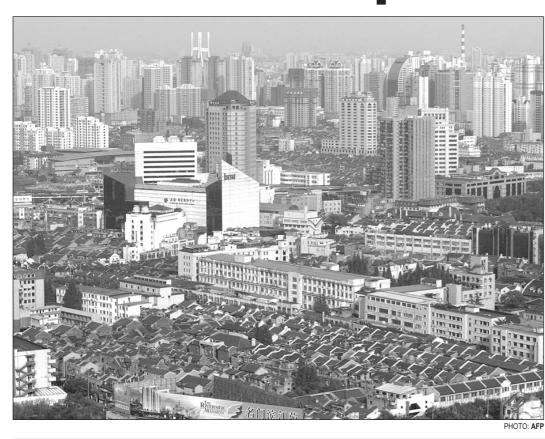
Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Adopt FAR architecture



I strongly support the FAR concept proposed by an architect of Brac University (letter in DS Mar 15), for construction of high-rise buildings and other complexes in the cities and urban

It is unfortunate that many greedy professionals succumb to the unscientific proposals from the clients; with the result that we are being swamped by concrete jungles in Dhaka metro and other cities and industrial and residential areas. We are developing vertically too fast!

The government is aware of the technical nuisance effect, but the concerned agencies are too powerless or too greedy to enforce proper monitoring and regulations (DCC, Rajuk, and the metro coordinating agencies). The cumulative effect is disastrous as we can already see in Dhaka. The traffic flow around such huge buildings are not coordinated properly during the planning, approval, and implementation stages.

Not that we do not have the awareness or expertise; but the professional ethics cultivated currently is poor, as such negative compromises are not in public interest in the

Residential buildings more than three

floors high (walk up) may be discouraged for a decade (foundation for higher floors may be allowed in the right zones), as the power supply problem persists (lifts and airconditioning), and the present roads are too narrow to handle the additional traffic around. Water supply is another big problem. [Now we cannot get running water in our rented flat in a residential area in Dhaka, as we used to get a few years back.]

The economy is galloping in the higher income bracket group; plus money laundering in various forms has become big business, with many offshoots, visible to the urban residents. The GDP may be rising, but not proportionately, as the gap between the top and the bottom levels of the society is too disparaging. The rich are getting richer, although development in the rural areas is not invisible. The base can be broadened with more emphasis on rural development strategies. This is not being carried out in modular format.

The government has to urgently single out the unsociable effects of corrupt practices, and launch a project to counteract the same. Alfa Ahmed

Dhaka

It is very unfortunate that while in power or in opposition Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has so far failed to make any specific proposal or reform

caretaker government. We fought against British imperialism, Pakistani colonialism and Punjabi/non-Bengalee domination. But why are we now creating division and hatred among ourselves in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Muiibur Rahman, Shahid Ziaur Rahman Bengalee nationalism and Bangladeshi nationalism?

Criticism and counter criticism attacks and counter attacks are meaningless, harmful and dangerous. These do not solve any problem rather these create more and more new problems and the situation of the country goes from bad to worse day by day.

Why don't we all in the greater interest of unity, faith and discipline of our people give recognition to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as father of the nation and also accept Bangladeshi nationalism?

Can't the Awami League and all opposition parties, without further loss of time and energy, put up a foolproof case for caretaker government with provisions of accepting the results of general election, not boycotting the Jatiya Sangsad and not going for hartal, irrespective of their positions?

Let us hold a referendum and solve the controversial issue of caretaker government. **OH Kabir**

6 Hare Street, Wari, Dhaka

Armed forces and professionalism

The armed forces of a country are raised and maintained primarily for defending it against aggression. During peacetime they are used by the government at times, if required, to help the law enforcing agencies and also to evacuate and rescue distressed people as well as farmer a telephone (use mini solar nower kits for self-installation)

The high rates of the private mobile companies cannot be reduced so long as they have to pass through the BTTB network for additional services to the other districts and internationally. The situation would ease after the opening of the submarine cable service. Ignoring this route was a colossal blunder of the earlier

Similar monopoly existed in PDB; and now the situation has slightly improved in reduction of the systems losses. The delays in approval of electric supply development projects come from the suspected unholy negotiations preceding such big projects. The government is aware of it, as the regime cancelled several projects approved by the preceding regime Begum Khaleda Zia's government has to take some drastic actions (referring to her soothing closing speech at the JS a few days ago). She presented one side of the dirty

M Abdali, Dhaka

Rab's performance

It is after a long spell, I guess after the unfortunate incident of his being seriously wounded, that the eminent economist Abu Abdullah has written an article. The article was published in The Daily Star of the 14th instant under the caption 'One and a half cheers to Rab'. I agree with him in giving cheers to the law-enforcing agency Rab, though our cheers may be short of full three cheers. For the first time in our country, police in the garb of Rab have been more agile and efficient than the criminals. The agency has also acted irrespective of political moorings of the criminals and in doing so it appears not have been interfered with by the government. As regards the allegations of non-transparency in the operations of Rab, the author has rightly remarked as follows: "To let known criminals roam free from a nice regard for their right to life and

They are not angels

Phrases and idioms will not help us. A foreign country will not solve our problems. Hating crime and pleading for the criminals are not the same thing . I wish some people could understand this plain truth. Our problem is we talk too much and don't work. When outlaws kill and chop innocent civilians, we read newspapers and say, "The country has gone astray, what the hell is the government doing?" And when the government deploys law enforcers to fight the terrorists, we say,"

In any country the parliament

i.e. the legislative authority

plays a pivotal role in deter-

mining people's fate. But in

Bangladesh the situation is

Are our lawmakers making

laws for our people or are they

using JS as a 'battlefield' only?

Each time following election the

losers term it flawed The people

who cast their votes with high

expectations for electing MPs

are being deceived, as the

parties attach no importance to

Human rights are being violated.

one terrorist is equal to saving

hundreds of innocent lives. And if I

talk about the corrupt Rab member

who has been captured recently for

taking bribe, I will say that human

beings are not angels. There are

temptations everywhere. You can't

expect good service from anyone

without any deviation. One person

might be corrupt, it does not

necessarily mean that each Rab

member takes bribe! Rab members

as well as the police force need

better salary that might keep them

Justice is that which preserves the

interest of the mightier. So, Syria

has to withdraw its troops from

Lebanon. It is only a half-measure to

dispatch Syrian troops into border

areas and the rest will be done if it

(Syria) removes all its agents from

But, we must not expect the same

result in the case of America. As the

US is the great peace and

democracy keeper (!) of the world.

so it can employ troops anywhere,

can commit genocide, can replace

away from corruption.

Cantara Wali Ruhi

Dhaka

Beirut

Justice

We should remember that killing

stop Rab, they are killing people."

their problems.

Moinul Alam

Ramna, Dhaka

as I understand, is that we should not be very sensitive about the activities of the foreign companies. The point is not clear to me Shouldn't we protect our interests? Md Yousuf Hassan 23, Goipibagh 1st lane,

Zeenat Syed's letter

I have been collecting letters to the editor on English medium education/schools for quite some time and your recent letter has

added to my stock. For someone

interested in understanding the

connection between English and

globalisation, this is more than a

from English medium education

even if you didn't mention that you

were its 'product'. I am unfortunately

from Bangla medium, but I don't

have any grudge. I rather salute you

(no irony meant) because you are

one of the few Bangladeshis

competing at the global level and

thus upholding our national 'image'.

I only wish that all people in the

country could take good education

like you did and then go global. It is a

pity that so many people are

I would understand you were

How effective is our JS?

uneducated, to whom the question of English does not arise in their whole lifetime. English has given you a passport to be a global competitor; the same English has been a big barrier in the life of so many people in the country in getting just a job for living. I know a person who took the IELTS 7 or 8 times but couldn't cross the hurdle because the score was not good enough. Of course the person was from Bangla medium, like me.

But I don't understand one thing in your letter. You complained that 'youth' was 'hindered' by 'closewere shocked, devastated listening the news. Jinat Rokshana is our only younger sister. I was in Bangladesh in February and celebrated Sadman's 11th birthday together. I spoke to Kabir and Jinat just a few days ago. When I remember all these I cannot control my emotions. According to your news, it seems that a tree trunk fell on their three-wheeler. I understand that the trunk must be a big one and according to my guess for some reasons the trunk was half detached from the main body of the tree, otherwise in such a non-windy weather it could not have crashed down. Now my point is who is to blame for this tragic incident? We understand that the City Corporation is supposed to maintain those trees seasonally and I am pretty sure they have paid employees to take care of those trees all over Dhaka. How come such a big trunk

Jinat has five brothers--all of them are well educated, I am sure when her condition will improve she will ask a lot of questions to herself and will try to find out responsible persons/authoritiesÊforÊher irreversible fate. We are also determined to help her in order to give her mental peace. We also need your help to make people aware about their responsibil-

(presuming it was detached) went

I am sure newspapers can play a vital role in making people/authorities aware about their responsibilities and can save lot of lives lost due to negligence responsible persons/organisations. Dr. Mahbub Reza

An appeal to Reza Kibria

The tragic death of your father Mr. SAMS Kibria was not merely your family bereavement but a national sorrow and shame. It was shocking that a national leader like Mr. Kibria could be eliminated so easily by criminals with possible machination by some political godfathers. You have our deepest sympathy. We admire the way a crusade has been launched by your family and friends against all terrorism. You are, I am sure, aware that terrorism has many facets.

Imposing hartal through violence, Caretaker governsetting fire to public transports burning the bogies of a passenger train in Bhairab Station in which a Law Minister Barrister Moudoud Ahmed has ruled out the possibility guard was burnt alive were also acts of terrorism. Your crusade must of any amendment to the system of spell out your condemnation of caretaker government. The

these anti-people activities. If you had launched your crusade against terrorism a few years back then we could have gained valuable time for creating public awareness. Iskander Meah

Dhanmandi, Dhaka

A rough ride

It took me a week to get my thoughts in place and write about my recent experience at the amusement park in Ashulia

Last Friday, we went to Fantasy Kingdom for a family picnic. The greenery of the Heritage Park and the fresh air was everything that we had been looking forward to for weeks. I spent the better part of the day relaxing in the nice shade and marveling the heautiful replicas of Shatgombuj Masiid, Ahsan Manzil etc.

Just as we were leaving for the day, I was coaxed into getting onboard the ride called "Spider Ride". The ride started off at an outrageous pace. The "safety" handlebars did not have a good grip and in a couple of seconds we were being flung and banged about in all directions. Most importantly, the way the ride is structured in movement and duration is surely dangerous for anyone. In fact, I watched a middle aged man actually crawling out of the ride clutching his chest.

I had fared no better. I started to throw up and sought medical help. But, there was no first aid station or a medical personnel insight.

I want to know if such rides are certified to be safe for an amusement park (where you have children and aged people alike)? And why aren't there any first aid stations? I also feel that the warning sign board should be placed clearly, as it is done so at the amusement parks all over the world.

I hope the readers take heed of this next time they visit the amusement parks. More importantly, I hope the park authorities take the appropriate action based on this letter rather than wait for an accident before taking notice. Malika, Gulshan, Dhaka

Our flag

The flag of Bangladesh was designed by painter Quamrul Hasan. He worked for a few months in making this flag of an Independent Bangladesh, which first had a golden Bangladeshi map on a red circle with a green background. The green colour was chosen as the symbol of the vitality, youthfulness and the beautiful green landscape of our homeland. The red circle symbolises the blood of the people killed by Pakistanis on this soil since 1947. The golden

opposition Awami League and

some other political parties have

threatened to boycott the general

election under the existing system

"The opposition is contemplating

of caretaker government.

Bengal was represented by the golden Bangladeshi map. ASM Abdur Rab, the vice-president of the

democratic forces to force the

government to step down for an

early election" said Awami League

students union of Dhaka University, hoisted the flag for the first time on March 3, 1971. He arranged an emergency meeting at Madhu's Canteen at midnight, between March 2 to 3, on the university campus. In the meeting it was decided that they (BCL) had no alternative choice but to hoist the flag. Later, at

Ramna Race Course (now Suhrawardy

Uddayan), the historic flag was again raised by w u j i b u r The flag of Bangladesh was first hoisted at the UN in September 1974 and later appeared in UN's stamp series "Flags of the member states". We should know the history of our flag. Tahsin Hyder

Maple Leaf International School Dhanmondi, Dhaka

giving a formula for holding a free distribute relief during natural calamities like flood, cyclone, and credible general election under earthquake etc. To enable the a non-party neutral caretaker government. We are in discussion armed forces to perform these responsibilities, they are to remain to prepare our recommendations in consultation with pro-liberation and extremely professional, which is

possible through regular exercise, training etc. I think for the sake of efficiency Presidium member Tofail Ahmed of the armed forces they should not be engaged in activities (like serving other organisations on deputation) which have nothing to do with the work for which they are recruited and trained. And lastly, why shouldn't the defence budget be transparent and placed in the Jatiya Sangsad?
Ahmed Shah

Dhamondi, Dhaka

Reform BTTB

The recent demonstration representing lakhs of mobile telephone users (a hot business) spotlights one single malaise in the regime: the monopolistic hold of the BTTB, who are cashing on a familiar situation-- take advantage of a market when the demand far exceeds the supply of a commodity or service, in this case cell telephones.

No regime could control the head-in-the-sand attitude of BTTB, which always go slow in providing telephone services to this fast developing society. It is holding on to outdated fixed-line telephone system, and the service standard is lousy, to say the least. The vested groups inside are powerfully backed by hidden godfathers.

Example; the fake premature opening of the BTTB mobile telephone service: while secret negotiations are believed to be going on through back doors for

'graft-toll'. The latest news is that an US company (in joint collaboration) has started a WLL fixed telephone service outside Dhaka. This is a new trend, which deserves close attention. WLL might be suitable for

liberty and the due process of law is the height of Quixote. It is one of the many examples of an uncritical application of Western ethical code to a society and economy at a very different stage of development. Hence, when crime has become so endemic that it seriously compromises this right, crime prevention takes priority and your right to open trial in a court of law loses ground to my right to security of life and livelihood. Some human rights must be partially and temporarily suspended in the interest of the long-term sustainability of equal or more important rights. This would seem to provide an acceptable moral foundation for Rab."

The recommendations forwarded by Abu Abdullah for improving the modus operendi of Rab should be given due consideration by the government. **SA Mahmood**

Sylhet International University

Bagbari, Sylhet Water shortage in

North Bengal Shortage of water in North Bengal is becoming an insurmountable problem. The shortage of power and irrigation water will aggravate social and economic problems. The social unrest generated by the failing agriculture may produce more followers of extremist people in the region. It is necessary to take urgent steps to avert such a situation for the greater interest of the region as a

With the withdrawal of water from the northern rivers and drying of under groundwater resources, the country will not be able support a large population in future.

It seems we have to go for constructing huge reservoirs for storing floodwater and rainwater at suitable places in North Bengal.

Fundamentalism and religion

PHOTO: STAR

minded ideas' but how come you

and your likes are already there in

the world competition? I know of no

society that ever stood in the way of

the affluent. And, not surprisingly,

English education goes hand in

Who is responsible

for these deaths?

We thank you and your newspa-

per for publishing the news "Father,

son die in freak accident" in the

March 20 issue. Unfortunately, the

victims are my family members. We

hand with affluence.

Obaid



There is a tendency to stigmatise 'Islam' as the religion of fundamentalists and extremists, especially by the western press. Standing at this juncture, my letter will very briefly draw a demarcation line between fundamentalism and extremism and its so-called fillipproviding components in Islam'. The letter from Ms. Cantara Wali published in the DS on 16 March hinted at this heated debate. Fundamentalists are those who are stuck to originality. Their rigid stand on originality termed as fundamental-

ism is the father of of the fanatics. nationalism, I believe. But extremism is Dept. of English diametrically opposite to

display of violent spurt of power to subjugate others. of extremism. Is there any living religion in the world which supports extremism? The answer is in every possible way negative.

ABM Shafiqul Islam

Let's not mix up religious

fundamentalism. It is the Jahangirnagar University.

Sometimes I become flabbergasted why religion especially Islam is labeled with the scar

Nowadays Islam is misrepresented and misinterpreted. It is a matter of great concern. Everyone is dogmatic and fundamentalist when it comes to his own roots. If we delve deep into this matter we will find that the essence of this fundamentalism is nationalism.

faith with the political agenda

outlying rural areas. Give each

M. F Islam

cause will never be unearthed.

an elected government etc. We must realise that the United States of America is the most power-blind, bloodthirsty nation and "Justice" is the thing which protects interests. Rizwan-ul Hug on-email Foreign investment,

at what cost? March 18 evening, Bangla news on TV: State minister for energy Mr. AKM Mosharraf Hossain appeared visibly much annoyed with people who are expressing their concern over the recent Tangratilla accident, its environmental impact and fallout. This might just have been an accident, but I am sure its real

I observed with astonishment that the Honorable Minister very openly and unconditionally advocated the case for attracting FDI. What he really meant, as far