



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.

## Bir Sreshtha Matiur Rahman

I am very pleased and happy to see that finally the remains of Bir Sreshtha Ft. Lt. Matiur Rahman's body has been brought to Bangladesh. I am the lone witness to the whole incident on August 20, 1971 at 11:21 am Karachi time.

I was on duty as an air traffic controller at PAF Base Masroor, Karachi. Late Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas was also my course mate and we had graduated together. One will find it difficult to imagine the incredible feat by which Bir Sreshtha Ft. Lt. Matiur Rahman took over the aircraft from the taxi track. He was never Rashid Minhas' flying instructor. All Bangladeshi pilots in Pakistan Air Force were taken off flying duties as soon as the crackdown started in the then East Pakistan. As a base safety officer, he approached the aircraft on the taxi track. He had



kept his personal car perpendicular on the taxi track, so that no one could approach him from behind. He managed to stop the taxiing aircraft of Rashid Minhas, and somehow got into the rear seat of the T-33 aircraft. He neither had his parachute, nor the flying helmet. I personally

saw the aircraft take off, while the two were fighting for the controls inside. Later, flying at tree top level they vanished into the Karachi sky.

The incident stunned the whole PAF Base in Karachi, which was a major base in Pakistan. Everybody wondered in amazement as to how a person could try to take over an aircraft from a major military base during wartime and succeed in taking off. The fact that he could not complete his mission was tragic indeed. I think that our young generation should be given the right information of his bravery.

**Captain Mohammed Fariduz Zaman**  
*Saudi Arabian Airlines*  
Jeddah, KSA

### HSC and hartals

On 13 and 14 June our HSC-exams (Geography 1st and 2nd paper) were cancelled because the Opposition did not care to call off hartal on these days. Ironically enough, recently the head of the opposition received a special prize from an obscure foreign organisation because of her contribution to humanity. The HSC-exams were rescheduled for 24 and 25 June. However, on the 25th of June, our dear college teachers called a strike, and again the HSC-exams are postponed, this time till the 1st of July.

It is outrageous that exactly the teachers who prepared us for our

HSC-exams, teachers who took crores of Taka through expensive private coaching-classes from us the students, to make us ready for these extremely important exams, teachers who told us to be sincere in our studies and exams, that these very teachers do not show any sympathy or respect for us, but willingly disturb our exams. Who cares, the coaching money is pocketed anyhow.

The explanation of the government, regarding the cancellation of the HSC-exams on the 25th June was another blow to the students. "These examination (HSC 25th June) have been deferred due to unavoidable circumstances," stated

the article in the "The Daily Star". Since when are teachers' strikes "unavoidable"? Is this the only excuse the government can give us?

It is very clear to all, that we, the students who like to study, who are not involved in politics, we the students who are sincere in our studies, cannot count on any respect and understanding from the opposition parties, the government and even from our own teachers.

This situation is very disturbing for all who care about Bangladesh.  
**Thowhida Nasrin Dalia**  
*Bharuakhalai, Ramu, Cox's Bazar*



In response to Oneil Osman's latest submission, I must correct some of his statements. It is true that Israel's electronics industry is one of the best in the world, but they are certainly not a rich nation. Over \$10 billion per year is given to it by the US, most of which is in advanced arms and ammunition. The principal reason for Pakistan's interest to engage in diplomacy is due to the Indian-Israeli axis and Pakistan doesn't want to be left on the sidelines. It's the same reason why Pakistan sided with the US in the so-called "War on Terror" against an enemy, which the Inter-Services Intelligence helped establish. Turkish interest in Israel is due to the latter willing to supply the former with advanced electronic components for its military - something that the United States is not willing to do. Bangladesh's Special Security Force receives training in Thailand - who is trained by the Israelis. During the 1971 War against Pakistan, there were initial contacts between Israel and the Bengalis because of the for-

mer's vested interest to see Pakistan divided, although due to projected political fallout, no collaboration took place.

The Zionist entity is a travesty of justice (against the indigenous Palestinian population) and unlike the US, if diplomatic relations is not a necessity, then why justifies its existence by engaging in diplomatic relations? The Zionists used their intelligence in ensuring support from major world powers - hence the reason why they can persistently flaunt UN regulations in the occupied territories and get away with it. Israel isn't going anywhere but if they want recognition, then this should be used as political leverage to gain something in return, otherwise recognition will only benefit an oppressor.

**Abdul M. Ismail**  
*Liverpool, UK*

## Dr. Yunus as next FM

Whichever the party or alliance comes to power in Bangladesh in the next general elections, Dr. Muhammad Yunus as their Finance Minister can be given serious thought. Dr. Yunus should be persuaded to take this responsibility for the greater interest of the country.

It is difficult to make changes in the environment. We want to make change but generally we cannot. But some people are born with inherent ability to make changes in the society single-handedly. Dr. Muhammad Yunus is such a person. He has already shown his efficiency and marked success revolutionizing micro-credit worldwide.

Dr. Yunus is a visionary. If he is given the responsibility of the finance ministry, he can do good things. If we want development



of this country, this proposal cannot be brushed aside by any of the major political parties.

**Dr. Md. Abdur Rouf**  
*Associate Faculty*  
*Dhaka Centre*  
*Royal Roads University,*  
*Canada*

### "Dilemmas of foreign currency reserves"

I am a Chinese citizen living in Dhaka and a loyal reader of your valuable paper. I want to draw your attention to the article titled "Dilemmas of foreign currency reserves" by Dr. Abudul A. Dewan in your newspaper on 7th, June, 2006. I enjoy reading your paper, as it is well organised and very informative. Many articles on your newspaper are neatly written and interesting. And Mr. Abudul A. Dewan's above article is one of them. But I am very sorry to find in the article that the author said something, which hurt my as a Chinese citizen. In his article, the author writes, "Table shows selected Asian countries with

the forex reserves (2005)", where he puts Taiwan and Hong Kong under the column, 'COUNTRIES'. Every person knows that Taiwan and Hong Kong (reverted to China in 1997) is not a country but part of China. I respect the independence of Bangladesh, and why should some Bangladeshi not respect China as a united country including Taiwan, which is internationally recognised. If I say Dhaka doesn't belong to Bangladesh, what will be the response from the Bangladeshis? I request the honourable editors of your paper to take this matter seriously and never let such things happen again.  
**Arthuryx**  
*On e-mail*