prime Minister Blair scurry off to meet his sole partner to discuss the participation of the UN on a post-war Iraq? It is quite obvious, that the British Government will be asked by the US to foot some the bills for a post war restructuring of Iraq, justifying to the British that the United States will be bearing the major portion of the cost. And in doing so, I am sure the British would like an equal share of the contracts, which so far has been given without tenders only to US companies.

I think Mr Blair has realised by now that by siding with the US, he has lessened the chances of British Firms gaining contracts to re-build Iraq, a profit making venture that has US companies scrambling to the Pentagon to get their share of the pie. Getting the UN roped into running the post war Iraqi administration instead of retired US Generals and diplomats might just help him land a "few business" in favour of the British!

Farhan Quddus, Old DOHS, Banani, Dhaka



were all the Americans then who now could not seem to stop denouncing Saddam's heinous activities?

When there was a Kurdish uprising following the 1990 Gulf War, America simply witnessed Saddam's tanks, helicopters and Republican Guard units killing the rebellious Kurds instead of preventing the killing. Any separatist movement in Iraq was feared to

misled by its own government's biased propaganda aided by the media for years after years. The American concept of peace, freedom and democracy lacks one critical component - TRUTH. With the increasing surge of anti-war movement in the US, that might change in the future. Until then, please try not to preach big words like freedom and credibility.

Omar Sharif

zens of Bangladeshi origin and I support the US and UK action to oust Saddam Hussein even though I know that it's illegal and its been conducted without UN backing. But I have decided to make an exception like many others since Saddam is a danger to world peace and security, and it's the best time to get rid of him and his regime.

So this uncertainty won't last long and believe me that the US and UK business will keep flowing to Bangladesh because we are very competitive in the region.

And so there is no reason for your Jewish American business man to keep away. And as for your charge that *The Daily Star* may be contributing to Anti-Americanism in Bangladesh, it's bit immature when you see so many letters with many views being published in this paper and also in many other Bangladeshi papers just like their counterparts in the UK. It's very educational to know and hear what others have to say and this is part of democratic press and process which should be encouraged and not hindered.

Manzoor H Ashraf
Kensington, UK

By reading Mr Kim's letter "Anti-Americanism" (March 25), I could not keep quite anymore.

Mr Kim, just for some monetary gain are you telling us to give up our conscientious mind, our dignity, our religion in the end to forget who we are? If you think we have become anti-American or anti-Jewish, can you blame us for that?

If we are to eradicate terrorism, you have to deal with the 'root cause'. You have to do justice, otherwise it is impossible. For example, in our Liberation War, those who fought for our country were heroes to us and we call them freedom fighters. On the other hand, the oppressors used to call them terrorist. I hope you see the difference now.

These days, the West do not do slave trading like they used to, by putting chains in their hands and legs and beating them up when they disobey, because now they have invented new tools like various foreign/donor organisations to do the same. With these new tools the West is spreading economic terrorism throughout the world. Look at Argentina and Indonesia. This is a new form of slavery called 'economic slavery'. Do you get my point Mr Kim?

Syeda Murshida Mahmood
Banani, Dhaka

Iraq war and the foreigners in Bangladesh

It is difficult to know what to do in the current crisis, as a British foreigner in your midst. Should I rush to the airport and leap on the first plane? At the moment, I want to stick around.

Mind you, I sympathise with the hard line on security that some embassies and employers have taken at a time like this. They care for their people - and they fear to

later, when the Bin Laden posters were for sale in some of the shops and someone said, over a loud speaker, "Kill the Christians. Support the Palestinians." I still felt safe because I trusted most of the people and was confident in the relationships I had built up over two years and people's awareness of my contribution to education in the respected local mission school. Moreover, I also resented any suggestion that I was manipulated through fear.

Thus I feel that being a face to which people can pin their prejudices has some value. I was buying a pair of shoes in Elephant Road a few days ago and was asked, "Your country?" I replied, in a conspiratorial whisper, in Bangla, "Today I am Italian!" When asked what I thought of the war, I groaned and said I was against it, but what DO we do with 'naughty boys' - in our homes, in our schools, on our streets and in our world? I hope, in this way, that I made them laugh, made them think, made them see someone from a nation that they disapproved of as still human - and that they also appreciated the fact that some foreigners were still going around spending money in the localeconomy.

Angela Robinson
Lalmatia, Dhaka

Boycotting is the answer

The US and UK have unleashed their war machine on Iraq after a long period of peace seeking pretence. To me, this is an invasion to gain economic benefits by the powerful to rob the powerless.

I have read a news item in The Daily Star wherein many instances of boycotting of US product and services have been reported around the globe to protest the Iraq invasion. I like this way of protest and appeal to our fellow countrymen to boycott the US and British products and services as much as they can. He was correct when Heiko Mueller, the Director of German bicycle manufacturer, Rieseund Mueller GmbH told Reuters, "Americans only pay attention when money is on the line..."

Sirajul Islam
Shyamoli, Dhaka

Americans, act now!

I love the characters played by Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, Eddy Murphy and Meg Ryan in their every movie. If those characters are truly American characters then I do like the Americans, rather I love them.

That's why I feel so sorry for them for they are so much ignorant about the satanic acts of their few politicians, that include Bush, Povel and Rumsfeld. These three characters are simply impossible. They don't look American, don't behave American and even don't speak American. Then how come they are American leaders! They just seem to be aliens and can only lead the Americans to hell.

invasion on Iraq. I always thought *The Daily Star* as a pro-West newspaper. Recently, my opinion has changed. *The Daily Star* is supporting the 99 per cent of Bangladeshi population except for some pro-American readers (who needs US visa, US business etc.).

S, Dhaka

"How I will fight Bush"

This is in regards to Noori Mostafa's ten point anti-American programme (March 30).

Number 1. Boycott all American/British food products including American beverages. Great suggestion. But why single out

American beverages? Why not boycott British beverages, like Virgin, as well? But don't forget to boycott Ovaltine and Horlicks.

I am also sure Noori didn't mean for us to stop at food and beverages. What about the best selling British/American product in Bangladesh; Benson & Hedges, 555 and Gold Leaf?

If you're going to boycott Coke, you'd better boycott B&H as well. You can probably buy French Gauloise at Gulshan 2.

Saladin
Dhaka

I absolutely loved Noori Mostafa's letter (March 30) with its 10 point suggestions.

Take for example number 10. Stop dreaming about coming to the USA and number 3. Ask your family members who have emigrated to the US/UK to come home. Both brilliant suggestions; but a bit weird coming from someone who's writing from Edison, New Jersey, USA.

I see that Noori promises to do the following. Fat chance of that happening. With the exception of the children of a few businessmen, the rest of the *deshis* in America can't be dragged back to Bangladesh for love or money.

MA, Dhaka

Mr Munasir Kamal of Dhaka and Mr Joseph Jabbar of Birmingham are right when they decide to boycott US products (March 24). Using indigenous substitutes in always good for the local economy to develop.

So Mr Kamal do try PRAN tomato Ketchup, Sauce and Chilli Sauce. You can even use their tomato Paste for cooking purposes. I have been doing so for years and do not miss Heinz anymore and all that for half the cost. Mr Jabbar, PRAN Cola is already in the market and that too is a good product. No more will I contribute to companies that "Pay Every Penny to Save Israel."

Sahmed, Shyamoli, Dhaka

I would like to add to that far-sighted letter by Arid Klokterhaug, bravely calling for a boycott of American products. I would presume we'd have to boycott the Brits as well, seeing that they're just as bloodthirsty as the Americans.

I would call on all our peacekeepers and the assorted anti-war activists to put their money where their mouth is. If you're serious about following Arid's lead in fighting Bush and Blair then don't stop at drinking Uir Cola rather than

Coke, that's too easy.

Boycott the best selling Anglo-American products in Bangladesh: cigarettes.

Benson & Hedges, 555 and Gold Leaf are all brands of British American Tobacco. Let's see you boycott that.

T Ali, Dhaka

Freedom for Iraqis

The entire Iraq has turned into a living hell with bombing and firing of the friendly invaders (!). It was said that civilians will not be hurt though a good number of people has been killed already. But that doesn't matter to people like Mr. Kamrul Naser (" War on Iraq: A different perspective", March 29).

They don't find anything wrong in the illegitimate attack on Iraq. Because they are eager to see the Iraqi people freed from dictatorship of Saddam, no matter whether civilians are killed or not. But I would like to ask Mr. Naser, how would those people who have lost their lives in this friendly attack enjoy the freedom brought by Bush?

Rumana Afroz
University of Dhaka

"Pro-war letters!"

This is in response to Fatima Ali's letter "Pro-war letters" (March 28th)

I have lived most of my life back in Bangladesh and not a single day had passed when I didn't have to struggle to keep the peace of my mind, so do not tell me about 'Peace loving Bangladeshis'. We are poor, weak, ignorant, often violent and crippled by religious sentiments. Of course that doesn't mean my memories of my beloved land is not the most precious moments of my life.

Anyway, I am for this war because I strongly and sincerely believe that dictators like Saddam must go. I am fully aware of American mishandling of Iraqi situation in the past but in my mere opinion I think the demise of this regime would bring a better future for Iraq. I had always been vocal against this dictator and would consistently keep doing so until he goes. By not bowing to the coalition forces and by not taking the offer of exile this evil dictator and his enslaved evil army has put the ordinary Iraqis before the cannon yet once more. I pray this to be the last.

Shuja, Canada

A war against humanity

I read an extract from the letter by one Sadir, Baghdad. He said - "It's heartbreaking to see my city set on fire, but who is to blame? Certainly Saddam Hussein but let us not forget that fact that he has been supported by the US and the UK for years to oppress his own people to fight neighbouring countries. Today the very same allies are liberating the Iraqis! Don't destroy my country Mr. Bush ... not in

our names."

Well, Sadir, sadly but truly Mr. Bush and his 'foreign secretary', Mr. Blair doesn't seem to care for humanity or your country or your people; the only thing they seem to care for is your oil.

But they are not fools, they know a good number of their people (whose vote they need to remain in power) are against the war, and so they are trying to give the on going war a noble cause "the

liberation of the people of Iraq".

Mr Sadir, we just can hope that one day the butcher of humanity will be thrown off from power by his own people who have taken the streets today. Still sadly many more innocent lives will be lost before that ... and even more sadly...the murderer(s) won't have to face trial for the crimes.

Yousuf Aziz
Dhaka Cantonment

