

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.

Cricket, cricket again

I am sorry if I sound monotonous and cynical harping on the same subject over and over again. But I, an avid cricket fan, (till of course Bangladesh's appearance on the horizon) cant rest in peace till this run of humiliating the nation stops. I have stopped watching cricket because I can't take this insult anymore. I feel if you just pick up 11 street boys with me as one, we won't do any worse than the much pampered TIGERS(!!). What a shame that they haven't yet given up the title Tigers. May be since this gorgeous animal has become an endangered specie, we can add another 11-14 to the number and let these tigers rest in peace.

Isn't there anyone in this God forsaken land who can take account of this and stop this horrendous let down of this poor nation?

Ahmad Kamal
Abu Dhabi, UAE



PHOTO: AFP

So the humiliation continues for the Bangladeshi Cricket team, alternatively billed as 'the Tigers'. Defeats after defeats in the ODIs and even in the Test matches, often culminating in becoming parts of the record books! I wonder how the Royal Bengal Tigers, after whom the billing is made, feel about such perennial humiliation: they must be having a last laugh under their sleeve! If they are very angry with us for such ignominy, I won't blame these hapless creatures. After all, they did not take part in christening our cricket team after their glorious name!

Those who have been tracking the growth of cricket in what is now Bangladesh will recall how gleeful and overjoyed we were when the ICC boss, Mr. Dalmiya, offered us the golden plate of the Test status. So overjoyed we were that in tandem with the then ruling government functionaries, we, the general public, danced and danced all the way on the Dhaka streets, as if that was the best 'Gift of the Century' for our nation. We were indeed so paralyzed with delirious joy that we could not fathom the other side of the story: what was delivered by Mr. Dalmiya was indeed a premature baby of around 6-7 months still very much in its mother's womb! We were also unable to understand the then political scenario that perhaps prompted Mr. Dalmiya et al to rush with the decision to show their 'love' for Bangladesh, even at the cost of Kenya who did have a better Test side compared to that of Bangladesh at that time.

As an ardent fan of the game, I am definitely optimistic about our cricket future. I do have all the sense of gratitude towards Mr. Dalmiya, although I wish if he could have been a bit more prudent in showering his love for us. That could perhaps save us from the ignominy of being a rickety baby at the mercy of the fully grown but scornful competitors.

Ahmed Ghani
Dhaka

Sunnydale on a rainy day

I appreciate Asmat Ara Rahim's letter "Attention: Sunnydale School" (printed in the DS on September 16) and her concerns about our country's natural calamities. However, I beg to differ with her on keeping the school closed citing this reason. I, on the other hand, thank the management of Sunnydale School for functioning normally even after experiencing a natural calamity. If majority of the students could come to the school premises even after braving the deluge, why wouldn't the school authorities keep it open? Another good reason to keep the school functioning is that almost all the schools extended their summer holidays due to the grenade attack on the Awami League rally on August 21. Schools in Dhaka city have been kept closed on slightest pretext. I am also a parent of two school-going children. They go to Banani's Playpen school. Over the last week, every morning, except a day or two, my kids went to school only to see that there would be no school. I watched them returning home with gloomy faces.

I can understand Asmat Ara Rahim's point that we should not ignore calamities, but there's another calamity about to happen in our children's lives. They are have become frustrated because they think they are missing out and their teachers won't be able to complete their syllabus. At the same time, they are turning out to be 'day-long television watchers'

Ekram Kabir
Gulshan, Dhaka

It gives us immense pleasure that Sunnydale authorities have taken timely and prompt initiative for holding off all classes owing to these rainy days. They have also taken the steps for holding the make up tests later.

I appreciate the measures adopted by the school.
Asmat Ara Rahim
Indira Road

JS incident and the commentary

This refers to your commentary "Honourable Speaker, you could have taken the Jatiya Sangsad to a greater height" published in your Daily of 18 September.

As you already know I have been an admirer of your thoughtful writings for quite sometime now. This commentary too is no exception. What happened the other day at the Jatiya Sangsad was far from desirable. However, your contention that the Hon. Speaker could have taken the Jatiya Sangsad to greater heights to my mind reflects only half the truth. One of the first statements right after the 8/21 incident was made by both the Leader of the Opposition and its Secretary General something to the effect that the ruling party was the one responsible for the bombings. As you have rightly observed, much bitterness and hatred exist between the two parties. I am afraid the opposition is also no less guilty for this. Admittedly, the ruling party is guilty of innumerable failures, yet the fact remains that the opposition too has failed to display any real wisdom and maturity in dealing with emerging issues.



PHOTO: AFP

Dhaka

India above criticism?

The readers and the columnists of The Daily Star are far more critical of the policies of the United States than any other nation. Yet, I have noticed that whenever India is criticised even mildly in your paper, Indians and even some Bangladeshis jump to India's defence! Could it be that the US democracy is strong and it can withstand criticism, and India's democracy is weak, so it cannot? Or is it that India never makes mistakes, therefore, cannot be criticised at all?

For example, I was intrigued by Shejuti Khan's (Letter to The Editor,

September 15), a response to Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed's column "For friendship Bangladesh should look East" (The Daily Star, September 12). Khan compares Dr. Ahmed's suggestion that Bangladesh should look East for trade with Canada looking to Greenland for trade. How one can compare Bangladesh looking for trade with the densely-populated, rising industrial powers such as China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, with Canada looking for trade with a chunk of ice, Greenland, is perhaps only understood by Khan. Khan also says America's neighbours are unhappy with it. I am not aware of any outstanding territorial and water-sharing disputes between the US and Canada or Mexico, as exists between India and Bangladesh. On the contrary, there is free trade between the three nations; trucks loaded with Canadian and Mexican goods have free entry into the US. India, on the other hand, severely restricts entry of Bangladeshi goods into its territory.

It is understandable for Indians to promote the interest of their country, but why should Bangladeshis also start promoting the interest of India?

Kabir Mia
New York

DU scene

As a student of DU, I am really frustrated about my future. Whenever something goes wrong, why should we be the only sufferers!

We, the general students, have nothing to do with politics but our academic life is completely halted by it. So for the welfare of the future generation, the university should be opened immediately!

Nusrat
Dpt of Information science, DU

Amigrant speaks

I refer to the letter 'Why I am not a migrant' from Dr. OM Ohidul Alam (DS 06/09/04).

According to Dr. Alam, educated Bangladeshis migrants are opportunists, escapists, selfish and bla bla bla. They feel safe and happy within their families in a nice house with a green backyard and a posh car at the portico. He is also critical of his migrant friends' happy-go-lucky attitude that almost leads to heaven! Different people have different observational attitude towards life, country and imaginable surroundings. However, many abstract feelings are obviously circumstantial, but love remains the same for motherland. Rather it goes up in many instances. Perhaps Dr. Alam failed to look at the inner sight of his friends to some extent if not totally. I think this parochial approach led him to paint migrants in a single brush, of course very ruthlessly. There are many dedicated migrants helping the people living in the barren edge of the society. Those migrants do not expect any recognition or publicity or do not cherish to contest any election to grab more wealth. We salute them. We also salute those honest contributors living inside the country but love to remain out of zoom. We appreciate his strong social commitment and deliveries other than his medical profession. But I failed to understand why he opted to measure his materialistic achievement, social deliveries and personal mind-set against his wealthy but 'escapist' friends.

Tarik Zaman
School of Land, Water and Crop Sciences
The University of Sydney, Australia

Inhuman treatment

The news of a crime committed by a madrasah teacher in a remote village of Bogra, once again manifested the ill of unplanned, uncontrolled religious education system in our country. The ears of 17 minors were cut/mutilated by a teacher enraged because the students were not reciting their studies loudly enough. People gave the teacher a good beating but did not care to lodge a case against the offender. However, local police started a suo moto case and arrested the offending teacher. Allegation of torture and other abuses are common with many such institutions. But only the sensational ones are published in newspapers, and perhaps only then some actions are taken.

Of late, private madrasahs have had a mushroom growth. It appears there is none to control or to determine the curriculum. I have gone through some ads claiming 'English medium cadet madrasah' and so on. No one knows what they teach there.

In Uttara residential area dozens of such dubious madrasahs have cropped up in the last few years. Some female madrasahs are here in a single building, inmates of which are not allowed even to go to the roof of the building.

The private madrasah owners claim that they do not follow government rules because they do not take any money from the public exchequer. The government may have the same thinking. But none should forget that the students are future citizens. So all such educational institutions should be brought under public scrutiny. We don't want to hear any more torture story from any educational institutions.

M Sanaul Huq
Uttara, Dhaka

On Towfique

Hassan's letter

I fully sympathise with Mr. Towfique Hassan (September 16, 2004) and for his son. I wish any of us had any answer or remedy for their plight. The only reason these so called developed countries harass us is that they can. I live in the US and I am in touch with many Indian and Pakistani students here. Frankly speaking, Indians never have this kind of problem. Same for Pakistan, to a lesser extent. Before September 11, 2001 Indian students sometimes were given US visa on mail. They never even had to show up at

am a software engineer in the US. I am seeing all the IT jobs going away to India but nowhere in Bangladesh. Why? Do we not have engineers in Bangladesh? Let me reassure that I know that some Bangladeshis have more talent than a lot of the Indians. Then why are we not getting a piece of the outsourcing pie? Because of my experience, I myself am willing to invest in Bangladesh and start an outsourcing business with our boys and girls - but at what risk?

If I go to Hasina and ask her to stop all the hartals and chaos she will just go on complaining about the government. How do I explain to her

giving us water? We would highly appreciate if they do not interfere so much in our internal affairs. Our people will decide when and to whom we will sell or not sell our gas.

And TV channels should take constructive and inspirational interviews, not frustrating and insulting interviews, which can irritate us.

Nazrul Islam Rizvi
Nurjahan Road, Muhammadpur, Dhaka

Good neighbourliness

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed's article "For



PHOTO: AFP

Water logging and housing projects

I think in future Dhaka city will be more water logged, especially during the rainy season if the housing projects in the low lying areas around Dhaka city continue

their activities. Let us stop it before it is too late.

To achieve this, RAJUK must be made accountable to the people (who pay tax for the salary of the employ-

ees and officials working there).

Dr. Mahboob Hossain
Niigata University of Pharmacy, Niigata, Japan

the embassy. I never heard an Indian and Pakistani saying that their wife might not get a visa. Bangladesh is probably the only country in the world where the wives of students have difficulty getting a US spouse visa. I personally know several Bangladeshis whose wife never got US visa and they had to leave the US.

The fact is that we are one of the poorest countries in the world and the image, let's not even talk about it. Given the type of utter corrupt politicians, devoid of any trace of human virtues, no wonder Bangladesh is destined to remain one of the poorest for a long, long time. So, the developed countries look at us as a bunch of poor hungry.

Nayeem Mano
US

Tragic indeed!

Today (17.09.04), I read a news in The Daily Star that one madrasah teacher, named Abdul Majid, cut the earlobes of twelve students who did not read the Holy Qu'ran loudly. What a tragedy! I have no words to condemn it and I am afraid of thinking that there may be many so called moulanas in our society who do not have any respect for human rights. They are not serving Islam.

We should take this issue seriously and be aware of the so called Islamists.

Kazi Firoz
Kosice, Slovakia

Amisunderstood religion

What has happened in Beslan is a manifestation of the desperate acts of some desperate people - a people who have lost more than the number of victims in the Beslan tragedy in their struggle for independence. It has nothing to do with Islam or religious fanaticism.

The West does not understand Islam. On the contrary, it is awed by the power of it. That is why they have fought it in the crusades and are now trying to fight it using their media and their armies. Let us not be swayed by the western interpretation of events.

Shomit Chowdhury
On e-mail

How long should we wait ?

After the fall of dictatorship in Bangladesh, a lot of us thought that "Okay, here comes prosperity". Oh boy was I wrong! Some politicians started to take advantage of this new found freedom and turned "our freedom" into chaos. I am not writing to blame the opposition or the government. We have already seen that before. I don't want to hear from Hasina that the government is doing everything wrong and so we have the chaos; nor do I want to hear Khaleda blaming Hasina for everything. It is time to look beyond the same old issues. Now, you will probably laugh at my writing and say what is new about that. A lot of people have already expressed similar feelings like mine and nothing happened. But then should I just keep my mouth shut and see my country go downhill (it is already down there according to the rest of the world).

The main reason I am writing this letter is to express my frustration. I

that the government is not calling the hartal. Now, please do not think I am a BNP fan. I do not care much about that party. I want to see peace and that is all! However, because BNP is in power, we need to work with them to get our security.

Russel Siddique
On e-mail

Gas export

A local TV channel showed the interview of Mr. Peterson, the US deputy Foreign Secretary. In that interview he strongly criticised Bangladesh for not exporting gas to India. We strongly protest this kind of criticism. How can he be so sure about what our people want? Why did not they criticise India for not

friendship Bangladesh should look East" published in The Daily Star on 12 September is amateurish writing. Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mr. M. Morshed Khan's outburst on India needs much more critical analysis than Dr. Fakhruddin's sentimentalist views. Your Editorial "The foreign minister's fury" on 10 September is balanced.

Let us face the truth. India can sustain, absorb some few billion dollar loss, but Bangladesh can't. India has a wide range of subjects to help, like education, health, infrastructure, information technology etc. But Bangladesh has only limited scope.

MK Barua
New Delhi

Grow old gracefully



PHOTO: AFP

In both western and eastern countries, we see many elderly men and women who spend their last years by living on their own. Many of them live in the homes for the seniors or elderly people's homes, and a lot of elderly people engage themselves in various hobbies and activities. We want to share some ideas and thoughts about the elderly.

Many elderly people are people of experience and wisdom. It is really nice to have a conversation with them because they have known and they have seen more than we have. Some elderly people are bitter and difficult because of their attitude towards life. After becoming 60 years old, a person considers himself or herself as an elderly person and they have seen and witnessed many things that are historic.

Many elderly people like to spend time with friends of their own age because they are tired of taking care of young ones for a long time. They want to take a break and live their life. But they do make good grandparents.

We find that most of the faces of elderly people are incredibly artistic and beautiful. The wrinkles, the grey or white hair and the look of experience in their faces (Estelle).

Read Barbara Cloud's article on the elderly which is very interesting. (January 21, 2001, Pittsburgh Post Gazette).

The Star Magazine (Bangladesh) published a very sad story of an elderly woman who asked for food and the landlord slapped her (this is heartbreaking).

Mr. Zahid Mukul built a home for the elderly in Gazipur and spent a large amount of money to assist at least 500 elderly people (a great achievement).

Elderly parents are often neglected by their grown children who either have personal problems or they are too busy with life and work. There are also old people who are rich and they can support themselves. These people also suffer from insecurity and loneliness.

There should be more old people's homes to give shelter, economic and emotional support to the elderly.
Suchitra, M. Shahi, M. Chaud, Gulshan 2, Dhaka

