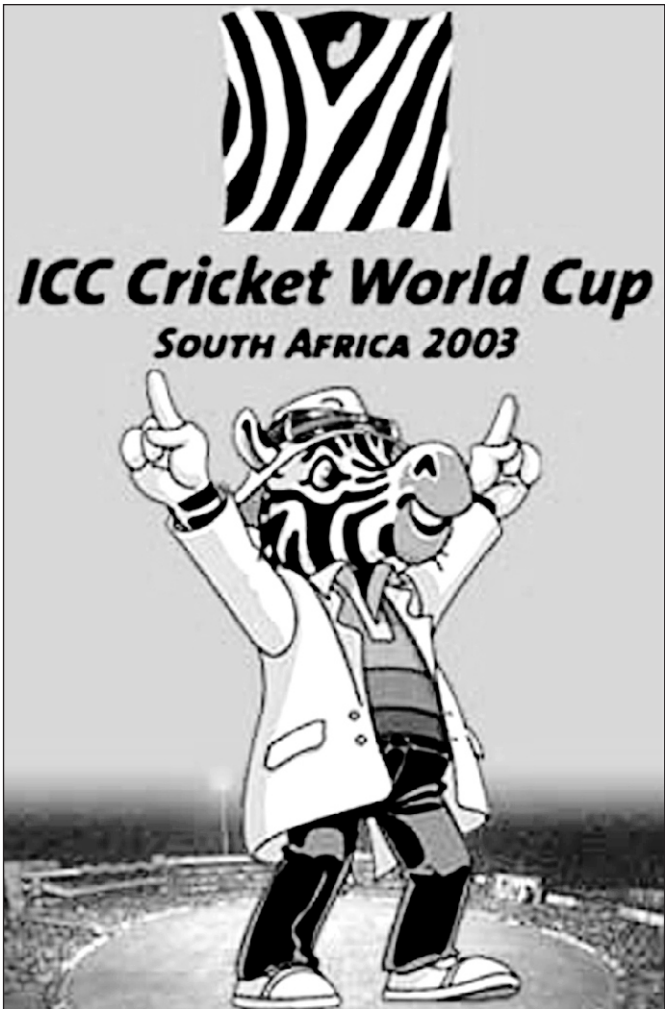


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

## World Cup Cricket and Bangladesh



How's that?

It must be said that all the harsh words and the uproar in the country created by Bangladesh's defeat at the hands of Canada was well earned, but not just by the cricketers. The criticism should also be directed towards those who are responsible for managing the cricket in the country, the BCB and the selectors. It is their job to select the best team to send them to the biggest show in world cricket and make the right decision for the country's cricket. There is no doubt that there is a huge hole in the selection process.

First, they pack the top order of batting with young and inexperienced, a major reason behind the top order collapse especially noticeable in the match against Sri Lanka. Then they keep an inform player like Alok Kapali for the middle order. When someone is playing as well as he is in a team that is under-performing itself every game, he should be given as much exposure as possible. I also fail to understand what the use of having all Nirma, Second Division, Third Division cricket competitions when there are no scouts appointed by the BCB to look for talent in these games.

BCB is just investing thousands of dollars in their infrastructure hoping to get immediate returns. Well that is not going to happen in the near future. For now they must start picking up talent wherever and whenever they may appear in the country. The Pakistan team is the perfect example. The PCB spends less than BCB yet their players perform better because they give the players the proper exposure at the proper times.

I really think that BCB should shoulder all the responsibilities for the torrid time that Bangladesh cricket is currently going through.

**Mohammad Arbaaz Nayeem**  
Class 11, Mastermind School, Dhaka

Will people kindly stop requesting our cricket team to surrender its Test status! This mass hysteria has been going on for long enough. Our World Cup campaign started several days ago. It is high time that these depressive people had gotten over the blunders made against Canada and Sri Lanka.

People forget that we have the talent to succeed at this level. Alok Kapali, Tushar Imran, Mashrafe Mortuza, Mohammed Ashraful and Talha Jubair can play quite competently when they apply themselves. Besides they are all teenagers, which bodes

very well for the future. We need only give them time. Just because things are not clicking now, does not necessarily mean we do not deserve to be where we are.

If these people understand anything about cricket, they will examine very carefully where the origins of our collective failure lie. If anything, it is the deteriorating state of our country's cricketing infrastructure that is to blame.

The BCB is undemocratic (almost nepotistic), and haphazardly run by people without cricketing credentials. Our domestic competitions are now a joke (as they are centred solely around Dhaka), our youth development is losing momentum, new grounds are not being developed, and the row over the Bangabandhu Stadium persists.

The ICC is not entirely free from blame either. If it is serious about the development of cricket in Bangladesh, it will pressure BCB to change its unprofessional attitude towards the game in our country. Once the current incompetence within the BCB is addressed, Bangladesh will slowly make its mark in the Test arena and, before long, will prove to the world why we are playing at this level.

**Shubho Rahman Khan, On e-mail**

There are a lot of interesting responses to the dismal performances of our boys in the World Cup. There are no excuses for such a showing, and the fact that a lot of people expressed their frustration is a valid indication of the love for the game. But can we concentrate and contemplate what is so terribly wrong with our cricket and what we can do about it... or let's just say give a few humble suggestions for our cricket authorities to ponder on. We are a Test playing nation, and it is counter productive to squabble about whether we deserved it or not, we should make every effort to prove we are worthy of it. The things that can be done are:

1. Reduce our international commitments for the next two to three years, and concentrate to build a solid foundation by improving our 1st class cricket, so that we can be more competitive.
2. Give proper emphasis to our 1st class cricket, which is the National league, and spend time and money to build divisional cricket facilities worthy of holding Test matches, and encourage

developing "Good sporting wickets," and make them available for cricket only.

3. Decentralise the BCB and create six "Divisional cricket bodies" with their own coaching staff and development programme with the active assistance from the central body. Make most if not all local tournaments on a three/four day basis.

4. Make performance on the national league "the major criteria" for the selection of our national team, and not the Dhaka league. Most of the Test playing countries require their national players to participate in their 1st class cricket. This is the only way to give other players exposure to the "Test players" and also to ensure these are still the best players we have.

5. As an incentive let the best two team in the national league participate "as it is," in one 1st class cricket tournament each year for "foreign exposure." These will be low-key tours and will be of enormous benefits for the lesser known members of the team who could otherwise be excluded by the selectors.

**Haroon Rasheed, Mirpur Road, Dhaka**

This is in response to M. Ayub Khan's letter ("World Cup Cricket: Bangladesh's poor performance", February 19).

Withdrawing Test status of Bangladesh is definitely a wise decision. After all, it is better to stay behind as a cricket-loving nation than to get humiliated all the time. All I can say is that, our cricket team is on a mission to hamper the image of our nation. This cannot happen and before it is too late, it would be better if our country is stripped off from Test status. It is the only solution I guess!

**Minhaj Ahmed, Dhaka**

Like many other millions of Bangladeshis I am equally frustrated of our Cricket Team's disastrous performance in the World Cup.

But what do you expect when a nation's sports bodies are totally politicised? That's the character of Bangladeshi politics. But the present BNP government has broken all previous records.

You will not find any other nation where sports bodies are changed with the change of the government.

So let's not blame the cricketers only.

**Sonia Mirza, Banani, Dhaka**

## Tawfiq Aziz Khan-- A pioneer in Bangladesh sports

It's very frustrating to learn that the Government has dropped the name of late Tawfiq Aziz Khan from the list of Ekushey Padak, 2003 ("Tawfiq Aziz's name dropped at the last minute", February 20).

From our early days we've known about the outstanding contribution of late Tawfiq A. Khan who dedicated his life for promoting and improving the standard of sports in our country through electronic media as well as by serving the post of the Executive Editor of *The Daily Star*.

What was the point of dropping his name from the list "when officials of the cultural affairs ministry collected Khan's profile and a photograph for publication in the awardees' brochure"?

**Gopal Sengupta, Montreal, Canada**

The other day, I was watching a programme of Channel-1 "Sports". I was very happy to see that in this programme they included an episode to pay tribute to Late Tawfiq Aziz Khan who they said was a great sports lover and sports commentator of Bangladesh.

It would have been appreciated very much if they could also mention Late Mr. Khan as a founder editor of the Sports World - who in spite of many odds have served in the same post for many years and was the founder president of Bangladesh Sports Writers Association (BSWA).

Late Tawfiq Aziz Khan was also a famous sports columnist, contributed a lot in the field of tennis by attending all the four Grand Slam

events and was the only Bangladeshi who had the opportunity to do so.

Anyway, I thank Channel i and Mr. Hamid for appreciating Late Tawfiq Aziz Khan's role as the pioneer of sports commentator (football, cricket and many other sports) in English and also in Bengali.

**Munira Khan, Green Road, Dhaka**

## "Bangladesh Cricket Team- golfing talent?"

I fully agree with what Mr. Aminur Rahman has stated about our Cricket Team (February 18). Performance of our team is really pathetic and had there been any system of relegation of team not performing reasonably well, Bangladesh Cricket team would be the first on the list for such relegation.

From Mr. Aminur Rahman's comments it appears that he has good knowledge of golf and he could be persuaded to act as the coach for the Bangladesh Cricket team once they enrol in Kurmitola Golf Club.

**Shuja Alim, On e-mail**

## "Push-in"

My earlier letter (February 16) was meant to be a statement, more like stating my position as a free citizen of the Indian democracy on the sticky issue of 'push-in', especially, in the absence of any Indian voice on the Letters Page.

Though, Mr. Kuldeep Nayar and Mr. Muchkund Dubey have stated my position more eloquently and forcefully, Mr. Lakshminath Bhatt's letter (February 19) on the issue has given me an opportunity to expand

on a few thoughts that I would like to share. But first, whether there are Bangladeshis in India? As Mr. Bhatt pointed out--there are. Here I would like to make two points.

First, likewise there are many 'illegal immigrants' who are Indians in the U.S.A, Britain and other such developed nations of the world according to an Indian government report. We know about the Turkish problem in Germany, etc.

Secondly, I would like to redefine this phrase 'illegal immigrants' with the help of the UN.

Anyone not following nation state protocols would definitely be illegal immigrants. But, in an interview published over a month ago in the 'Hindustan Times' a UN official used the term 'economic migrant' to denote the nature of many of the people who were crossing over to India from Bangladesh. Long ago, in Germany, they started to call most people who were apparently seeking 'political asylum' in West Germany, 'Wirtschaftsfluechtlinge' or 'economic refugees'. The thought was that many people from the 'Third World' were going over to Germany to flee from acute poverty and to look for work and a steady income of some sort. This I think is the core issue and not any 'terrorism' and 'security' related rhetoric that are flying around.

Star News had done an excellent coverage on this issue, though about the illegal Pakistani immigrants in India. Star News had put a face to the list of names of illegal Pakistani immigrants that was published by the government of India. And as the camera showed that none were security threats to India. Most had relatives on both sides of the border, and some were even women who were married to

Pakistanis and had come back after their marriage had dissolved due to the death of their spouses and other reasons. All they had done was come back to their homes, in the meantime they had acquired the Pakistani citizenship out of marriage!

Like I said, this is a sticky issue and too many things are sticky here, like our vast common history, as opposed to the tiny history of secession between the two countries. And it would be wise for us neighbours to stick through thick and thin, even if we were to think selfishly! Hoping for a balanced resolution on this issue I rest my case.

**Awrup Sanyal, Mirpur, Dhaka**

## "Ethics"

This is in reference to the letter "Ethics" by Dr. Rashid Hyder (February 20).

Like Dr Hyder, I am also an avid reader and a fan of *The Daily Star* "Letters Page", but what makes this page special is its unpredictable nature. No one can ever guess of which topic the readers would take interest. I had no idea that the letter "Ethics" would get so many responses.

As for me, I liked the letter. Though it doesn't fall under the category of replying on current topics and stuff, it was refreshing. As Ms Shahrin Shahjahan Naomi (February 19) says it is a different type of letter inspiring people to bring out the good in them and to come forward to build a better world.

As the 'Letter Page' is the only page I read regularly, I don't mind coming across such off-track letters from time to time.

**Arafat Mujib, Banani, Dhaka**

## Purbachal deal with the expatriates

Recently Rajuk announced allotment of plots to the expatriate Bangladeshis in Purbachal project and has asked them to deposit additional 7000\$ to 15000\$ depending upon the size of the plot by 31 March/03.

We, the expatriates, neither received the allotment letter formally nor we know the total price of the allotted plot against each individual. Unless Rajuk declares the price, the allottee cannot come to a conclusion whether they are to accept the deal or otherwise.

As a matter of fact, any deal of sale and purchase, the seller should declare the price of any commodity. There should not be any confusion or speculation about the price. If a final price cannot be declared now, an approximate price may be declared so that the allottee can make up his mind.

Rajuk should also declare a tentative time limit of handing over the plots. In the past, there were instances of delayed handing-over process and this creates a lot of mental pressure on the allottee.

So, it is our utmost request to Rajuk, please clarify the above-mentioned points and be transparent to the clients.

**M. S. Rahman**  
An allottee writing from Los Angeles, USA

## CNG auto-rickshaw and meter tampering

I somehow feel that it is only me who is talking about this, that it is only me who is affected by this, that it is only me who has come across such duplicity. How come there is no write-up, no news, no views on it till today? Yes, I am talking about meter tampering, particularly the ones being used in our CNG auto-rickshaws.

On February 2, I boarded a CNG auto-rickshaw from Banani to Mohammadpur for office as usual. The only difference was this time I

did not have to haggle about the fare since we now have the long-awaited meter in our CNGs taxis. Since it was my first day in a metered auto-rickshaw, I was trying to take a good look at the details of the meter, which looked somewhat different from the ones used in the yellow and black cabs. What bothered me was that the meter was running too fast and also at the red signals the meter kept on running although the driver switched off the ignition key (is he suppose to do so while on hire?). Observing this, I asked the driver what was the waiting charge per minute. He boldly told me it was fifty-paisa. But I remembered hearing on BTV news that it was only five-

pared to the previous day's meter. And when I got down at the same location I noticed that the total fare showing on the metre was only Tk 32! The same route, same traffic jam, same distance - then how come there was such difference in the fare?

These days I find it cheaper to travel by Mishuk than by metered CNG taxis.

**Naseem Chowdhury**  
Banani, Dhaka

## Traffic problem

Everyday the daily papers are full of disgraceful accounts of corruption, negligence, lack of foresight by the

## "War in Iraq"

What none of the peaceniks seem to realise is that Iraq brought on the troubles on itself. Iraq is the one at fault here. Not the US or Britain. The first Gulf War was in response to Iraqi aggression against a sovereign state. So what if the real reason was to protect oil supplies? The US is under no obligation to perform altruistic tasks for the world. The US is perfectly justified in stepping in to protect a country, in that case Kuwait, because of moral right and self-interest. I am sure if Rwanda was the world's biggest supplier of oil then the Marines would be there too.

Rashid (Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>) says in his letter that the first Gulf War didn't solve anything, implying that Saddam survived in spite of US efforts. Far from it, Saddam survived because Bush Snr. allowed him to live due to Saudi pressure and fears of a fundamentalist regime taking his place. It was certainly a mistake not have marched into Baghdad in '91.

Iraq has had twelve years to submit to the UN and hand over its biological and chemical weapons. Yet for over a decade Saddam has played cat and mouse with the UN preferring to starve his own people rather than hand over his illegal weapons. The fact is that Saddam has no intention of handing over his weapons.

When I see all these peace protests in the news, I have to wonder where these people have been for the last ten years while this vile dictator dodged the UN.

Standing against the Ameri-



Marching towards war or peace?

cans are the French, Russians, Germans and Chinese. Let me just quickly dispense with them. The French used to be considered bad weather friends. That even though French foreign policy is by definition the opposite of whatever the Americans and British want, in the end the French will pull through. That has not happened this time yet. The French position seems to be one of simply to outfox the Americans and British and trying to cling on to its already undeserved influence in the world. Of course the fact that France has contracts worth billions of dollars with Saddam plays no part in this decision.

The Germans, I must say are the hypocrites. If it were not for the US and Britain, Germany would not have survived the Cold War.

The Russians and Chinese are not exactly models of liberty, truth and justice. China just last week sentenced a dissident kidnapped from

Vietnam to life in prison. Where are the protests against that? The Russians have been merrily slaughtering civilians in Chechnya for years, where are the activists then?

By the way, Bosnia and Kosovo don't have oil.

It was also Americans who died trying to save Muslims in Somalia. How many martyrs and brothers of the Muslim Ummah went off to try and make peace in Mogadishu?

**MA, Dhaka**

This letter is in response to Mr. Shomit Chowdhury's letter (February 18). I would like to thank Mr. Chowdhury for writing an extremely clear and succinct letter. All the points made in his letter made perfect sense and I agree wholeheartedly with all of them. I would not have been able to state those points better myself.

Living in the US and reading and watching the extremely conservative media bias can

(February 16) that the gas export committee should include lawyers and strategists along with the bureaucrats and economists.

We must take note from what happened in Africa after export of natural resources in response to the advice of oil companies. I cannot understand why our government does not sign agreement with the companies which do not impose these type of condition that Bangladesh must export gas? Export of gas will be suicidal and we do not want to become another Nigeria. We must keep our gas in our own country for our people to use.

**Dr. Mahboob Hossain**

## Valentine's Day

I see that Mr. Minhaj Ahmed ("Right to celebrate Valentine's Day", February 19) has fallen into the trap. In an attempt to define what he thought was right and what his rights were with respect to celebrating an occasion, it seems that he has himself infringed the freedom of his addressee. Here in the U.S. freedom is quite a buzzword, and so it's quite easy to learn the numerous legal aspects that revolve around the issue of "right." Mr. Ahmed states that Mr. Yahya (February 17) has no "right to interfere with others," and by saying so, he is exercising the freedom of voicing his opinion. But by also advising that "you better keep your mouth shut," he is threatening the freedom of his opponent, whether he realises it or not. He is therefore engaging himself in self-contradiction, almost a hypocrisy. So I suggest that in future we all try to be more prudent in our speech, and of course, action.

**Arafat, Yale University, USA**

I wonder why is there so much fuss about the St. Valentine's Day. I personally don't care much about whether anybody celebrates it or not. I do not. When we claim to be democratic (quasi-democratic to be more accurate), we should not forget that there would be people on both sides of the fence. Isn't it always nice to



Everything is fair in love and war!

keep the discussion more courteous? Doesn't "keep your mouth shut" go a little overboard? In my honest opinion calling people "reactionaries" on one side and "perverts" on the other side are not going to produce any good.

I personally favour some celebrations that have more *Deshi flavour* in them, that we can easily identify ourselves with, something that touch our hearts and minds and that impact our lives day in day

out. Please allow me to be a bit humorous and a bit sarcastic too. May I propose a National Toll Collection Day on which we will choose the best toll collector and recognise his special "talent"? Or how about a National Hypocrisy Day or even a Day of Bribery? Whereupon every year we will crown the "best" sons and daughters our heart-broken motherland has ever produced!

**Shahnaz, Cincinnati, USA**

*The University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka*

## Novel use of Air Force

On February 17, I read in *The Daily Star* that the government is now thinking of using the Air Force to spray for mosquitoes. Surely, this is another milestone for the BNP government. Just when you think that things cannot get more farcical Khaleda Zia's government do something that reaches new heights of absurdity. Pray tell us, if we are to see the sight of jet fighters spraying the country with insecticide.

I have only one question, is the coalition government at all concerned of the voters' anger at the next general elections?

**Samreen, DOHS, Dhaka**

## Gas export should not be imposed

I fully agree with Shika Mansoor's letter "Economics of gas export"