

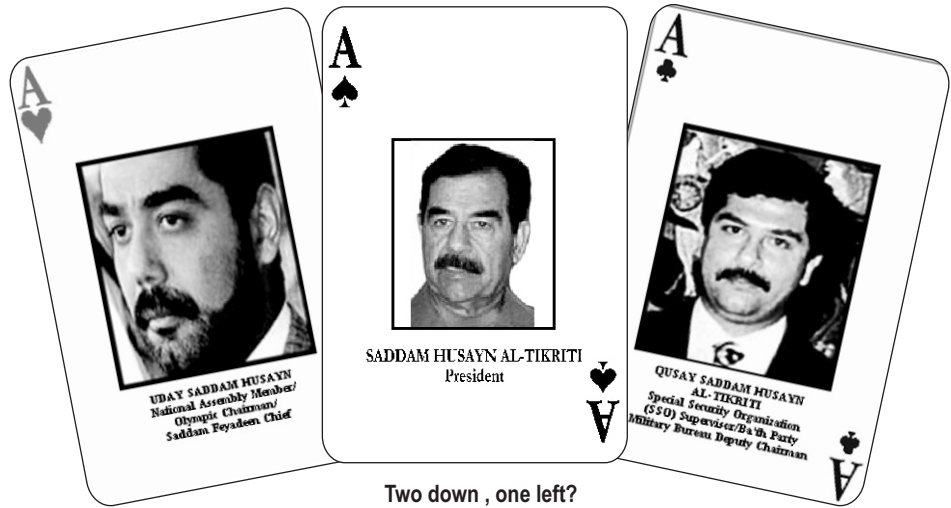
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Death of Hussein sons

I am not a military analyst. But common sense says that capture or kill means kill if you can't capture. General Ricardo Sanchez dodged the question in Wednesday's press conference in Baghdad if enough or any realistic attempt was made to capture them.

What resistance could three or four persons with a few AK-47s put up? It seems the mission was only to kill them. If lives of a former Arab leader's sons are so cheap target their alleged atrocities are not in question here, that should have been the matter to be resolved in a court in The Hague or Brussels -- then what about an ordinary Arab?

Uday and Qusay Hussein were not leading the resistance to the occupation anyway as they themselves were helplessly stranded in rival Kurdish controlled Mosul with virtually no brothers in arms, themselves almost unarmed, as far as resistance is concerned. The resistance came spontaneously from the occupied people. And leaders are created in abundance.



I have two questions: Has assassination now officially replaced the courts now? Are we in the 21st or in the 17th Century?

Ahmed Mohiuddin
Banani, Dhaka

We heard the briefing given by the Commander of the Coalition Force in Iraq, describing the assault on a Mosul house that killed Uday

and Qusai Hussein -- sons of the deposed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Heavy weapons were used in the operation and all the occupants died.

This looks like yet another demonstration of the disproportionate use of force that characterises the attitude of the occupation force. The Mosul episode raises the question whether a prolonged siege of the house

could have secured the surrender of these two "high value" targets or not. Lives would have been saved; if guilty, as claimed, fair investigation including fair judicial trial could have been conducted. This was an execution without trial. The world at large and the Iraqi people in particular will never know for sure what really happened.

Zakir Husain, One e-mail

Now what?

A falsity can never be hidden. George W. Bush, Tony Blair and John Howard are accused for falsities throughout the world. They not only cheat their countries' inhabitants but also all the people throughout the world. Now it is apparent that they were moving behind a false statement about Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and they started the invasion against Saddam Hossain. The occupation force killed and injured thousands of children, women and innocent people of Iraq.

Mr. Howard already begged pardon to his Australian people and admitted that the decision of sending troops to Iraq was wrong. Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair are trying to escape but their stipulation is crucial among their fellow law-makers. These two persons should be impeached for their crime and taken to the international court for an illegal war.

and suffering in general. We know there was no silence or pop concert held for them, but at least they deserved a passing reference. After all he did claim the war was being waged on their behalf. Blair and Bush have no sense of accountability, they take it for granted that only they possess the right to judge and inflict punishment on others in accordance to their interests. Which is in line with the recent attempts by Blair to push for another UN resolution calling for the right to intervene in countries that violate human rights values. Of course the assumption being only the west have that prerogative as who has done that and who can be selectively punished to meet their interests. Blair seemed to have totally overlooked such violations are being carried out under his nose by the USA in Guantanamo-bay. Hence would such a resolution be enforced upon the USA by force?

he has earned the title of a partner of the US but it is highly doubtful the Americans have the same view. Far from being grateful the Americans did not hesitate to blame British for the recent fiasco of "intelligence" reports related to the issue of Iraq's alleged purchase of Uranium from Niger.

Yamin Zakaria
London, UK

Dowry: A social crime

The custom of taking dowry is considered as a social crime but the demand or the practice of it is not lessening in our society. Almost everyday there are cases of indescribable maltreatment of daughter-in-laws in their husband's houses. Suicide, murder, desertion by the husband for dowry are daily incidents.

It is a matter of regret that highly educated persons of respectable families are committing this crime

a) I was driving from Dhanmondi to Tongi. In Uttara I halted my car for the red signal. Suddenly, a small truck slammed in to the back of my car and caused substantial damage. I got down and found the car badly damaged. I got hold of the driver and took him to the nearby Uttara Thana. The police found the driver being a helper who was driving without a licence and was carrying garment scraps to Tongi. However, with pressure from police the truck driver agreed to bear the repair cost.

b) I was driving to IDB bhaban to see the computer fair. My wife was beside me. At Begum Rokeya Saroni junction there was a red signal. We were waiting for the green signal. A bus going to Mirpur came from the back and hit my bumper. I got down and found a Sergeant standing nearby. The driver's answer to the police was brake fail. The case was mitigated when I agreed to be happy with

otherwise my car could have hit the car in front. The young driver started apologising for his faulty brake. Later I came to learn that, the younger brother of the actual driver was driving the cab. Finally, the elder brother was called over mobile and accepted the proposal of police to bear the repair cost.

e) I was at shahabag traffic island. I was coming back from stadium market in the evening. While I was taking the turn to Farm Gate a small truck carrying vegetables scraped my car in the left side. I chased the truck but all in vain.

Now my point is whenever I went to the BRTA office for yearly car fitness, the experts checked almost all parts of my car concerning to the roadworthiness. Especially they checked the brakes very carefully. I became happy for their sincerity. But it is disheartening to see a lot of vehicles without headlights, indicator lights, brake lights and proper brake system plying everyday on the roads. How does it happen? The standard of some drivers at times makes me afraid on the road. Most of the drivers do not park their vehicles properly in the appropriate place. Who is responsible for it? Why can't we feel safe on the road? Why can't we cut-off the unnecessary foolish driving competition of the city buses?

Is it that difficult a job for us to make our communication system like the developed countries? It is a common practice in our country that cars are not properly parked in the proper places. Who is responsible for that? If our police force is inadequate why not shift the responsibilities to the private sectors? Everyday we spend a lot of time on the road for needless traffic congestion.

Under the circumstances can our government take some measures like:

- Ensuring proper fitness of all the vehicles.
- Only the qualified drivers will drive vehicles.
- Unfit vehicles will be closed step by step.
- Parking in unauthorised places will be stopped.
- Unwise driving competition will not be there on highways.
- Directing pedestrians to use the overbridges.
- Evict hawkers from the foot-paths.
- Employing private security agencies to keep the artery roads out of jam and congestion.

Sultan mahmud
DRA

DU library

I would like to thank Mr. Hasan Zahid Tusher for his excellent report on Dhaka University library (Star City, DS, July 21). The report on DU microfilm will aware people about the negligence of the library about microfilm, which is not only the property of DU but also of the nation. The DU authorities are neglecting people's property. That's not at all. We the students of DU are facing serious problems in the library. Most of the books are not available in the library though you will find them in the catalogues.

Most of the books of the DU library are not updated -- you never find the latest editions. Another problem of the library is power supply as there is no generator. We can hardly use the internet as it has only two computers for the students. Lack of dictionaries is another problem for the students. The library provides little space for keeping the bags of the students. Students often have to keep their bags in the library counter without tokens and the library authority takes no responsibility for the security of the students' bags.

I hope that the DU authority will try to solve these problems and thus help the students.

Azizul Russel
Department of History, DU

Road map towards peace

Recently the Bush-Blair force has been trying to compensate the war in Iraq by pondering the issues between Palestine and Israel. I hope it works out otherwise they will face real hard time, both within and without their countries. But first, these two gentlemen must stop thinking about the other countries and should concentrate on the feelings of their own people. Because the elections are closing in and their public opinion is like to go against them. And it is also the high time for the Americans and the British people to practice their democratic right by discarding these two gentlemen and making sure that no such leaders ever come to the power in future.

Hitler and Mussolini would have felt hurt by seeing the onslaught of these two gentlemen. Mr. Abbas and Mr. Sharon should forget all their hostility and let their people live in peace.

Badal Hasib
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

TV channels of Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a small country with minimum electronic media facilities. At present there are four channels in the country, one is state owned BTV and the other three are private channels -- ATN Bangla, Channel I and NTV. The private channels are transmitted through satellites so many people cannot afford to enjoy their transmission,



Mocked morality

The unloved

These days we seem to be experiencing the past again in our export sector. Everyone is worried that after the quota regime ends in 2005, millions of people will be affected in general and thousands will be thrown out of their jobs. Those who are going to be sacked are expected to be women and it's amazing when one remembers that about a decade back many child workers were also thrown out of factories into the street. Is it the past repeating itself or another round of the same past?

I think there is a bit of both. Getting thrown out of jobs is probably the common issue and it would be very silly to expect that the buyers are going to be par-

ticularly concerned about who keeps their jobs and who doesn't. So if they couldn't give a dime about children who could possibly starve because they were unemployed and the families faced extreme hardship anyway, there is little chance that the West will care. But as a long resident of the western world, I have been taken aback by the total lack of concern on the part of the government towards the fate of children.

The situation today is a grim reminder that our governments don't care. And they don't care about children means they don't care about the future. It's true that poverty pushes many children to go to work but what have we done to

end this poverty and make sure that children who do go to work also get a chance to study and over a period of time, they don't have to work at all. How is it that our political leaders who seem to care a lot about rights don't make a peep when it comes to these working children? No society survives to pushing its children to work for them and use poverty as an excuse. We are doing that. We should look at world for examples and not excuses to go on exploiting children. Children are the most vulnerable and weak so they were victimised. Now it's women's turn? Whose turn will it be after that?

Badsha Mia, Bhuter Gali

especially the village people who does not have the access to satellite channels.

On the other hand, the quality of BTV's programmes is also not very satisfactory. There is a lacking of style and improved presentation in their programmes. People who do not have satellite connection get bored easily by watching the same kinds of programmes day after day. Therefore the information ministry should allow terrestrial to the other three private channels. If done so, BTV will face a competition and definitely will improve the standard of its programmes. Then every citizen of this country will be able to watch and enjoy the programmes of these four channels. I hope, the information ministry will consider and materialise the matter about channels, because they are the chief source of entertainment in home.

I hope, my suggestion will not go in vain.

Sharif Ahmad
Uttara, Dhaka

Income tax

The Finance Minister complains frequently that very few citizens pay their income taxes. I think it would not be too difficult to detect many of the tax evaders. What the

income-tax people have to do is to visit the numerous flats in the metropolitan areas and ask to see income-tax returns. This will increase the number of income-tax payers by a factor of ten at least.

Rakin
One e-mail

The apartment committees

Such committees are formed by some of the tenants of the apartments, especially the ones who own flats. Recently in one such apartment, where I am a tenant, the committee members have decided that the drivers would not be allowed to sit at the front lounge, and that they cannot use the intercom and such. The question is, where the drivers would sit then, and how would they communicate with the owners who often live 5-6 stories up except through the intercom in the garage. The committee's claim is that the drivers are mishandling the telephone set by their constant use! They expect that every time we want to send the drivers on errands we have to go down the stairs.

The aim of these committees is to "benefit" the tenants, but they end up creating problems. I would also like to question the legality of

these committees, and whether there is any law that enables them to dominate other tenants and create problems for them. The committee members often make these rules for their own benefits regardless of the problems faced by other non-committee members. If the committee chiefs are the owners of the building, it would be no problem, but if they are just tenants like us, it raises some questions.

TMK
Lalmatia

Speedy vs regular court cases

Isn't the Shazneen case hearing taking too long? It is more than five years now! It just reflects how our judiciary system works, when it is kept on its own course (i.e. with no intervention by the government for speedy trial, as we have seen in some cases lately). Although, I am sure that every citizen appreciates the speedy trial concept, but would the authorities concerned see how a "speedy trial" differs from a "regular trial" in terms of execution and cost effectiveness.

I believe that a speedy trial's decision (because of the decided time-frame) is not influenced or compromised (i.e. prosecutor/defence lawyers and judges leave no stone unturned before giving the final judgement). Now does the cost differ greatly? If so, how much (in terms of Taka) actually is the government/judiciary system really incurring, in order to convert a regular case to a speedy trial. In my judgement it should not be much (in fact it could be other way round, considering the time span of regular cases now a days). If so, can't we have the similar speedy trial concept for all our court cases, and not just few sensational ones? This way, by defining time limit to every cases, there would be some sort of bindings on our lawyers and judges also, to actually wrap up a case at earliest.

Mohammad Mehroz Jalil
Dhaka Cantt

Launch disaster

I have been reading in your paper the reports on the tragic loss of life due to launch disasters and seemingly nothing is ever done to stop this tragic and unnecessary waste of lives. Some many years ago now I remember reading that the Government of our Country had made it priority to install a modern Global Maritime Distress Satellite System (GMDSS) since the International Maritime Organisation had made it compulsory. I do not believe that such a system has ever been installed and wonder how long it will take before the government takes this up before another disaster occurs? Soon I guess, that the IMO will also be asking the government the same question.

Al Fulani
One e-mail

CNG pumps



Gas for mass

Md. Zillur Rahaman
Bangabandhu Hall, University of Dhaka

Blair "Knighted" for his service

The award of the Congressional Gold Medal and being the fourth British Prime minister in history to address a joint meeting of the US congress can be viewed as the British equivalence of acquiring Knighthood.

Blair whilst being "Knighted" by the Americans he remain isolated from his own population. Now Mr Blair refers to history as being the final arbiter rather than the legal pretext of the UN resolution. The question is whose history? More pertinently in his justification he failed to mention the loss of 8000 innocent Iraqi civilians not to mention the infliction hardship

Apart from the personal gift of Blair's "Knighthood" what was actually gained for British nation? As a Capitalist nation wars are never fought for genuine principals other than economic benefit. No one is convinced of the rhetoric of saving the Iraqis with bombs and bullets, whilst ignoring the longer suffering Palestinians, also given the historical track record of Britain in the region. In the 1930s Winston Churchill gassed the Kurds long before Saddam, as he wanted to spread a "lively terror". So did the British firms gain any of the valuable lucrative contracts that went to Bechtel and Halliburton? Or perhaps only Blair will be rewarded personally in the future with some sort of directorship in one of the many multinational companies that are currently collecting the booty in Iraq! In every other sphere Blair may think

too. But they do it differently, in a more refined manner. These people demand and exert pressure not only to have property or cash but also prefer to marry career girls who can earn money for her father-in-law's family. Isn't it shocking that a girl's career is also some kind of dowry?

Though there are laws to prevent and stop this crime, the victims mostly remain quiet for the fear of public calumny. By making another law this evil custom cannot be abolished unless the outlook of the society changes.

Rubab Abdullah
Dhaka cantonment, Dhaka

Troubles we face everyday

I think, the readers will find my experiences interesting.

taka 300/- only.

c) I was going to Chittagong with my family. After crossing the jams of Saidabad, Kanchpur, and Mograpara we faced a bigger jam at Eliotgonj bazar. We had been waiting on the road for clearance. Suddenly the bus hit my car from the back. I got down and tried to talk to the driver, but all the passengers in the bus took the side of the driver and requested me to shift the car to the road shoulder for negotiation. But the moment I moved the car from his front the driver fled away with his bus.

d) I was coming from Uttara at 9 o'clock at night. On the way I had stopped my car at kuril Bishwa road junction for the traffic signal, but in no time a black taxi cab hit my car from the back producing a big sound. I got down and found both the cars damaged badly. Luckily, my hand brake was drawn;