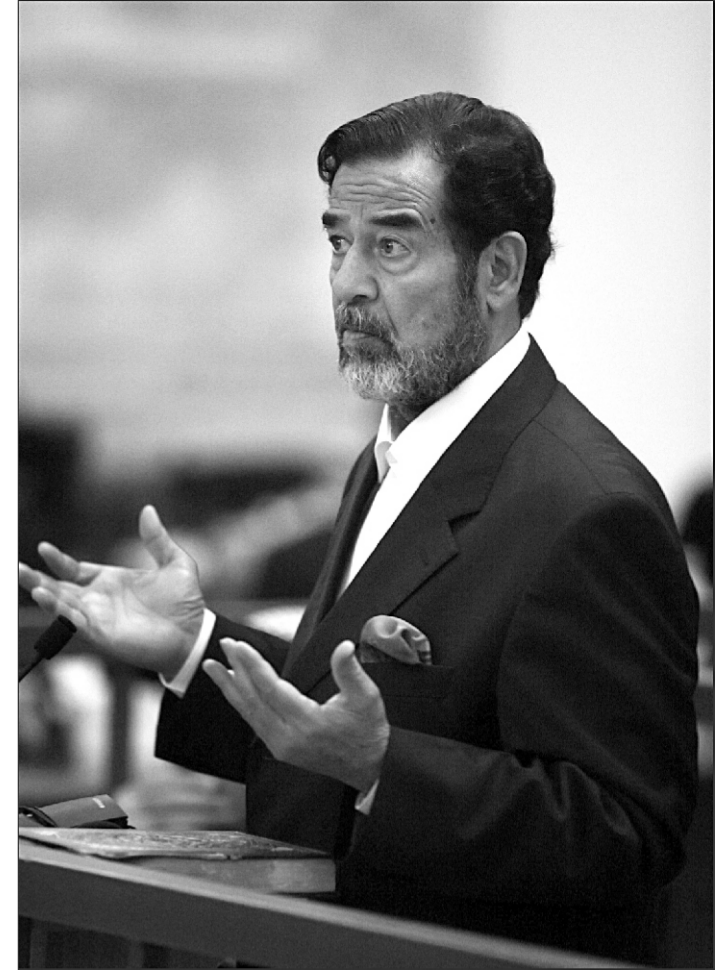
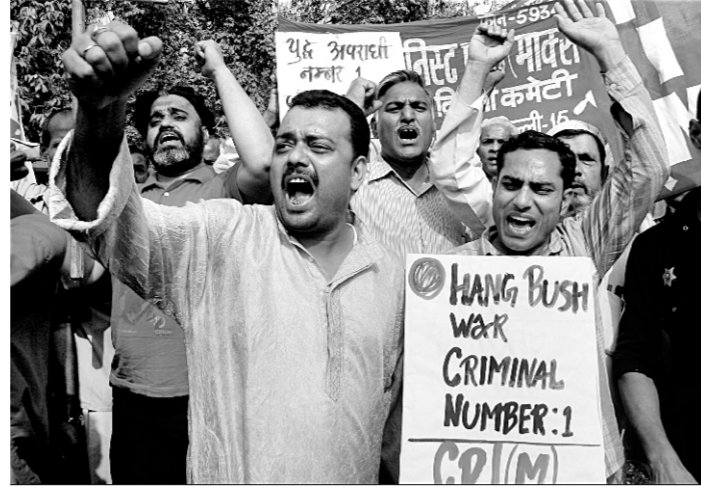


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



# Saddam's execution?

Lack of knowledge of law and order is shown in Iraq through Saddam being sentenced to death by hanging while the world is under threat. Will not the verdict increase sectarian violence in Iraq? No one will say anything about the situation due to American domination. The prosecution of Saddam was held with a lot of controversies since he was arrested. However, the quality of justice in the case has been questioned by some international bodies. Saddam's execution is a big political issue so they are rushing to execute him quickly. It is shocking because Saddam's prosecution should have been done in an international court. If Saddam is guilty the international court is ready to do so.

Since his trial began it was controversial because judges were chosen by the Bush Administration.

**Rajul Hasan**  
University of Ballarat, Sydney

I was surprised to see that

Saddam's trial didn't appear as the most important headline which usually appears on the left corner of any newspaper. Again there was no editorial on this farcical trial on the following day. As a major English language daily the readers expect that 'The Daily Star' will give importance to major international events.

The sentiments of the readers should be given due priority.

**Dr. Bakul Sultan**  
Indira Road, Dhaka

Saddam has been sentenced to death by hanging for the deaths of nearly 150 Shiite Muslims following a 1982 assassination attempt against him in the town of Dujail.

When I saw this news on BBC, I just kept on telling myself that if Saddam is convicted for the killings of 150 people then what should be the punishment for US President George W. Bush? Bush's ruthless US soldiers have massacred hundreds of thou-

sands of Iraqis.

**Minhaj Ahmed**  
Uttara, Dhaka

Saddam Hussein, the former despot of Iraq, was handed down a death sentence on Sunday (05 Nov-06) by the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal (SICT) in Iraq which supposedly found him guilty of ordering the killing of 148 Shiites in the city of Dujail, way back in 1982.

The charge for which he got a death sentence itself looks ordinary when today one can see and hear that almost 100 equally innocent Iraqis are being killed every day. God knows on whose orders and by whom. And, God knows if they too would also be put to trial and brought to justice.

Sunday's verdict on Saddam has so far received mixed reactions. Obviously President George Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair are the happiest men, besides the Shiites and the Kurds of Iraq who wanted to live to this day.

George Bush is happy as the timing of the sentence did provide him some ammunition to wield against the Democrats and in a way helped surge the falling support of the American voters for Tuesday's mid-term election. Here is what the two, and others who matter, had to say on it.

President Bush said Saddam's trial was a milestone in the Iraqi people's effort to replace the rule of a tyrant with the rule of law. Obviously this comment is misplaced as "rule of law" is nowhere to be seen in Iraq as of this day. Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada set the record straight by contradicting Bush. He said that the Iraqis had traded a dictator for chaos and that according to him neither option was acceptable, especially when the American troops were caught in the middle. The Republicans, however, termed the verdict as evidence of progress in Iraq. White House spokesman Tony Snow called it a "good day for

the Iraqi people."

Tony Blair commented, "Justice well-served". Yes, indeed for it is viewed as nothing but a "victor's justice". Tony Blair's Home Secretary John Reid commented that Saddam's hanging was a sovereign decision by a sovereign nation. He couldn't be funnier as Iraq, under American-British occupation, is everything but a sovereign nation. The Europeans as usual have been political; they hailed the verdict but not the sentence; they wanted a life sentence instead. Nouri Al-Maliki the Iraqi Prime Minister, who was once absconding from Iraq after himself handed down a death sentence by Saddam, was seen rejoiced and beaming at the judgment. He immediately addressed the nation hailing the decision and compared Saddam with Hitler and Mussolini of the past. The Muslim world leaders remained conspicuously silent which was judged as being cautious. They feared annoying their masters

by condemning the verdict and losing credibility in the home-front by supporting the same. In the midst of this push-and-pull, they preferred to remain silent. Even the most vocal of them all - General Musharraf chose to keep his lips zipped.

However, the most ardent critics as usual were the Human Rights groups like Amnesty International (AI), which opined that the Bush administration should have insisted that an International Court hear the case. According to Malcolm Smart of AI, this trial should have been a major contribution towards establishing justice and the rule of law in Iraq, and in ensuring truth and accountability for the massive human rights violations perpetrated by Saddam Hussein rule. According to him, in practice the whole trial had been a shabby affair which calls into question the capacity of SICT to administer justice fairly in accordance with international standards.

Moreover, according to Robert

Frisk in his latest op-ed, Saddam's Lebanese lawyer Bouchra Khalil said that Saddam would not come out of prison to count his days and years in exile in Qatar or another place. He would rather come out of prison to go to Presidency or to his grave. This was a very sensitive comment indeed implying Saddam won't beg for anything; neither clemency nor exile.

I am no fan of Saddam Hussein but I find myself on the side of millions out there, both in the west and in the Muslim world, who may or may not be happy at this news but are surely not sure about the credibility of the entire trial itself. In their minds, like in

mine, there are several questions which may or may not find the answers. Some of them are:

Saddam has been sentenced to death for ordering to kill 148 Shiite opponents. Why was he not tried for gassing the Kurds in Halabja where thousands perished? Will Saddam's death penalty bring justice for his victims? Will it benefit Iraq in any way? How can this be explained that his defense lawyers and witnesses were murdered and judges were dismissed?

**Syed Faiz Ahmad**  
Senior Structural Engineer,  
Saudi Oger Ltd  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

# POLICE excesses

Finally, the much talked about police brutality which took place at the National Shooting Complex on October 2 got the nod of a Dhaka court to initiate judicial inquiry into the whole incident. It is obviously welcome news for the nation as well as for the millions of sport lovers of the country. If we put the whole situation in its true perspective we would find that every organisation is run by a set of rules and regulations of their own. And persons in charge of managing a particular duty must obey the rules and perform with due earnestness. Hence, if a guard on duty of the complex requested the chauffeur of a car not to park the car in the no-parking zone that does not mean that the guard was doing it deliberately to harass him or had any enmity with the driver. He is doing it because he is instructed by the authorities of the complex to do so. Now the question is why the people, especially who are mighty always have a tendency to break rules? Is it because they think that they have the right to do so or is it that they think they can get away with anything and everything?

Now our question is, can the police compensate for the irreparable loss that they inflicted on our internationally famed sport personalities? Do they have the courage to take the blame? We are all waiting for a free and fair judicial inquiry into the incident and expect that all the officials who were involved in this crime will be given exemplary punishment in order to restore our confidence in the police again.

**Humayun Hyder, Zigatola, Dhaka**

We are appalled and shocked at the way Asif and other shooters were mauled by police. Has the country been really reeling under lawlessness? Or else how could police get away with incidents tantamount to trampling the constitution time and again? Our constitution has given every citizen a certain degree of freedom and right. But we often find that the general citizens cannot even exercise wee bit of it while the police have been ridiculing with the same right, as they are immune to accusation and punishment. We were dumb-

founded when no action was taken against the police officer who brought disrepute to the nation during a Test match played in Chittagong. His strength remains shrouded in mystery but what appears crystal clear is that we have no self-respect as a nation. Incidents such as this are to be resolved for upholding national dignity and prestige.

I don't know whether those who beat up Asif and his compatriots understand the value of a sporting icon. But I understand how far-reaching consequence it could have had on Asif's psyche. Almost all of us sometime in our life wanted to be a national hero but hardly a few could materialise the dream. I can only feel, how sweet it could be to hear the national anthem in an alien country amidst applauding spectators and wrap the national flag around my neck while saluting the one fluttering high above the others. But the actual feeling is known to only a few like Asif who had made this nation proud. On the contrary, what a grateful nation we are who beat them mercilessly and then covered that heinous crime by concocting the same old stories. We have gradually turned into an insensitive nation who are destined to be beaten up or killed and then implicated in a crime about which we do not have even a clue.

**Manna, On e-mail**

Police violence has reached its zenith these days. They have unleashed their colonial mindset that claimed many innocent lives in an independent country in the past and the recent brutal attack on the national shooters who earned name, fame & glory for the country was disgraceful.

At this point I, being a former national chess player, would like to point out the fact that reaching an international height in any sphere of life is a difficult proposition since there is no state sponsorship of any kind for them, except cricket players.

At this point of darkness, I can only wish that sanity & good sense prevailed in our social life.

**Rafiqul Islam Rime, Agrabad, Chittagong**



## The president should assert his authority

The confusion and heated debate that have been created by the visit of two members of the Council of Advisors to Sheikh Hasina's house recently should be put to rest immediately by the Chief Advisor and President himself. If the two advisors, viz., Shafi Sami and Sultana Kamal had gone to meet Hasina with the knowledge and consent of the Caretaker Government, then the President should issue a press note immediately confirming the same. If not, the two Advisors should resign quietly.

The President by keeping the portfolios of Home, Establishment and Cabinet, among others, to himself has become the subject of all kinds of pressure from the former ministers and the Hawa Bhaban which he now finds difficult to resist.

However, to save the country from further confusion and confrontational political violence, the President should take recourse to Articles- 93, 96 and 141-A of the Constitution without wasting time. We expect and hope that he will take decisions objectively and go by them.

**Abul Mohsin**  
Siddheswari, Dhaka

## A request to BNP and AL

I should say it is a political crisis. Actually it is a crisis of power hunting. The two parties are trying to get into power. It is all right. But what we find here is that both the parties are trying to get power through some dubious means, rather than depending on people's vote. Actually it is time for all the parties to win the hearts of the people of Bangladesh as they always told that people are the source of power.

The parties should refrain from following a destructive course.

**Sabbir Hossain Tanvir**  
Dhaka

## US Ambassador

I have noted that the US Ambassador has been very busy in attempting to bring peace, understanding and amicable negotiations between the warring political factions in our country, especially at this crucial juncture. She had offered her residence as a 'neutral' venue for discussions, she has issued statements of noble intent and actively sought out endless meetings with the leaders of not only the two political parties, but even met the Jamaat and Jatiya party. One wonders why.... why this passion to help a country that the US government tried to abort at its birth, supported its subsequent militarisation and has continued to cripple and control through garment quotas, IMF conditions and illogical, one sided visa requirements.

Yes, we are in need of wisdom, in need of guidance, though these are not missing in our people or society. They have simply been found to be an obstacle to success under the

current political paradigm. However, if we have been derailed, then we must and will eventually find our way back, there are no shortcuts to redemption after thirty years of bloodletting and corruption. I believe she should maintain her 'neutrality' and stop meddling in our affairs.

**Sis'tam**  
London

## Stray calls for removal

As I see thro' your esteemed columns, various calls to the caretaker govt.(CG) from different parties and this 'jote', 'that jote' to pull down (or

Opposition Parties or their allies to undo what the previous govt. did in their whole tenure of 5 years or they have some specific tasks mandated by the constitution? Does it mean that the CG has been installed only to overturn the whole administration only because the critics of the outgoing govt. think that way? Can the CG (not elected) challenge and upset each and every step of an outgoing elected govt.? Hah! the CG will come every 5 years only to scrutinize the whole rule of the past govt.(?) and try to do things the rivals of that govt. want them to do-but not to hold the appropriate election, especially for which the provision (of the CG) has been

by Habib which has been appreciated by his fans.

Not only urban youths, but also adult & old people are fond of Habib's compositions. The way Habib composed his songs & the way he mixes sounds into his songs, has totally changed the concept of music in our country.

Moreover, Habib's songs are unique & very appealing because all of his songs have something special in them.

But it's a pity that other than Habib, there are very few people in our music industry who are innovative.

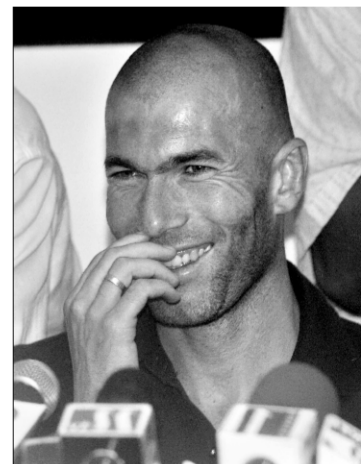
Habib's success is not the result of a day or two. Habib has done a special course on music composition in the UK.

I wish all the best to Habib on behalf of his all the fans for giving us a perfect Eid gift in his outstanding new album.

**Nazmus Saquib**  
Basaboo, Dhaka

# Produce our own Zidane

One of the greatest footballers of the recent times visited our country on November 7. Zinedine Zidane, more popularly known as Zizu, was here right inside the national stadium playing with kids. Three times winner of European Footballer of the Year and thrice the best in the world.



We were a football-loving nation and we still are. But one thing is just not clear as to why Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) wanted Zidane to visit us? What do we have to show in front of an ambassador of football like him? Our poor infrastructure, a moon surface likes national stadium or incompetence of BFF? Actually what? BFF was busy chalking out cultural programmes to amuse Zidane. They took him to a field to play with kids!

BFF also looked for singers who could sing French songs. But what about football itself?

I just want to tell them that your duty is to produce Zidane from our land, he has to be our own Zidane.

**MD Bashar Farhad, Mirpur-11, Dhaka**

to terminate) those recruited or promoted or transferred by the outgoing govt. at the fag end of their ruling, are rampant.

There are even some suggestions to the CG to review and take actions against the actions taken by the outgoing govt. throughout their full tenure! What a wild whim! (as cry for the moon as a child does). The latest caprice was made public by some attorneys and their allies through asking for the ouster of an Advisor because of his stern comments on their undue demands.

I have only one question to the Advisors of the CG, have they been inducted only to listen to the

incorporated in the constitution?

**AF Rahman**  
On e-mail

## Sensational Habib

Habib Wahid, the sensational music composer & singer, is the recent craze in our music industry. After the tremendous success of his previous albums, this Eid Habib was once again back in limelight for his very own album 'SHONO.' The difference of this new album with that of his previous one is that here Habib not only tried to sing new songs, but also he didn't do any remix of old songs. That's indeed a good move

## Flawed politics

So far I know our constitution is not a doctrinal scripture with sheer conformity. Likewise, its democracy is also not a rigid institution. The former one is changeable, and the later one is adaptable and tunable through proper parameters in course of time. Since the independence most of the constitutional changes, except a few which are more or less clear, were done for the sake of abstruse necessity; who knows whether for a particular political party or an individual.

The politicians never cared for the public opinion. Each adult individual only feels as an election unit, rather than a democratic unit, and only on the eve of election. On this particular ground the political system democracy here seems to act with some defects.

**Ajmiry Ahmed**  
Goettingen, Germany

## Discourteous traffic police

A few days back my car broke down in the middle of the road at Banani. With hundreds of cars behind me honking, I tried to restart the car but with no result. Instantly the police constable on the roadside started shouting from a distance, "Get out of the car and push?" I was startled. I said it was not possible for me alone to push the car. But he insisted and in fact opened my car door and almost shouted on my face to get out of the car and push. I tried but failed.

My question is, when will the police behave a bit more decently?

**Mahboob Hossain**  
Manager  
Media & Communications Ltd.  
Banani, Dhaka