

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.



**Madhupur Garos, justice denied!**

It is painful to see the hapless indigent Madhupur Garos being evicted to make way for a planned Eco-park. Such invasion on the indigenous people and culture had been an age old practice in many a places around the globe so a state like Bangladesh can not be expected to act in a saner way either. We the pseudo civilised people from the so called urban plastic culture should be held responsible for supporting such senseless acts by the government.

Wonder why are we still silent over this inhuman eviction of the historical custodians of the forests and ecology in the name of preserving the forests? We as member of the civil society ardently urge upon the government to reconsider this venture at Madhupur and save the Garos.

I also urge the NGOs working on human rights to do everything possible to alleviate the suffering of our withering Garo compatriots, who practice only equanimity and fraternity all their life. Hence, please let them share this land with us, like they have for years.

**Shah Mushtaque Ahmed, Lake Circus**



The deprived

PHOTOS: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

**Noise pollution**

I would like to draw your attention to a serious problem that the city dwellers face everyday. It is 'noise pollution'. I am not talking about the unbearable noise one has to bear while on the road. Being rather particular, I am talking about the noise resulted by the construction boom that is going on everywhere in Dhaka for quite a few years. The constant heavy noises of drill machines and tile cutters are simply unbearable.

To give you an example, approximately ten feet from my bedroom (I live in Dhanmondi), they are using some machine (decibel level is perhaps beyond the measuring capacity of the sound measuring machines) from morning till late in the night. As bonus, you there are always other noises associated with building construction. I have, in fact, become sick due to this extreme noise pollution (or should I say torture!).

There must be some law/regulation to limit such nuisance. I am afraid this noise pollution, particularly the screeching sound of drill machines possibly affect our brain/nervous system and may lead to serious dam-

attend the lectures. Especially the department of library and information and communication science is seriously affected because of its closeness to this noisy gathering place.

The DU authority seems completely nonchalant about this harmful practice (I suppose we may call it sound pollution). It will be highly appreciated if the authority negotiates with the political parties to shift their meeting place from the front of the arts building to the Mall Chatter. We are waiting anxiously for the authority's timely decision to make the DU campus free from sound pollution.

**Shamsul Alam Monir, DU**

**Snatching**

On July 18th, 2003, between 8:00 to 8:15 p.m. while going to Mirpur by a rickshaw with my wife, a snatcher from a black taxicab suddenly snatched her handbag right in front of the BIBM. There was a police check post only 100 yards away from the place of the incident. I immediately informed the police inspector present, but he asked for the taxicab no which we failed to provide. Nevertheless, he passed the message through wire-

the stated goal of the Bush administration for more than a year, and in the last fall Ari Fleischer, the White House spokesperson, said war with Iraq could be avoided at "the cost of one bullet". This open discussion of killing Saddam marks a profound retreat from the long-standing insistence that the US did not and would not use assassination as a tool of state. The discovery by the Church Commission in 1976 that the CIA had plotted to kill several foreign opponents including Fidel Castro was described as an aberration; supporters of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy insisted they had authorised nothing of the kind, and official efforts to pinpoint responsibility never went further than the words of US Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, who told a Senate investigation committee, "I just can't understand how it could have happened." Executive orders banning assassination issued by Presidents Ford and Reagan, prompted by public dismay over the poisoned cigars and exploding seashells intended for Castro, have never been revoked. Reagan's order flatly states that "no person employed by or acting on behalf of the US government shall engage in,

treated a heinous crime by the US government and it's own media. Is it correct that the US administration has quit arguing the rights and wrongs of killing enemies? Is Saddam's survival and recent broadcasts of his voice as a psychological barrier, scaring off some Iraqis who might be willing to work with the Americans, and inspiring others including different national military forces to go on fighting?

How can Washington be sure that killing Saddam will be a change for the better? Success might only clear the path for another Iraqi leader, just as intransigent but free of Saddam's burden of decades of crime against his own people.

**Gopal Sengupta**  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

**Anti-American**

I appreciate the letter written by Azad Miah, UK under the above caption on July 23.

It's a common perception that anti-American feelings is only high among the Muslims, but such attitude is also noticeable in other non-Muslim parts of the world. Recently Time magazine arranged an online opinion poll, conducted before the invasion of Iraq under the title "Time Europe.Com Online Poll" and according to this poll 86.9 per cent of the participants opined that America poses the greatest danger to world peace. Although the report also mentioned -- "this is an unscientific, informal survey for the interest and enjoyment of Time.com users and may not be indicative of popular opinion", yet to me it reflected the mood of no less than a number of 7,06,842 people, which cannot be ignored straight away as it was simply taken online.

Recently another authentic and scientific opinion poll result has been published in Washington, conducted under the chairperson of no less a famous personality than Prof. Madeline Albright who was Foreign Secretary during Clinton administration. As per this scientifically organised poll, varying from 70 per cent to maximum of 99 per cent of the people of the Muslim world feel antagonistic towards US and this attitude is not limited among the Muslim countries alone, even in countries like France, Spain, Turkey, Italy, Germany (who were earlier US old allies), large portions of the population do not support America anymore. Now only 16 per cent to 42 per cent people think their countries should sustain the existing friendly relation with US.

No doubt US is a super power but this world also has seen and witnessed many super powers in the past. And it's the lesson of history that in course of time super powers change. So, maybe things will change in future and America must think about that.

**Jkobir**  
Dhaka

**WmD (Weapons of minor Destruction)**

The way the Iraqi dissidents are launching rocket propelled grenades on the coalition forces, with almost hundred percent success as we see in the news papers and TV screen, it now seems that instead of targeting weapons of mass destruction (WMD) the coalition forces should have gone after Weapons of minor Destruction (WmD) such as AK47, rocket launchers etc. This would have saved a lot of lives of innocent young people who openly demand to be sent back to where they belong. They have no interest in George Bush and Tony Blair's misleading strategy. The longer this expedition lasts more lives would be lost with no benefit to any one. Let us hope that good senses will prevail on Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair.

**Fayaz Khan, Joar Sahara**  
Dhaka Cantt

**Price rise**

At present the prices of essential commodities have risen high without any specific reason and continuing to go beyond the common peoples reach. Some people are blaming the budget, others are blaming international crisis like

Iraq war and the rest are blaming currency deficiency or scarcity in financial system. The fact is that the way the prices of staple articles are going up, compare to the common peoples earning it is becoming more difficult everyday to contend with the market. As a result, some people are buying less than their demand and others are not buying at all. One of the main reason behind this is some dishonest businessmen sometimes create artificial crisis by storing essential commodities or staple articles which intensifies the high price. And naturally, when the supply is less than demand, prices go up. Whatever the reason may be, we expect the government to take immediate actions in holding the price-line and bring down the price rise of daily necessities within a reasonable reach.

**Rubab Abdullah**  
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka

**Only brotherhood**

I am somewhat surprised at the comments made on the death of Saddam's sons during the firefight in the city of Mosul. First of all, both the sons could have surrendered after the war, like other generals did. Last time I checked, Tariq Aziz is still alive, so is the information minister. According to "western media" the owner of the house first surrendered and came out with his son, after that the US soldiers used bullhorn and ask them to surrender. This owner was most likely Saddam's cousin and the informant. The US soldiers, upon entering the compound was shot at, in the stairs, which was heavily fortified. The reinforcement came after half an hour. Why didn't the brothers surrender at the initial call? They may be leaders of a Muslim country but they are responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths of Shiite Muslims. Even when Taliban took their country to dark ages none in the Muslim world did anything. I have seen complaints about how the embargo was hurting Iraq's. But how come, Saddam's sons have multiple Rolls Royce's and built many palaces? This is after the first Gulf war. Was it okay for them to gain wealth with the oil for food program money? I saw outrage when Saddam Hossain was asked to leave his country but what then about Liberia? Not a single person protested that. Is it because Saddam is a Muslim brother? When Pakistani Sunnis kill Shiites in the mosque, I have seen only one letter condemning such heinous act.

It is time for Muslim world to get their acts together. S. Korea's per capita income was below per capita income of Bangladesh. Taiwan, Singapore, Hongkong have less mineral resources than Iran and Iraq. Look where they are now? How come Iran, Iraq or Egypt could not become such powerful industrialised nation? Why is it that Muslim scientists contribute more when they are in western countries, but not in their own homeland?

**M.Hassan**  
USA

**Ethos of war**

The US-UK occupation forces are setting new rules in Iraq. 'Every thing is fair in love and war' may be a momentary truth or at best a reconciliatory tag pinned to a foolish leader in combat to justify his un-soldierly actions. The planners are forgetting the consequences -- would they like the same treatment when their turn comes?

**Tasmia Amaat**  
Dhaka

**Security Council Resolution**

When Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in 1990, the Security Council adopted resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. The Security Council Committee, pursuant to the aforesaid resolution, has now established and also designated the individuals listed below in connection with the measures contained in paragraph 23 of resolution 1483 (2003), which reads:

(a) Funds or other financial assets or economic resources of the previous government of Iraq or its state bodies, or agencies, located outside Iraq as of the date of this resolution, or

(b) Funds or other financial assets or economic resources that have been removed from Iraq, or acquired by Saddam Hussein or other senior officials of the former Iraqi regime and their immediate family members, including entities owned and controlled, directly or indirectly, by them or by persons acting on their behalf or at their direction, shall be frozen. These funds or other financial assets or economic resources are themselves the subject of a prior judicial, administrative, or arbitrate lien or judgement, will be transferred to the Development Fund for Iraq, it being understood that, unless otherwise addressed, claims made by private individuals or non-government entities on those transferred funds or other financial assets may be presented to the internationally recognised representative government of Iraq; and decides further that all such funds or other financial assets or economic resources shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities, and protections as provided under paragraph 22."

In the same fashion when the US and the UK jointly invaded and occupied Iraq on a false and concocted accusation, the whole world naturally now expects the aforesaid resolution be legitimately and equally established. Otherwise the credibility and neutrality of the UN will be at stake.

Finally I will end my letter by a quotation from Dwight D Eisenhower who put the cost of war in a saner and more suitable perspective when he said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

**Manik Chandra Das**  
Dhaka

**Let's privatise peacemaking operations**

The inability on the part of the international community to stop mass murder of their own people by tyrannical regimes stems from the shortcomings in the international system formed in 1945, when the greatest threat to human life was war between nations. Its structures were designed to prevent conflict between states and secure peace in the international arena. What international law cannot do, however, is to secure peace within nations.

But this may be changing. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan recently said that human rights stood above everything. However,

**Why billboards only?**

Thanks for your timely editorial, published on 26 July, 2003, on Dhaka City Corporation's latest decision to remove the billboards.

But my question is why billboards only? The roads, lanes and streets of Dhaka are infested with commercial banners, festoons and posters. For example, at the Farm Gate area it is quite disturbing to look around just because of these banners, festoons and posters put up at every possible vacant space to promote sale of education, ornaments, costumes, herbal medicines, palmistry and what not.

We know the DCC makes an effort half-heartedly once in a year to remove or destroy these 'vision polluters'. But why must DCC do it only once in a year? It can, and it should, remove these materials as soon as these are displayed. It should also take legal actions against those who are putting up these materials. Weekly drives on regular basis will stop this nuisance. For doing so, I don't think, lot of fund is required. What is required is good taste and the desire to do the job on the part of the concerned officials of the DCC. They must not forget that Dhaka is no more a district headquarters. It is the burgeoning capital of a country, and the people of the country want feel proud of it.

**Brig Gen (Retd) Ashraf, Dhaka**



Billboards kill

PHOTO: AUSABAR MCDONALD

the UN peacekeepers have been unable to stop interethnic conflicts mainly because of the unwillingness of nations providing peace-keeping troops to sustain inevitable combat casualties in regions where their own security is not stake. To obviate this problem, one suggestion has been to set up a standing UN force. But most powers are unwilling to allow the UN to have such a force for their own self-interest.

This can be overcome by allowing the UN to use privately recruited armed forces to stop genocide around the world. Northbridge Services, a private military company (PMC) founded by retired American and British soldiers, has offered to deploy 2,000 armed men in Liberia where reviled President Charles Taylor and rebels are engaged in a vicious conflict costing thousands of lives. In June, the company offered the

UN "a special constabulary force" that would arrest Mr. Taylor and bring him to trial at a cost of around \$4 million -- a fraction of usual peacekeeping cost. "The whole thing could have been resolved in June," said Pasquale Dipofi, Northbridge's director of US operations.

With the US clearly reluctant to send its troops to Liberia, time has come to consider using private military establishments to do the job. Under strict rules of engagement and supervised by the UN, PMCs can be used to bring peace in nations embroiled in domestic conflicts.

**Mahmood Elahi**  
Ottawa, Canada



Crouching tigers

PHOTO: AFP

**Hookes blasts Bangladesh**

Though it is only the second day of the second cricket Test between Bangladesh and Australia, it is high time for the former Australian batsman and presently a TV commentator David Hookes to come out and publicly apologise to Bangladesh and particularly to the brave Tigers/Cricketers, who have proved him wrong.

It is really shameful for a host country TV commentator to pass such comments.

Bravo Tigers, keep it up and prove persons like David Hookes wrong.

**Marghub Mawla, Dhanmondi**

I wish to address this letter to Mr. David Hookes, the former famous Australian cricketer who is presently a cricket commentator. Mr. David Hookes, showed his utter disdain by his comments about the young Bangladesh team -- the most atrocious one being the writing off of Bangladesh in one day Test in Darwin and asking for its relegation even before the Test match started. I presume that he was suffering from tempo-

rary amnesia while making that comment, otherwise he would have remembered that some of the most illustrious present test playing nations did not win their first Test match until 17 to 35 years while Bangladesh is only three years old regarding their Test status! And just look what they have achieved so far in the ongoing Cairns Test against the mighty Australians, the world champions.

**Ashfaq Chowdhury**  
Banani, Dhaka

age, including retardation.

I would be glad if DS take some initiative to aware people on this issue. Who knows, your columns may draw the attention of the authority concerned!

(I am keeping my fingers crossed).

**Mufazzel Hossain**  
Dhaka

**Sound pollution in DU campus**

The Dhaka University campus, specially the base of the Aparajeo Bangla is a popular place for gathering of the political parties. And it is quite natural that such a place will always be used a venue of political meetings and all that. But we probably never considered the problems such gathering may cause to the common students.

The sculpture being right in front of the arts building makes it difficult for the students to pay attention to the lectures. The excessive sounds of exciting speeches make it very difficult to

less to the next check post and told us that snatching or hijacking occurs frequently in that area. A few months ago similar thing happened at Mirpur-10 while my younger sister was going with her husband on a rickshaw. I heard several stories of this kind from my relatives too. The many police check posts around the area are not helping to reduce snatching. I wonder why? I would like to draw the attention of the police department and hope that they will take this matter.

**Ahmed Zubayer**  
Dhaka

**"Saddam's sons and grandson killed-- but under what law?"**

It has come to my attention regarding the above mentioned column written by Mr. Muslehuddin Ahmad duly published in the Daily Star in it's July 27, 2003 issue.

I sincerely agree with Mr. M.Ahmad and would like to add the followings:

"Removing Saddam" has been

**PM's call for change in political culture**

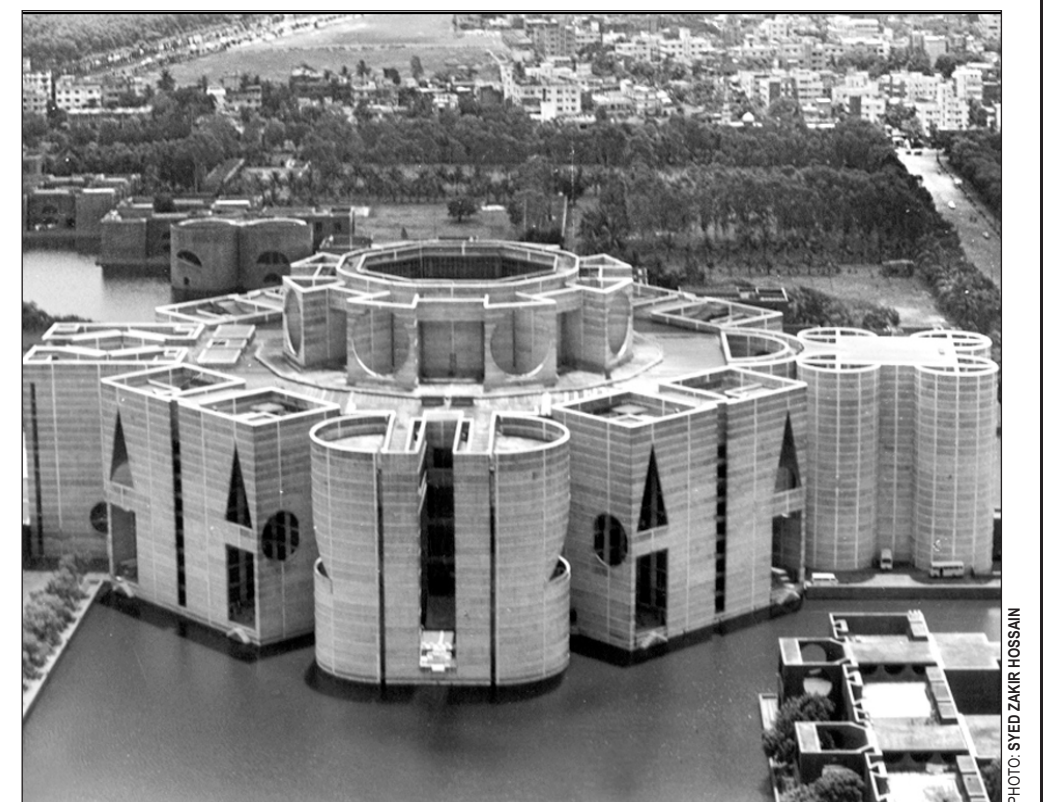
It was quite encouraging to hear the prime minister calling for qualitative change in Bangladesh politics as she thought it to be above everything else in the modern state mechanism. She made the comment at the inauguration of 9<sup>th</sup> National Convention of BPSA (DS July 20). She also called upon all the political parties to uphold the interest of the people and consolidate the democratic system together through political farsightedness and acumen. It goes without saying that is what our democratic polity really needs. There is no denying that people's interest should come first and above all else and to implement people's welfare oriented policies leaders must have farsightedness. The sincerity of purpose and unfailing commitment to that end are of prime necessity.

And to speak of holding democratic system together, we are still miles away. Our parliament, the House of the nation, the citadel of our nascent democracy is functioning without participation of the opposition and the treasury bench by virtue of its brute majority takes it comfortably to go its own way.

The PM was also quoted as saying "We are pledge bound to ensure rule of law through strict application of laws irrespective of party or group". This sounds of high morale, integrity and going above prejudice that is what is expected of a prime minister. It would be only

great if we could give credence to that. The same day news-story captioned "Home ministry move to relieve BNP MP's brother of murder case" leaves us sceptical about the PM's pledge. The speedy tribunal has awarded capital punishment to the criminals in a few sensational murder cases to the consolation of the affected families. But the accused in the double murder in Keraniganj despite being in custody for committing the felony is being contrived to be acquitted from the charges, thanks to his being the brother of a ruling party MP. Rules are to be bent, laws warped for such case with no pains spared

**A H Dewan**  
Dhaka Cantt, Dhaka



Shattered dreams

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN