



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.

Biman in bad shape



Your front-page news item (18 Feb) under the above heading is very disturbing and sad news for a national flag carrier.

As far as I remember since 1976 Biman has been a target of manipulation and interference by all governments that came to power. Since commencement of Hajj flights last December, Biman landed in a quagmire. Now the aircrafts are getting grounded one after another.

Ziauddin Ahmed On e-mail

Bishwa Ijtema: alternative site

I very much appreciate the opinion expressed by Air Cdre Ishfaq Ilahi Chowdhury on Feb 08 in your daily regarding shifting of the present Ijtema site from the bank of river Turag in Tongi to either side of Jamuna Bridge approaches.

The number of participants in Bishwa Ijtema is increasing every year and as reported it is going to cross 3 million soon. It is the second largest congregation of the Muslims and devotees from most of the Muslim countries are visiting Bangladesh in greater numbers.

The present location is valuable and the prime land is very much within the Dhaka Metropolitan city area. This land should be better utilised to attain economic benefit or social uplift through education and training by setting up more industries or schools/colleges/technical institutes.

for setting EPZ or any other institution around the capital city is not available.

Alternately, the government can also study the feasibility of shifting the Bishwa Ijtema site to Sholakia in Kishoregonj where the largest Eid Congregation is held every year.

Zoha On e-mail

Killing of teachers

I think nobody will overlook the consequences of the nasty student and teacher politics in the public universities. Over the decades public universities have experienced innumerable bloody clashes between rival student organisations to gain supremacy on the campus, leaving many students dead.

Central political parties as well as teacher politics have shaped student politics leading to violence. Political leaders have close nexus with teachers and vice-versa for their mutual benefits. Removal of elected VCs and appointing VCs loyal to the ruling party have been the practice in public universities.

There are many instances of this kind of malpractice, which have ruined the public universities' reputation.

One of the most serious consequences of politics has been the assassination of our teachers who opposed all sorts of illegal practices. We have lost Prof. Humayun Azad, Prof. Yunus

Humayun Azad, Prof. Yunus

and lastly Prof. Taher has been added to list.

We may think of overhauling the 1973 University Act.

Mallik Akram Hossain The University of Hong Kong Hong Kong

Be compassionate

In recent years, mother's day, father's day, Valentine's day etc. have been introduced only to serve the interests of companies which sell greeting cards.

In order to show respect and love for the dear ones, we need to show compassion throughout the year.

Michael Smith, US

An abrupt end

The dream has been shattered, the enthusiasm has died. The dream run of the Bangladesh under-19 cricket team had an abrupt end. The early exit from the quarter finals was quite unexpected.

Batting is the strongest department of the team but the batsmen failed miserably. Though the team won all the three group matches convincingly but the batting didn't click.

Over confidence was one of the main reasons for the failure. It is true for every team in every sport.

The notable example was the failure of France & Argentina in the 2002 World Cup football.

Though there was no selection debate & no one questioned the selection, I couldn't understand why an all-rounder like Marshal Ayub was out of the team. He proved the selectors wrong in the just concluded Dhaka Premier League with some scintillating performance.

The early exit from the World Cup is not the end of the world. The players will soon represent Bangladesh. So we must nurture them carefully.

Solaiman Palash East Jurain, Dhaka

Weather forecast by TV stations

I find that except BTV other TV channels in Bangladesh do not telecast

"Weather Forecast" for the benefit of their viewers. The weather forecast is very important for office goers, students, farmers, business people and travellers.

With proper information of "weather" everyone can plan their work schedule in advance. This will save lot of time and make people more efficient.

It may be noted that BBC gives

the world news every hour and weather forecast of the major cities of the world at regular intervals.

We should move with the times and introduce new programmes for the benefit of the people.

I. Haq On e-mail

Dealing with corruption

After being five times champions in corruption according to TIB reports, we have seen a number of dialogues, seminars or discussions throughout this country. An interesting article by Dr. Md. Yunus about corruption was published in a Bengali newspaper which was appreciated by most of the readers.

I am a conscientious and responsible citizen of this impoverished country and would like to suggest the following reforms.

Appointment to all constitutional posts including that of the head of the caretaker government be made by the president on the advice of the government duly approved by the parliament.

Let us not forget our fight to establish Bengali as mother tongue in 1952 and to win independence in 1971. We need another FIGHT against corruption.

Miraz Ahmed Dhaka University

"Bhalobasha Dibosh"

Valentine's Day, a festival of love, has been celebrated in Bangladesh almost every year with high fervour following other cultures. In the name of the Valentine's Day what happens in the big hotels and restaurant is really ridiculous.

Arif Laskar Jahangirnagar University

Biharis' plight

It is really a pity that when the Election Commission has very rightly, following the relevant High Court decision, taken up the task of enlisting the so-called BIHARIS in the 2006 voters list, one Dhaka daily



Reforms

For some time now one of the major political parties has been agitating for reforms in the Election Commission and caretaker government i.e. they are only concerned about those matters that directly affect their chances of getting elected and no other anomaly draws their attention.

I am a conscientious and responsible citizen of this impoverished country and would like to suggest the following reforms.

Appointment to all constitutional posts including that of the head of the caretaker government be made by the president on the advice of the government duly approved by the parliament.

I feel that our parliamentary system also needs a major shake-up. Westminster style parliamentary democracy suits a developed and civil society and not a poor, illiterate and economically backward country such as ours.

What I feel a concern for me and possibly for many others is a different subject. The subject matter is how long still further the miserable plight of the 'Biharis', who have been labelled so as a clear misnomer, because, in fact, they were the very unfortunate migrants from various Indian territories including albeit some from the State of Bihar following the partition of the British India in August 1947, would continue even now after nearly 35 years.

The willing among the lot in the so-called 'Geneva Camps' who were not born in Bangladesh after 1971 and would declare their loyalty to Bangladesh Statehood, 90% of them is known to declare so, could right way be given the

and very seldom they vote for individuals. Let's take the example of Dr. Kamal Hussain, any parliament will be proud to have him among their midst as he is a highly respected politician but without the backing of a major political party he cannot even get elected.

So we choose party and not individual. I, therefore, suggest that instead of having a demarcated constituency we should have five parliamentary seats for every district.

The voters will vote for political party and its symbol and for every 1/5th votes cast in favour of a party, it will get one seat in the parliament. Besides being members of the parliament these elected MPs will also function as members of district development council and will oversee all development work of the district in association with the members of the existing elected members of the local government.

Function of the development council will be supportive and it will act as facilitator to the local governments to expedite development work. This way the elected MPs, besides enacting laws, will also be associ-

ated with local development work which the voters of the district expect from their elected representatives.. This system I am sure will address many of the ills that plague our politics.

Above is an outline of my thoughts and ideas. I would request readers of DS to elaborate on this and give their views so that we can have a better political environment.

Salahuddin Ayubi Dhanmondi, Dhaka

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We congratulate the opposition leader for joining parliament to place reform proposal for caretaker government and electoral system. We, the common people, start understanding the necessity of the reform seeing the political situation turning violent. The CEC has failed to win public confidence.

The AL should stop calling hartals which cause sufferings to the people.

The two major political parties must work together for the greater interest of the country.

Roney On e-mail

February 21, as International Mother Language Day to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism."

Diverse communities and groups make up the population of Toronto whose residents come from over 200 countries and speak more than 170 languages and dialects. The City of Toronto values the contributions made by all its peoples and believes that the diversity of the history, language, heritage and traditions among its residents has strengthened Toronto.

The City of Toronto recognises that language is the cornerstone of culture and provides a means of communication among people to create a climate of understanding, leading to conditions of peace, dignity, respect, safety and harmony.

UNESCO proclaimed February 21, as International Mother Language Day in 1999 in honour of the many languages in the world. The resolution was sponsored by Bangladesh and adopted unanimously by all Members States of UNESCO.

Mr. Sona Kanti Barua Bengali Literary Association, Toronto

Ashura, I saw a programme on Boishaki television. The programme was regarding the significance of Ashura. The panel consisted of three learned scholars of Islam. They discussed the subject with great eloquence and mannerism. I liked the way they approached the idea and philosophy behind Ashura and the great sacrifice of Imam Hussain (R.A.).

Muntazir Zaidi Gulshan, Dhaka

International Mother Language Day

On this auspicious occasion 170 communities' leaders, scholars, poets and writers will adorn the speakers' chairs and Premier Dalton MacGuinity and Mayor David Miller will declare the International Mother Language Day with a celebration of the ceremony on February 21 evening 5:00pm to 10 : 00pm 2006 at the Toronto Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Toronto. All are welcome. Mayor David Miller declared in his official Proclamation, "It was unanimously agreed to observe

Denmark and freedom of expression

There is a country in this world where the government maintains a list of approved names for new born babies. The citizens of this country must choose a name from this list. If their desired name is not on the list, they have to make a special application to the government, which may not go in their favour.

that great country Denmark, which will do anything and everything for free speech and freedom of expression. Yes. While this Scandinavian country goes on preaching freedom of expression when it comes to humiliating Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) they do not even allow their citizens to name their children according to their wish. Needless to say there are many trivial

reasons provided by the Danish government for such restriction. However, at the end of the day, it is nothing but a restraint on freedom of expression (on a matter that is in fact, quite frivolous). If a Dane does not have the right to name his child as he wishes, then it is beyond my reasoning how can a Danish newspaper get away with publishing those disgraceful caricatures of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), an action which was undertaken with the clear intention of offending Muslims all over the world.

I generally do not like to state the obvious but that is sheer hypocrisy.

AC Brussels, Belgium

The notorious editor of the Danish newspaper reportedly went on an indefinite leave. This is not enough punishment for his heinous crime. The editor and publisher are yet to say sorry for their unpardonable misdeed. We strongly protest the publication of the said cartoon and demand that the culprits be brought to justice

Muhammad Mamunur Rahman Muhammadpur, Dhaka

I think it's reasonable to demand that Europeans newspapers and editors be



put on trial for slandering and maligning the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and in the process, the entire Muslim community. In most countries, legislation is in place to protect a man's dignity and reputation from slandering. But in this case, the entire Muslim world has been maligning.

So I believe it is justified to demand that the editors who published these cartoons are put on trial for slandering an entire community. Shahnewaz Siddique Uttara, Dhaka

Costly Planetarium!

I read a news article about Planetarium "Bhasani Novo Theatre". It read as follows; "The planetarium after political tangles for years was finally set up at a cost of Tk 133 crore at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar."

I did some rough calculations and 133 crore equals, correct me if I am wrong, Tk 1330 million. 1,330,000,000.00 BDT = 19,797,558.80 US Dollars.

How on this earth could a simple Planetarium have cost 19 Million US

Dollars when even in the West, in places like the US, Canada and UK you could easily buy AT LEAST 2 or 3 Planetariums including all buildings. I would challenge someone to call up GOTO or other planetarium suppliers and they will find that the maximum amount for the equipment

on its own, for the very largest system, would be around \$5 million, that is, one-fourth of the amount that Novo Theatre cost. Could anyone say why this Planetarium cost so much?

Zabidur Rahman Toronto, Canada

