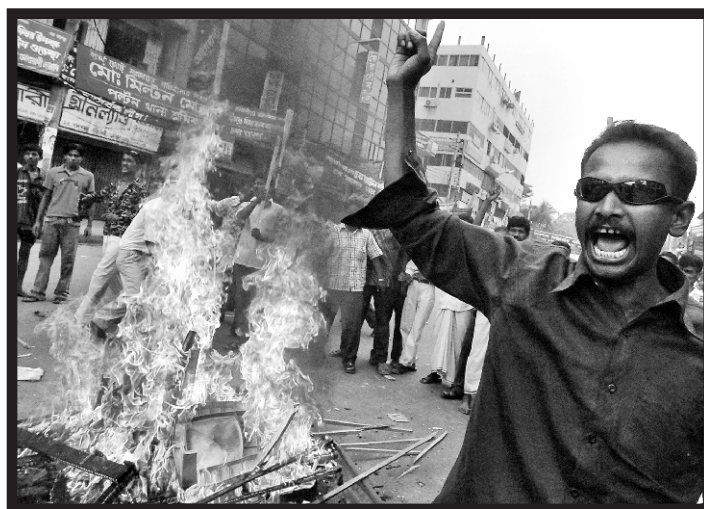
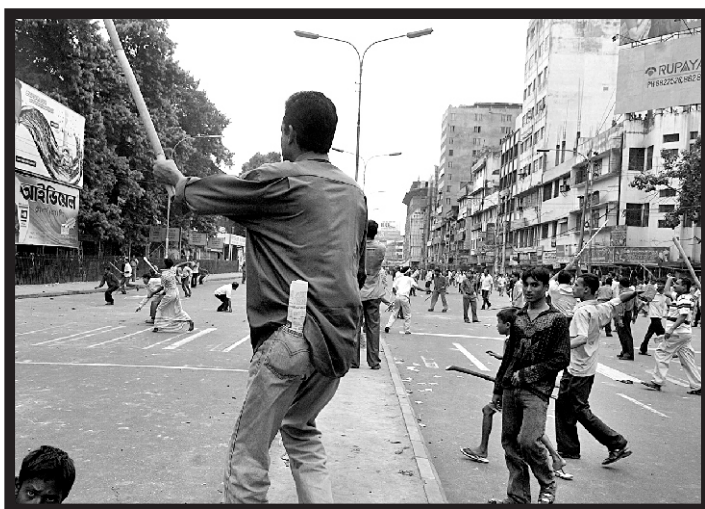


letters@thedailystar.net

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.



PHOTOS: AFP

# Destructive politics, helpless people

Recent political events are harmful for the nation as a whole. All the important sectors of our national life have been affected by the on-going political crisis.

Our political parties should try to change their attitude in the greater interest of the country.

**Farhad Khan**  
Uttara, Dhaka

The country and the people are burdened with countless problems. It will be a long list if one wants to make a log of the problems. A few of these are: uncontrolled corruption in all spheres of our life, governance in the hands of dishonest politicians, sky high prices of all essentials, miserable life due to regular power cuts, hartals leading to destruction of private and public properties, putting the hard currency earning garment industries on fire, ban on manpower export due to malpractice of manpower agencies etc. These are not in order

of priority because that may not be same for everybody.

We are really at a loss. How to solve these problems and who will do it? Primarily it is the responsibility of the government that is formed by the politicians.

In the editorial of the Daily Star of 18 Oct. 2006 under the title "Dialogue in limbo", the editor asked the leaders of the two big political parties why they play hide and seek with the nation. Leaving the nation in a state of anxiety the top leaders of the two dialogue partners left the country, one to perform Umrah and the other to visit family members in the heaven (as some say) on earth.

But what is the solution? There are many seminars and talk shows going on more or less every day and also many recommendations are being put forward for solving the problems the country is facing. But we do not see any result. Man creates problems, so laws

formulated by man really can not solve those effectively. Patients have to pay Tk. 40 lakh in bribes in a year for seats at DMCH, passport seekers are to pay Tk 21 crore in bribe every year, bank directors themselves are top loan defaulters, Biman is on the brink of collapse for corruption, touts feast on Eid tickets a few to mention from recent news in The Daily Star only. What laws can solve these problems? No system or law will work unless the people who run the system are honest. The time has come to turn our face to religion because if we believe in the lone Creator of this universe, then His laws should also guide our life. In Singapore one American youth was whipped at his buttock for spraying paint on public cars. Even Mr. Bill Clinton's request could not spare the boy. Here in Bangladesh no actions can be taken for burning and damaging private / public cars on the street.

Our religion "Islam" has prescribed definite punishment for some major offences which if applied shall bring peace to the society.

**Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque**  
Khalishpur, Khulna

I watched on ntv with horror and dismay how a group of activists of one political party beat and killed another activist from a rival party in front of thousands of others! How was this possible in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? And two others innocent passers-by were crushed under speeding vehicles in the skirmish. And who is going to be held responsible- the President? IGP? Justice Hasan? Khaleda or Hasina?

Why not the lawyers instead of appearing on TV with many different interpretations of the constitution that they wrote do something about these barbaric acts, which are putting the country back!

**Manik Lal Saha**

**Scarborough City Council,**  
Toronto, Canada

I am a simple citizen of a country where the simplest people can do the unthinkable works without any thinking.

I am surprised, shocked, horrified to see such activities of the crazy mob who killed a human being on a street. It was an unbelievable scene. I did not see our liberation war. It was the war against another nation. Many died for a reasonable and very noble cause. But what is this? The man who died was an activist of the Jamaat-e-Islam Bangladesh. Many others also died in such political mob beating on Saturday. A person who supports a certain political party can agitate, but can anyone be killed for supporting another party? Is it rational? It is not the matter of AL or Jamaat, it has become the question of our mental health.

I think we are the victims of

mass illusion, mass mental disorder.

**Parizad Choudhury**  
Akua, Mymensingh

If the streets and the maidans are captured now for the sake of a favourable caretaker government then who can confirm that in the next general election, which is supposed to be held in a single day throughout the country, thousands of voting-centres will not be captured for winning the elections?

Our politicians need to be a little more farsighted and honest.

**An ordinary citizen**  
One-mail

When on Saturday President Iajuddin Ahmed informed the political leaders that he was ready to take up the position of the Chief Advisor to the caretaker government, I thought he was joking; or may be it was to pressurize politicians to come to a consensus on the issue. I

never thought he really meant what he said, and eventually would proceed to take up this position. But he has disproved my presumption. He has been sworn in as the Chief Advisor.

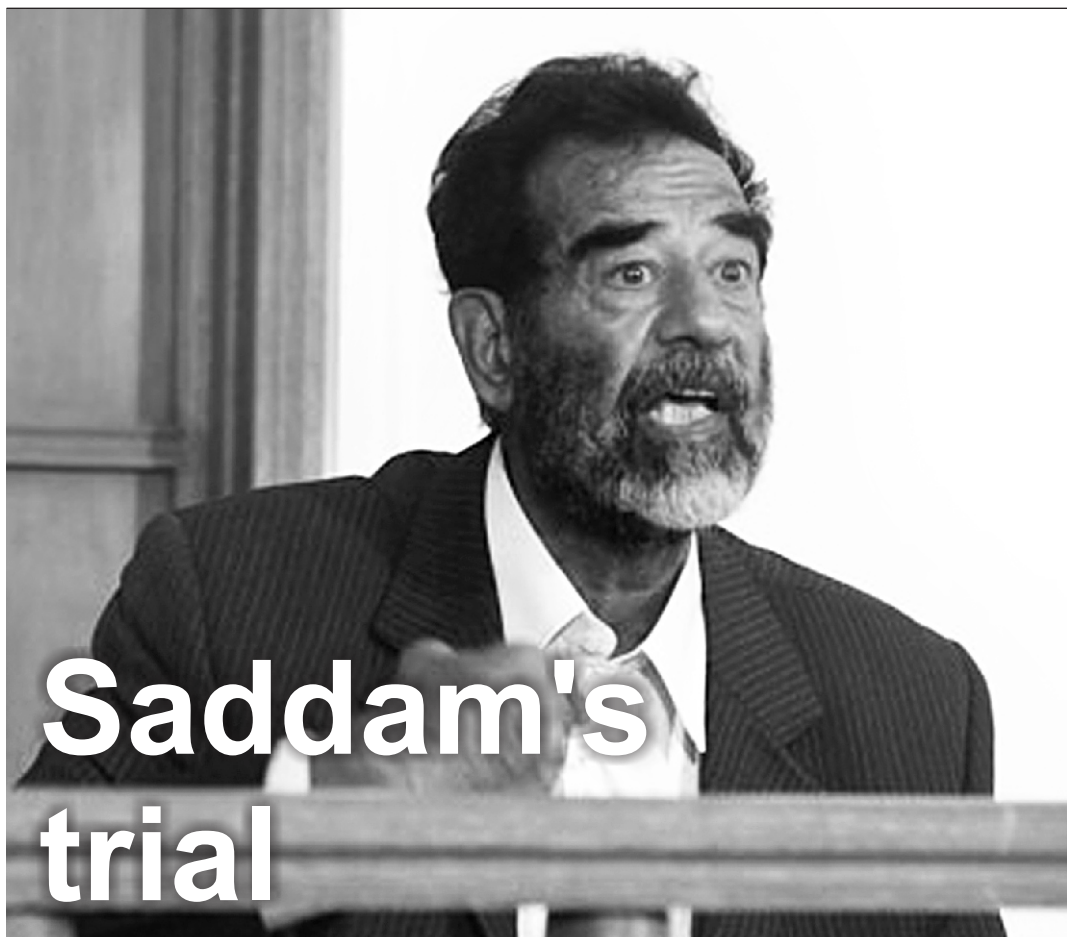
There are valid reasons why I thought like that. First, as we all know, in June last he returned from Singapore after a major cardiac surgery. He has not been feeling well. Hence, it was only reasonable to think that he lacked the physical fitness to run the country as its de facto prime minister. Moreover, if Justice KM Hasan could be intimidated by the 14-party alliance led by the Awami League, Professor Iajuddin would be no exception, I thought.

But I shall not hasten to argue that he is essentially a BNP man. In 2001, the Awami League nominated Justice Latifur Rahman as the Chief Advisor and Mr. Abu Sayeed as the Chief Election Commissioner, considering

them to be their 'own men'. In course of discharging their duties, both of them proved their neutrality and successfully held the election of 2001 in a fair and free way.

In my experience, most people tend to respond to the demand of the chair, even if there are other forces at work. I believe Professor Iajuddin Ahmed will prove himself absolutely neutral in conducting the office of the Chief Advisor and in holding the 2007 general election in a free and fair manner. Our responsibility is to help him in discharging his responsibility by giving him good suggestions and above all giving the freedom to exercise his authority. Any attempt to influence him either by way of undue criticism or biased suggestions should be avoided.

**Mahmud Atif Khan**  
West Razabazar, Dhaka



The former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein has been under trial for quite some time now and the investigative agencies authorised and controlled by the Pentagon-cum-CIA are making a mockery of legal procedures by prolonging the trial endlessly and continuing to make Saddam's life miserable by forcing him to walk out the hall in protest every now then. One is not sure what exactly the USA and its coalition partners are finally going to do with Saddam who lost power to the occupation forces chiefly because of his anti-USA stand and his concern for protecting the Iraqi energy resources from the hands of the USA and not because of any absence of US brand democracy in that country. Iraq, like Afghanistan, is now being ruined by terrorist attacks engineered by the US led forces and the Muslims particularly in Arab world are being tortured and, according to their estimates, over 100 persons are killed every day on an average. Meanwhile the USA and its allies have invaded Lebanon and Palestine and Saddam's fate has been hanging in the court. The Islamic world is still divided over Sunni-Shia details. One is astonished to see that Saddam has been answering the questions, perhaps hoping that the power would be returned to him and he would be back in Baghdad to lead his people and if he tries to be obedient to the enquiry officials he would be safe. As it is evident, the USA has been vehemently trying to justify its illegal invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq on fictitious pretexts for which it obtained tacit approval of some so-called Islamic countries as well and Saddam is not expected to believe the Bush administration to be fair to him in any way.

After Iraq's fall, the Iran has also been forced to take up the challenge from the world's most powerful country in spite of the weak position it has been pushed into owing to a long war with Iraq. Now the US bell rings around Tehran and it has to be ready for possible air-strikes of the US led forces and, disregarding the nuke testing in North Korea and considering the Pentagon's long term goals of controlling the world, must not to just stop at rhetoric alone by trusting the positive intelligence reports, as Saddam Hussein perhaps did by trust-

ing his Republican Guards at Baghdad that seemingly had close links with USA's Pentagon and CIA networks. Thus although Saddam before US invasion of Iraq had also reiterated that Iraq would give a fitting response to the Allied forces if they ever attacked Iraq the war ended quickly resulting in the destruction and looting of Iraq and ultimate control of the energy resources by the US led forces. A few years down the line, the USA and its allies are almost settled down in Iraq destroying it by engineering violence and killings, while Saddam Hussein who, according to the Bush administration, was caught, from a hole where he was reportedly hiding, is now in jail awaiting the imminent attack by the hands of the USA led forces. Assisted by the global media, the USA has spread make-believe stories around the world about terrorism and Islam. As the world is at a loss as to the fate of Osama, the suspicion that he never existed is gaining ground and none is bothered about what happens to the Muslims in the world on account of the terror card being used by the world powers and as such the fate of Saddam would not cause any problem to the world either. His protests and walk-outs amidst answering for his anti-American and pro-EU rhetoric have no meaning at all in the present uni-polar context. Yugoslavian Slobodan Milosevic's fate remains a glaring example of what could happen to any leader opposing the USA, if the superpower wills it that way. One is therefore unsure if the USA would prolong the trial until Iran and Syria are also invaded by the US led forces, currently facing some bottlenecks to pursue the agenda quickly enough. One wonders, in case Saddam is fully aware of the reality that the USA, given the Pentagon agenda in Middle East, is not going to spare his life, then why should he attempt to cooperate with the US investigative authority at all. The dramatic event since the start of the trial point only to the unreliability of the trial and also sustains the suspicion (which I raised at the start of the trial) if it is really Saddam Hussein who is being tried.

**Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal**  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

## New stalemate

Whereas our political parties failed to show the nation any sign of hope, KM Hasan, the former chief justice, took an attempt to resolve the conflict by declining to be Chief Advisor of the Caretaker Government. However, it is indicated from the attitude of major political parties that they will try to foil this attempt of KM Hasan. The BNP expressed its reservations against all other alternate justices who should have taken oath as Chief Advisor as per the constitution. The party was not ready to accept anyone but the President Himself for the post. On the other hand, the Awami League was giving sole importance to the constitution.

However, the political parties should judiciously face the situation that has arisen after the president himself took over as the caretaker government chief.

**Mohammad Kazi Mamun**  
Tolarbag, Mirpur

## Who will rescue us?

We feel helpless. We are not safe on the road, in the mosque or even our home. What a life in an independent country! The two political parties have paralysed our economy, development, everything. Can anybody come to our rescue?

Dr. Yunus is one person who could show us the way.

**Radyan Rahave**  
Program Officer, SHISUK

## Changing Afghans

I am writing this letter in response to "Changing Afghans" written by FR Choudhury from London on 13 September. I absolutely resent the impression that the writer has of the people of Afghanistan. "Afghans are not educated or cultured...they live in caves and kill each other", the writer seems to think the Afghans

are some sort of primitive animals who do not even know how to walk and talk! Excuse me sir, do you know anything about Afghan history and culture? Have you read any of the famous Dari poetry or seen Gandhara art from Afghanistan? If you had read any history books in school, then you would have known about the scholars from Afghanistan who were renowned for their knowledge on art, literature and mathematics.

You pointed out that the Afghans are not properly educated. Well, it can be said that the lack of development in the whole of Afghanistan, not only the education sector, is due to the Taliban regime (which the majority of Afghans did not support) and is made worse by the invasion of the British and American army. You make it sound like the British soldiers are doing some sort of huge favour for the Afghans and laying down their lives for a heroic cause, but one of the main reasons that Afghanistan is in such a sad state is because of the chaos caused by your "heroic" army. The country would be a lot better off in terms of political and economic conditions if the British and Americans would just leave, instead of continuing their bloody massacres.

I think it is time that you come down from your pedestal of British superiority and start seeing the Afghans and all the people of the world as your equals, as they truly are.

**Shuprova Tasneem**  
Bailey Road, Dhaka

## Whither spirit of liberation war?

We are general people. We don't understand democracy or political science well, what we understand is that a controversial anti-liberation party is leading our country. Great respect to our

martyrs! How impudent and ungrateful we are! Those brave hearted heroes devoted their lives just to make us independent and we are rewarding their killers! Now those killers are proudly moving in front of us, hoisting our national flag, presenting wheel chair to disabled freedom fighters (!) The astonishing thing is that no one is protesting. Every one has taken it as normal. If some one protests he or she is considered a supporter or follower of a particular political party and his or her impartiality is questioned.

**Shahed**  
One-mail

## Intellectual poverty?

Except a few exceptions, our intellectual property seems to be tailored by political sponsorship, if I could define them and detect their instinctive impulses properly. Plainly, their possessive ambition whirls about the murky political axis. To some extent, this framework has been shaped reverse to its counterpart western discipline. From that standpoint ours may refer to intellectual poverty, I think, which is just a leftover of the previous high productivity before our independence.

Right at the moment our democratic horse has become a docile donkey and needs whipping to push forward. I on behalf of many who share this view, urge the existing intellectual community of Bangladesh, also those who are directly entwined with the present political impasse, to help the political parties, thereby the nation, to enjoy the inherent fruits of democracy.

**Ajmiry Ahmed**  
Goettingen, Germany

## Look at the constitution

It seems to me that under clause 58C article 5 of our

constitution, the President may appoint any eligible citizen of Bangladesh to be the Chief Advisor, in consultation with the major political parties, if efforts under articles 3 and 4 do not bear fruit. It is only after all three provisions cannot be given effect to, that the President can exercise his right to assume the position of Chief Advisor under article 6.

It does not appear that any consideration was ever given to any other eligible citizen of Bangladesh, with due consultation of the major political parties. There was still sufficient time to explore that possibility, so why did the President rush to assume the powers himself? We are always being told that things must move in accordance with the constitution. Perhaps we should read it a little more carefully.

**Syed Hamde Ali**  
The Nawab Palace, Bogra

## So be it!

It was two days of stress and tension for me to get updated about what is happening in Dhaka, where I left my three most loved people-mom, dad and sister. My sister sent me an sms on Saturday, which says 'thank god you are not here, these people are behaving like beasts to grab power'. She is only 20, going to DU for her undergrad. When she needed to be full of life, she is frustrated. I am frustrated too.

Bombs are blasting, bullets are flying around, and people are dying on the streets like dogs. Why so much hatred among us? Why? Poverty? If so, what is the reason for that? It must have been the unequal distribution of wealth, created by political corruption. Who is the gainer from this corrupt political system? Leaders. Do they ever fight on the

streets with sticks, botha? So, does it mean these people (followers) are only servants of the parties? They will do whatever these few people say. For how long?

Who are the losers and victims? General public who are dying on the streets. Why do we need to support these parties which don't care for the country?

What a joke! A Bangladeshi has won Nobel Prize for Peace, which made the greatest news for the country. But this country is making headline for political turmoil. This time the whole world sees people fighting on the streets. They are killing their own brothers.

These political parties ruined Eid celebrations; they ruined normal life and security of general people. President Iajuddin has taken charge of the caretaker government, if he violates the constitution in order to establish control over anarchy, so be it.

**Mubashar Hasan**  
University of Dundee

## Shafiq Rehman

It is amazing and baffling, and shocking to many, that journalist Shafiq Rehman tried to get out of the country under mysterious circumstances.

He was stopped at the airport at the request of his newspaper staff at midnight on October 28, 2006!

The surprise attempt to flee away at midnight took place at a time when the whole nation is, as it appears, plagued by political turmoil and the attempt was made by a person of Shafiq Rehman's stature!

**Rafiqul Islam Rime**  
Agrabad, Chittagong

# Olmert and Iran

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Friday compared Iran's nuclear ambitions and threats against Israel with the policies of Nazi Germany and criticised world leaders who maintain relations with Iran's president.

Israel has identified Iran as the greatest threat to the Jewish state. The people of this civilised world must know that it is actually the other way round. Israel is the only country in the Middle East that poses threats not only to that region but the world at large. It is the Israelis who are acting like the Nazis against the innocent people of Palestine. The way Israel attacked Lebanon some months back surely makes us remember the way the Nazi Germany attacked Poland in 1939.

It is Israel which is ruthlessly wiping out the Palestinians. They are bombing their houses & making them suffer in every way. Israel is doing all these only because they have the support of the US. So, it is really unjust for Mr. Olmert to say that Iran is like the Nazi Germany. The Jews are doing all the wrongs & none is there to act against them.

We all must act now to stop Israel.

**Minhaj Ahmed, Uttara, Dhaka**

