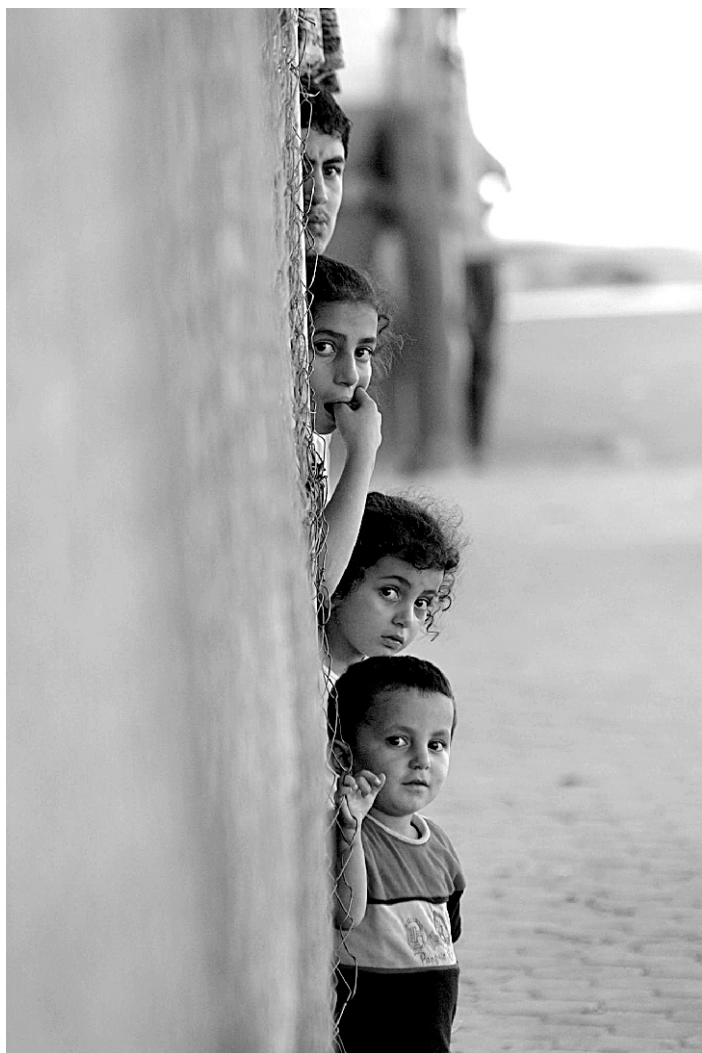


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Stop genocide

A picture, printed in The Daily Star, made my heart bleed. Because those kids had stolen my heart at first sight and I love them. They are Palestinians and their lives are at stake, they are always living with death. Kids are like angels, they deserve affection and care, not death. I wish Mr. Sharon could understand how does it feel to see your dear ones dying! I met a very nice Palestinian boy of my age online, who is 19 years old. I told him that I'm a fresher in university and asked him about his studies. The ill-fated boy answered he can't concentrate on studies because there is always turmoil going on in Palestine and it's very unpredictable whether he can continue his education or not. He typed like this, "Here when I'm chatting with you, no one can say when I'm gonna be bombed (laughing out loudly). It's very difficult to ensure secured life here...people have forgotten when they last slept a sound sleep...". The boy said that people of Israel and Palestine are not really so hostile to each other, but it's the government of Israel...



The boy grumbled that none of the so-called world leaders nor the Arab leaders are taking any effective step so that the problem can have a peaceful solution. No one is doing anything to stop the mass killings. Innocent people including women and children are being killed in Palestine by Israelis. President Bush says that Mr. Saddam Hussain killed many Kurds, Shites and demeaned human rights. Well, definitely

Saddam did and he deserves severe punishment for that. But the intention of Mr. Bush seems very ambiguous when he speaks of humanity at the same breath after his army killed 32 innocent children in Iraq!

I watched the live telecast debate between Mr. Bush and Mr. Kerry. I love the way Mr.

Kerry knocked out Bush. Bush was looking very annoyed, he was giving evasive answers as he could not face the truth. Mr. Kerry seems a sensible person, a brave patriot, an eloquent speaker, as well as a good politician. Kerry is a ray of hope, maybe.

Cantara Wali Ruhi, JU

The ensuing homeless 1500 years-the status as immigrants or the bohemians, the inhuman hardship borne by this band of human beings in different parts of the world -the holocaust and what not up to now, is well known. If someone here says we don't know this or we would repeat that part of the history knowingly, the answer is a clear and resounding- No! Never!! We the people beside the Bay also walked a long and protracted path of the history again for thousands of years and fought out with everything for our liberation. After that we found us fighting among ourselves! Why? Because, we let those skipper take their turn and led us for the destination of a common goal. Now, we see, as Bakht sees - and have rightly started believing "that anything can happen" to us, on this soil.

Now it is time to say to them shouting clearly, - this is no leadership, whatsoever. "We" will definitely bring out this leadership - skilful not muscle-flexing. Can't we Bakht? -- We can steer our distressed ship through, up to the port of Tranquillity.

Chapt. Sayeed (Rtd) Dhaka

What's going on ?

The most popular group for the young people of Bangladesh is RAB. RAB is becoming very popular to the youths by its cinematic activities. Most people are happy because they have no faith in current law and justice system. The RAB is uttering the word "crossfire" happily and without hesitation. Crossfire has become a normal incident to all.

RAB has been successful in issuing a threat to all terrorists. The government and ministers are all happy with the activities of RAB. Is it a good sign for justice and human rights? There arises one common question : is there any necessity of a regular law enforcing agency or any government in Bangladesh? We can engage a special hired team for a term to run Bangladesh! It may be like a bank management team.

People are observing the developments with great consternation.. In broad daylight, terrorists are throwing grenades in the heart of the city and in the presence of lots of law enforcers, lots of special forces, NSI, DB and so on. People hardly

Green road, Dhaka

Bomb blasts and intelligence failure

Extreme shock and awe, disbelief and tension mount across the country as 19 people were reported killed, including a front leader of the AL, and many were wounded as waves of grenade attack rocked the meeting of the main opposition party on 21st August. The leader of the opposition narrowly escaped this vicious attempt on her life. According to various sources there had been 14 powerful bomb blasts in last five years, killing 154 people. Surprisingly, no one is being held or arrested in connection with these heinous crimes.

Who are the elements that keep on attacking and running away safely? It must be a question to answer. If I throw the dice on board thrice, three possible outcomes are striking my imagination. For some reason, I don't want to specify the names but it should be clear to many readers. One throw of my dice tells it could be extremists or guerrilla groups backed up by fanatic organisations who want to put our country in dire straits. Another could be an authorised organisation of foreign countries who are looking to cut down our sovereignty, and the last possible dice throw shows the elements of internal political conflicts which are assumed to be less important. The opposition is blaming the government for this attack.

It is time the two major parties sat together and formulated a master plan to work against such criminal activities.

Shafiqat Rana Sayed

Dept of Economics and Social Science, BRAC University

Power generation

Going through Margit Merten's "Energy: Solutions made in Germany" (DS: 03 Oct), it was disappointing to note that apparently none of the options offered could be a viable proposition for Bangladesh; unless heavily subsidised by the government. Solar power is the only option that has made its way to a few rural areas through determined effort by a private company. However it still has a long way to go before it can have some visible



The wanderer

"All those who wander are not lost" (J.R.R. Tolkien). We can travel to many places and overcome space and time. Is that you, or just the wind in the sky; so what is the gypsy life doing to me? By travelling we can see many different sights and we enrich our minds. It doesn't matter if a person is young or old. Travelling is ageless and timeless. Even older people travel. Age does not bother them. Travelling refreshes our minds. Travelling and moving became a part of my life. There were so many different landscapes. When I looked at the vast sky and the vast expanse of land, it gave a sense of openness, equality and freedom. The land changes. Sometimes the land has the shine and glitter of the shades of the brown earth and clay. Or the land is covered with the vibrant green grass. I can see the massive blue skies, defiant mountains, and the deep forests. Sometimes I have seen the land covered with hundreds of flowers. Sometimes I have seen

the land as a desert covered with the shimmering sands. Sometimes I have seen the land change into a white desert covered with snow. I can experience the flight of an eagle through the sky. I lived in many beautiful houses and I also left them. Gloria Anzaldua says, "I am a turtle, I carry my home upon my back." Edward Said wrote about the travelling theory. We can be like Mulan, and travel to save a Chinese empire.

When we travel, we disconnect the mundane, boring life and discover a life that is bigger. We learn many things when we travel. We discover undiscovered continents. Maybe tomorrow, I'll want to settle down, or maybe I'll travel forever. Until tomorrow, the whole world is my home. Travelling through lands, a traveller in the journey of life.

Estelle Mahnuma On e-mail

Tigers need inspiration

It was indeed sad to see our hopes of doing something being dashed in the ICC Champions' Trophy, when our national cricket team failed to make any impression and lost to both the West Indies and South Africa. I think one of the main reasons for this is lack of inspiration and spirit. It was clear that the Tigers were uncomfortable playing out in the English conditions. They were not getting as much support as they would have if they played on their home soil or countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan or India. And another reason for their failure must have been too much excitement. As I had mentioned (Tigers do take time) earlier that on a wicket like that of England, they should try to stick around for the first 15 overs without losing wickets. But they failed to do so.

Despite these failures we must inspire the boys and be patient. Mohammed Fahim Hara Universal Tutorial, Eskaton Road, Dhaka

Attention : traffic authorities

This is needless to say that nowadays traffic jam has become a major problem for the city dwellers. The country also incurs a heavy loss in efficiency and productivity in all spheres.

Yet, we didn't see any effort being made by the authorities concerned to lessen the sufferings of people. At this stage, I earnestly request the DMP Commissioner to instruct the D.C. Traffic to ensure movement of rickshaws on the left side of the roads. Rickshaws are found on the left, middle and right side of the roads. This causes serious traffic jam.

But so far I know, as per DMP traffic regulations, rickshaws or rickshaw vans must ply only on the left side of a road. I have tried several times to bring the matter to the notice of the traffic authorities. But there has been no result. Will they respond to it?

MA Bashir Dhaka

Save us all

I heard slogans like, "Save Hasina, save Bangladesh" from our opposition party's protest rallies and human chain.

Yes, they have a point, but I think we must save all the people of this country, not only a particular individual.

Nayeem Islam The Aga Khan School Uttara, Dhaka

Please call it off

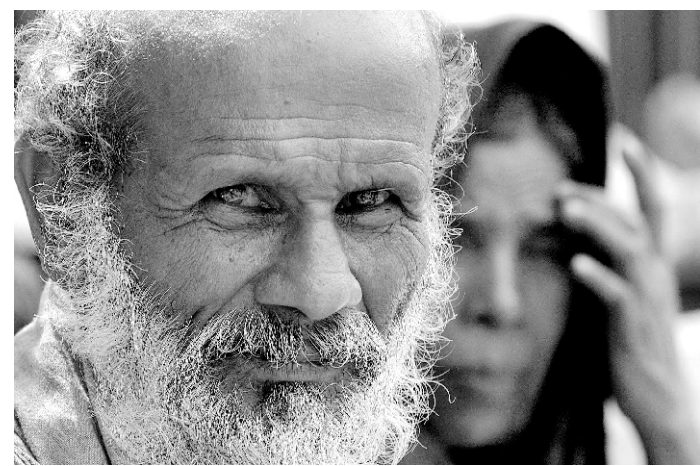
I am a student of Dhaka University. Like all other general students of this university I am totally disappointed, frustrated and agitated due to the ongoing strike. We had our exam on 25 August, which was postponed for floods and after that when the university reopened we expected that the schedule of the exams would be given. But the strike called by some student organisations has ruined our hope again.

I condemn the attack on the procession of the BCL but I believe that there are a lot of ways to protest the incident. An indefinite strike

cannot be the solution, since it will only jeopardise our own future. Putul Department of Law, DU

questions. Surely this was not the purpose of judicial inquiry. So let the report be published for public scrutiny. People of Bangladesh will appreciate more clarity, and annota-

Role of intellectuals



The present world is a desperate race between the atom and the thinker and it is duty of a philosopher to combat blind dogmatism and irrational creeds and reconstruct man's institutions on a more rational basis. The history of mankind is a perennial struggle between rational and irrational forces, between knowledge and enlightenment on the one hand and stupidity, prejudice, lust for power, on the other.

For the intellectuals, society has no fascination. They are our greatest, revolutionaries and dreamers. The French Revolution would never have occurred if the faith of the people in the old institution had not been undermined by the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau and other thinkers. Today Bangladesh needs intellectuals and the masses have to be brought up on new values -- the values of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism.

The intellectuals are sometimes disheartened but they have a responsibility which they cannot evade. Mohammad Ariful Islam, RUET

Customs' cruelty

I am not surprised but shocked to read the report in The Daily Star titled "Kidney Dialysis Solution Tariff row may spell patients' plight" where it is written that customs officials are not clearing the dialysis solution arguing that it is taxable (which so far I know is a non-taxable item). Thus these officers are endangering the lives of many kidney patients. From my experience I have found that they identify many non-taxable items as taxable to get bribe.

To me, blocking the delivery of a live saving solution is a kind of terrorism for which the customs officers should be punished. If such live-saving solution is really taxable the persons responsible for imposing such tax deserve punishment. Dr. Mahboob Hossain Niigata University of Pharmacy, Niigata, Japan

Hasina weeps

Hasina wept again on 3.10.2004. She wept like a housewife in her public meeting at Paltan Maidan. Once she wept in 1996 roaming door to door for votes. Weeping is good for emitting 'waste vapour of agony' of the mind. But it does not suit the leader of the opposition. The leader of the opposition of our country is not merely a woman--she is next to the leader of the parliament.

A leader should be strong minded, physically fit and intelligent enough. Weeping here and there erodes personality. Weeping in public, that too in a big meeting, is a clear indication of losing courage and moral strength. Nur Hossain Bangshal, Dhaka

People have the right to know

Your editorial of October 3 on JIC report on August 21 2004 episode is hopefully not the last on the subject. We expect more analysis of the report when made public. The report has already raised some

things where needed, considering that the vast majority of our fellow countrymen and women are not highly educated to understand hidden truths. They would appreciate plain truth in a plain language.

By the way, please do not forget to mention about other reports that we expected from external agencies who came to Bangladesh to assist investigation into the August 21 attack, especially technical aspects where Bangladesh has limited expertise.

Thank you for the editorial which has at least opened the way for exchange of opinions. A Bangladeshi abroad On e-mail

An epilogue to "Anything can happen"

We can't accept your "Anything can happen" on this small chunk of land of ours called, Bangladesh. Want to know, really who, why, how etc? Prior to the replies to all those, Mr. Farid Bakht, heart felt love, from the very goodness of the soul for those "script" like few lines of your article "What happens next?". So ordained and time consumed were the narrative, that in turn dictates the onlookers to say that the reply to the first question 'Who is --you and your likes.

The answer to the second question 'Why' is very simple and precise we can't afford to wait for that "anything" to happen here.

We have a small chunk of land on this planet called Earth and how come, we let "anything" happen to this when the very definite effect of this "anything" is nothing short of losing it!

Don't we know the historical fate of an identical human race that inhabited the shore of the Mediterranean, and lost it in the ancient time? We think, this group of people has a striking semblance with us. They had with other things a very common linguistic and cultural identity, lived beside the shore of a sea as we do here beside the Bay.

believe that they have no clue in their hands. The terrorists exploded bombs in the past, but now they are throwing grenades in front of thousands of people. What is going on in this country, and where shall our sufferings end? Sra von

presence in rural Bangladesh.

Power from municipal waste, which has taken roots in Europe, particularly France, seems to be an elusive subject here. Often we read about some study being processed; which is about as far as the public is aware. For large cities like

Devastated world heritage

Legendary history of war-ravaged Iraq, almost 6,000 years old, conjures up Mesopotamia civilisation, one of the oldest civilisations of the world, a combine of three civilisations-- Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian.

The Sumerians were small city dwellers and their economy was based on agriculture carried on fertile land watered dextrously from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

The land of the oldest civilisation is now passing through a grave crisis, thanks to the American presence there.

Nasir Uddin Roney Dept. Of Anthropology, University of Chittagong

