

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.

"Students or sardines"

As a regular reader of your newspaper, I had the misfortune to read the news story "Students or sardines" (June 1) in the "Star City" page. Comparing students with sardine fish of the herring family smacks of bad taste. The analogy has been misplaced.

Every good news story needs some research and thoughts. The story in question lacks these qualities. It begins with a bland statement that 15000 non-resident students of Dhaka University commute the campus everyday and that the university has only 23 buses. It is not my intention here to defend the university authority on the transport problem of the students. What I am interested to know is: do all the 15000 students of the Dhaka University depend on university transport for commuting as has been assumed by your correspondent?

The story is full of faulty sentences and inappropriate use of words and expressions. Expressions such as "students commute around the Dhaka University campus", "there is a 52 seated bus for every 290 students", "to face this conveyance urgency", "go all the way home as a standing passenger", "overcrowding and heat causes fainting and nausea", have been wrongly used in this story.

The story is very weak in composition and coherence as is evident from the conversation between your correspondent and a commuting female student: "At least I feel quite secure on university buses, while women have to face more harassment on public transports". Besides, your correspondent has a very weak sense of grammar.

As you will appreciate, such weak and faulty stories slowly but surely tarnish the image of a newspaper. **Quazi Abdul Mannan**
Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism
University of Dhaka

Power failure in Mohammadpur

Power supply situation in Mohammadpur adjacent to



At the gun point all the time!

Arabs and Israel

I read Mr. Yahya's letter 'Israel and Arabs' with the same surprise with which I have been reading letters from the likes of him, the Bangladeshi Americans, who have in these columns been praising the Bushes, the Blairs and the Rumsfelds and blaming their fellow countrymen of inferiority complex. As it happens, when one wants to be accepted in a society about which he/she has a complex, he/she tries to be holier than the pope. Mr. Yahya is one more example of this breed of our ex-countrymen.

Coming back to his views, no one in his right mind would say that the leaders he has named from the Arab world are anyone's heroes. They all lead corrupt regimes that no one in the Arab world respect them; rather they are patronised by those countries and leaders who seem to awe Mr. Yahya with respect and pride. Or did Mr. Yahya miss on CNN Mr. Bush's broad smiles in the company of the leaders that he has named as "thugs" during his recent trip to Middle East? The characters of the Arab leaders and the issue of the Middle East conflict are two different things altogether. Whether these leaders blame the Israelis or not, the Israelis should be the object of the worst criticism of any right thinking person anywhere in the world or belonging to any religion. The state of Israel was created illegally in 1948 on Arab land.

This illegal occupation dispersed 2 million Palestinians from their homeland. Not satisfied with this illegal occupation and creation of an illegal state; the Israelis extended their borders and usurped most of the land belonging to the Palestinians in the West Bank. Today they are keeping the Palestinians in the West Bank under military occupation, taking away from them their past, their present and their future. They are pretending to be sincere to negotiations on the so-called Road Map by agreeing to give up land that they have usurped in the first instance.

What have the Palestinians done? Well as people such as Mr. Yahya would say, they have fought to free their homeland from foreign occupation. Then, they have demanded the implementation of UN Resolutions for their freedom. They have shown their determination to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of their motherland. Finally, they have shown their determination that they will either remain free or not live at all. These are qualities for which any nation should rightly find a place in the annals of history as a nation to be held in the highest esteem. But when it comes to the Israelis, or fighting the Israelis, the causes are irrelevant; or so it seems.

Shahjahan Ahmed
Dhanmandi, Dhaka

Shaymoli, Rayer Bazar and Dhanmondi area was never stable. But during the past few weeks it has become unbearable. Everyday power goes off at least a number of times and often the major part of a day is passed in fixing the lines.

We have been facing this problem for quite sometime now—every evening the power goes off and remains so till nine or ten p.m. It is really tiring and troublesome spending such a long period in total darkness with fans not working during these hot and humid days.

Is it too much to ask the authorities concerned to look into the matter and do something about it? **Primal K. Bhattacharjee**
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

A note to the Roads and Highways Department

Like many other well-wishers of Dhaka's overall improvement, I would like to express my thankfulness to all the concerned parties involved in the DUTP (Dhaka Urban Transport Project) due to the fact that some effort from the government (with the help of international organisations) has been pouring down to improve our road networks in Dhaka. The quality of road divider and the renovation of road surface undoubtedly cast a hope of new horizon of betterment to our environment.

I would like to add a few words here on issues of the road-networking scheme. It is perhaps a rational gesture from our conscious citizen to know the exact condition of our road networking which aims for an international standard. One basic question is that whether there is any scheme to add road-marking (Thermoplastic Road Marking) on the roads which are under refurbishment. For instance, zebra crossing (white); no parking line (yellow); road dividers (white/yellow) to create lanes for cars to follow; bus stop sign on the road (white); slow speed sign (yellow), etc. all should be drawn on the road surface which help the drivers to drive their vehicles in a disciplined manner. This is an international practice and Ban-

'Probe Report on Bangladesh's World Cup Debacle'



After reading 'Probe Report on Bangladesh's World Cup Debacle', I realised how far we were from the real picture of what was actually happening inside the Cricket Board.

The entire nation was waiting to see our team win just a single match and look what the people who were involved in it did. The manager wasn't doing his job, the coach inefficient, our Captain's manner (who was actually supposed to be a hero) and the players' irresponsible attitude, were all to be blamed. I thought that BCB wasn't listening to the players, well they weren't, but the player's weren't paying attention to their job either. I must congratulate the two members of the committee for their great job. Thank you Daily Star, thank you very much for publishing the report even before the BCB announced it (and even before anyone else managed to get hold of it), for most of the inquiry reports in this country remain unpublished. It has really given the cricket lovers throughout the country an insight to what was really going on wrong with Bangladesh Cricket.

Sumaiya Zulfikar, Gulshan, Dhaka

I have just finished reading the BCB "top-secret" report in your daily. Now as you have published the report, BCB is forced to disclose it to the media.

Thank you for your effort to let us know the truth.
Tarek, MI, USA

I should thank *The Daily Star* for publishing the most talked about report of the recent time on June 6, 2003. It is regrettable that the BCB chief received the report on May 27, and he did not keep his promise by publishing the report to the public, forget about publishing on the same day, as the DS mentioned in the introduction. The fact finding committee should be lauded for what it did through its inquiry. After reading the report, I think these two persons of the committee who interviewed, analysed and commented on the issues in the DS published report had done their best to find out the shortcomings. Still, if DS could obtain the recommendations of the committee, that would help us to understand what did the committee thought for a remedy. The recommendations would also give us an idea how the BCB and the sports ministry are going to handle the total affair.

It is appreciated that the committee interviewed the Manager, the Coaches, the Captain, some players, the selectors and the past and present BCB Presidents. The interview with these persons revealed the naked truth that they did not bother to discharge their sacred duties to nation as a whole at the opportune moments, thus bringing the total disaster for the Bangladesh Cricket Team in the Cricket World Cup 2003 in South Africa.

The report included interviews and observations which showed the persons assigned with various duties and responsibilities in the World Cup team 2003 were "neither competent, dedicated, sincere or committed enough to perform their duties." Knowing that the Manager, the Coach and the Captain are not on talking terms, neither the Selector nor the BCB President came forward to solve the problem. The committee felt that "inadequate management, lack of leadership and the lack of guidance of a good coach" were reason for the poor performance in the World Cup.

I hope the BCB shall take appropriate measures, and simultaneously inform the public, and steer the cricket team to usher in glorious victories or better results in the future matches.

Sajjad Waheed, Dhaka

I would like to congratulate you for publishing the probe report on World Cup debacle of Bangladesh cricket team. It is a commendable job that your team of young journalists has done. Please keep up this spirit for future to save the country from the hands of some dishonest vested interest motivated people.

Now I feel that we still have some good people back home working sincerely for the country.

However, I request the Sports Minister to take stern action against those who have been found responsible for the pathetic show of Bangladesh cricket team in the World Cup. No one should be spared.

M. T. Khan
The University of Warwick, UK



Mystery unearthed!

gladesh is no exception as far as the road safety and discipline is concerned.

I hope to draw the kind attention to those who are involved in the road development.

Dr. Q M Mahtab-uz-Zaman
Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture
BRAC University

America remains the world's only "hyper power"

I am writing with reference to "St. Petersburg, Evian and Jordan," by Ambassador Arshad-uz Zaman (June 5).

In his otherwise interesting article, Ambassador Zaman might have missed the point when he writes: "Whereas the US continues with the trappings of a Superpower, France can be no match. Yet the truth is that France speaks in the name of the emerging powerhouse, European Union (EU). We live in a world where everything is in a state of flux. Since 11 September 2001, US has lost her superpower status and there is a great power void throughout the world. Thus US continues to live under the illusion that she is the sole superpower, whereas it is really a multipolar world. The pushing and shoving that we have witnessed in the recent past is a manifestation of this phenomenon."

The spectacular American victories in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown that the United States remains by far the world's only what French newspaper *Le Monde* calls a "hyper power." The terrorists may have killed some unsuspecting civilians by hijacking airliners, but they have not made any dent on America's military and economic prowess.

Similarly, with lightening-fast victories in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is the United States which calls all the shots in the world. Though the French want a united Europe that operates as a new global power that will act as a check on the U.S. dominance - with France in the driver seat, French President Jacques Chirac had difficulty in convincing other EU countries like Britain, Italy and Spain who remain strongly committed to trans-Atlantic alliance. As such, Mr. Zaman is not correct when he says that France speaks in the name of the European Union (EU). France speaks only in the name of itself, Germany and Belgium - a decidedly small minority.

Contrary to what Mr. Zaman says, the United States remains the world's only military, political and economic super power with a global reach.

Mahmood Elahi
Ottawa, Canada

"Kashmir problem"

Mr. AK Azad has given a brief and largely correct account of Kashmir account in his May 07 letter "Kashmir Problem". I would like to add a few points to further clarify the problem.

In the end of 19th century, the British sold Jammu and Kashmir for fifty lakh rupees to Dogra maharaja who wasn't even a Kashmiri. As a matter of fact the liberation movement in the Valley started short time after the installation of Hindu Dogras due to their tyrannical rule.

Under the "Principal of Partition" plan, Muslim majority areas of eastern and western parts of sub-continent were supposed to go to

Pakistan and Hindu majority areas to India. The ruler of princely states were given option to either join India or Pakistan by keeping in view the wishes of the people of the state. What that meant was that ruler couldn't decide to join either India or Pakistan by ignoring the wishes of the people of the state.

North-west Frontier Province was not a princely state. Over 90 per cent people in that state were Muslims but Congress Party was in power in that province. At the request of Congress leaders a plebiscite was conducted in NWFP to ascertain the wishes of the people. Over 90 per cent people voted in favour of Pakistan and NWFP joined Pakistan.

There were three states whose rulers' faith was different than the subjects of those states. While Hyderabad and Junagarh and Munavar had Muslim rulers, the majority population were Hindus. In case of Jammu and Kashmir the ruler was Hindu but majority of subjects were Muslims. Muslims were certain that Jammu and Kashmir will go to Pakistan.

Nizam of Hyderabad decided to go independent and Nawab of Junagarh and Munavar opted for Pakistan. India invaded Hyderabad and annexed Junagarh and Munavar on the pretext that majority of people of those states were Hindus. But in Kashmir things were different. The liberation struggle giants the Maharaja's rule was more than 50 years old. Maharaja announced Kashmir's accession with India. India landed its army in Kashmir against the will of the people and a war breakout between India and Pakistan. When Pakistan gained control of third of Kashmir, India took the case to United Nations.

At the United Nation case of Kashmir was discussed for fourteen days. Both India and Pakistan fully participated in the debate. Security Council passed several resolutions and declared Kashmir a disputed territory and demanded that the future of Kashmir be decided by conducting a plebiscite in the State.

Both India and Pakistan agreed and endorsed the resolutions. Nehru gave his solemn pledge to give people of Jammu Kashmir their right of self-determination. But even after passage of 55 years that promise to Kahmiris by the Indian leaders has not been honoured. Pakistan kept on demanding to implement the resolutions. India started using delaying tactics and later openly in defiance of UN resolutions annexed its part Jammu and Kashmir.

Irfan Ahmed
Dallas, Texas, USA

It is a joke all right, but we ain't laughing

Now we have this warning from the "policemen" of Earth, that Iran, N. Korea and other countries should abandon their program of developing nuclear weapons. Although the reason for this warning may be obvious to many people, I do have some reservations about this.

They said the spread of WMD is "the pre-eminent threat to international security". What is this rubbish and which international security are they talking about? Yes, the world has become much safer now and perhaps that is why Blair has surrounded his parliament with concrete blocks all around them. British

people have never seen such wicked phenomenon in their history before!

Why should other countries not developed nuclear? Is it because nuclear is bad and dangerous for our planet? If the answer is NO it is not, then I see no reason for all those leaders to flex their muscles and start making everyone nervous once again - just to start another of their personal, oil-lubricated wars! However, if the answer is YES it is dangerous, then we do need to consider a few things here. For a start, those leaders who actually pushed for this "warning", themselves hold some of the biggest stockpile of nuclear weapons. If that wasn't enough, some of those "guardian angle" countries are now spending billions extra in developing "mini-nukes". So are they also going to stop their weapons programs? You see, jokes don't get any more rotten than this!

You can never make this planet safe -which is not your real intention,

The government should downsize itself and reduce spending. We are in an economic limbo and the Minister of Finance should not take steps that might lead to a fall in national spending.
Yahya USA

The nightmare of transportation in Dhaka

There is an issue that is being repeatedly ignored by the very people who should take notice of it. That issue is the arbitrary way that the transportation system is being organised for Dhaka.

The municipal authorities, from whichever department, are soon going to ban rickshaws on a number of major thoroughfares in the city. When this happens, rickshaws will be restricted to a few roads in Dhaka and commuters will have to use other means of transportation elsewhere. Now I ask you, how

Nazmul Huda said about not allowing Bangladesh to be the dumping ground for old models is very laughable. Importing vehicles on the scale required to make up for banning rickshaws will be economically crippling for this country and I don't see any serious plans to set up a local car factory very soon. I have just one last thing to say to everyone: wake up, please.

Ahsan Dhaka

S Q Chowdhury and OIC

Recently Bangladesh named S Q Chowdhury as the candidate for the post of secretary general of OIC. This has already created a lot of controversy. Mr. Chowdhury had been accused for his pro-Pakistan role during our Liberation War. This is enough to refrain the government from nominating him as a candidate. Mr. S Q Chowdhury was also expelled from BNP for his controver-

ideas told substantiated by facts or quotes or references. Its a good game but players should play fairly. I think, anyone can make their points but no guesswork, please. Supporting someone or some idea should not be turned into collaboration.

Let me answer the writer who wrote 'the US has not found the WMDs because they have been moved'. I want to quote a Washington Post report of June 5, 2003 wherein the writer of the above mentioned remark would get his answer. The report says, 'Multiple visits to the CIA by Vice President Dick Cheney and a top aide over the past year created an environment in which some analysts felt they were being pressured to make assessments of Iraq data fit the administration's policy objectives'. The report cited an unnamed senior CIA official as saying that the visits by Cheney and his chief of staff to question the analysts 'sent signals, intended or otherwise that a certain output was desired from here.' The report also

Eid-ul-fitr and HSC

This is in response to Mr Omar's letter (June 6) on the compulsory HSC question about Eid-ul-fitr. Mr. Omar totally missed the point on what ground I expressed my strong objection towards the issue. According to Mr. Omar, no matter what religion one belongs to, he or she must or should know about Eid-ul-fitr as it is the largest Muslim festival in Bangladesh. He also mentioned how at his colony, he and his non-Muslim neighbours celebrate Eid-ul-fitr.

However what Mr. Omar forgot, is the equal opportunity factor associated to this very issue. A Muslim student will always get an upper hand over his or her contemporary non-Muslim one to write on the issues which are very much related to his/her religion. And by knowing this, why should the examination board



Is it all about Eid?

we knew that all along and now it is getting clear even further- by wagging wars on people based on false evidence and lies. You do not tell people to give up their weapons and then start killing them for complying with international law. Iraq WAS complying fully and still it was bombed. So my message to these leaders is: keep your jokes to yourselves.

Azad Miah
Oldham, UK

Credit cards and VAT

The proposed VAT on the use of credit cards (Jankantha June 07) is not a consumer friendly decision. The Central Bank should be commended for floating the exchange rate. However, this tax on the use of credit cards will hurt consumption and have adverse effect on the economy.

irresponsible can the city authorities get? The rickshaw is the one major reasons that Dhaka city is not as polluted as other mega cities are with a similar population figure. The more number of buses you introduce onto the streets, the less the space there is for other vehicles and, considering the reckless drivers in charge of the buses, the more accidents you will have.

Now let us consider the CNG vehicles. The fact remains that owning and running a fleet of CNG vehicles is a major hassle. CNG vehicles are not practical considering the fact that gas supply is getting limited by the day.

Then there are serious allegations regarding the import of buses and other vehicles. The process of import and sale appears to benefit certain businessmen more than it benefits the buyers. What Mr.

sial role. A few days ago he made some insulting remarks about our women and culture as well. How can the govt. nominate a person who doesn't have minimum respect for his nation?
Jabed Sufian, On e-mail

Debate on WMD

After the war on Iraq was declared by President Bush, some of his staunch supporters began appearing in *The Daily Star* Letters Page. They are making their points and I personally take this in good spirit since there are some voices heard at last on the pro-Bush front. I do not like to name them but one of them wrote 'the US has not found the WMDs because they have been moved'. Well, but how did the writer know that? Any reference? Taking part in a debate requires facts or

cited intelligence officials as saying that visits to CIA headquarters by a vice president are unusual.

The newspaper reported that former and current intelligence officials said they felt a continual drumbeat not only from Cheney but also from Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and, to a lesser extent, CIA Director George Tenet, to find information or write reports in a way that would help the administration make the case that invading Iraq was urgent.

It is the readers of *The Daily Star* to decide what is fact and fiction.

Sirajul Islam
Pisciculture Housing Society, Shyamoli, Dhaka