

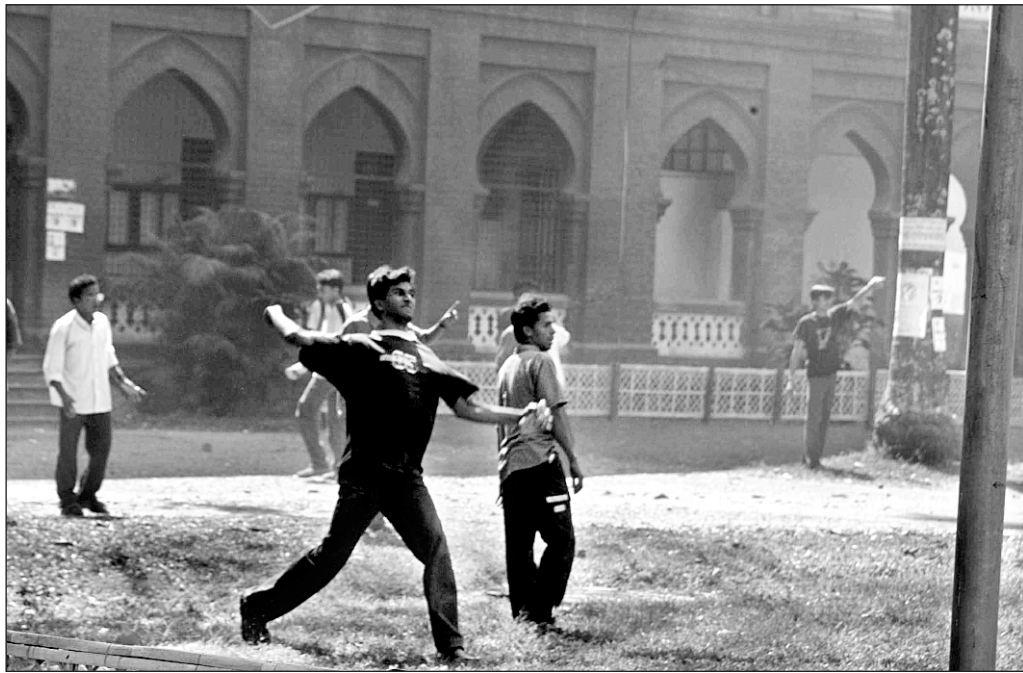
Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

DU in disorder

Dhaka University, once known as the Oxford of the East has been crippled by nasty politics. It was a prominent seat of learning in Asia, but at present it has lost its old glory and reputation. It is a now a grazing field of petty politicians. It is politically so polarised that the basic organ of the university has been paralysed. The existing environment is really suffocating for the genuine students to pursue their studies. The academic atmosphere is very sluggish while the administration is callous. Most of the faculty members are lukewarm about the progress of the students. They need minimum four months to give a course final test and eight months to publish the result. They take tutorial even after the course final examination. Most of the teachers are politicised, and their filthy politics is preventing the smooth functioning of the university.

Student politics is the mother of all the problems. It hampers every aspect of the university. Those who are involved in politics are not regular students. Some of them are not students at all. They are nothing but a nuisance for the general students. They bother the general bona fide students in the dormitory. Our classes are seriously disturbed by the cacophonous political processions, slogans and shouting. They try to capitalise any trouble for political gains. They do not have the welfare of the students at heart. Their approach is bad and their activities harmful. They have destroyed the social environment of the university.

I hope the authority will wake up to salvage the university from the grip of the horrible politics.
Molla Mohammad Shaheen
Dept of English, DU



Politicians, set examples!

We were dismayed to read the following news items recently in various newspapers. AL Secretary General, MA Jalil went to India for medical check-up. Dhaka Mayor, Sadeque Hossain Khoka flew to Singapore for medical check-up. Ex. President HM Ershad went to Saudi Arabia for annual medical check-up. Politician Zillur Rahman returns from abroad after medical treatment.

We are really sorry for them but all these medical check-ups and treatment could have been performed in Dhaka. We are blessed with plenty of competent medical practitioners who are providing services to people of all walks of life. In the last few years a good number of hospitals have come up in Dhaka and other districts. Our doctors are operating upon 'beating' hearts, carrying out kidney transplants, and transplanting knees and what not. Many more new hospitals will soon be added to the list of high quality hospitals, which can cater to the medical needs of all the rich and the mighty.

We will urge upon our politicians, public figures and the upper income group to be more patriotic and set examples. They ought to seek medical treatment in country, which will encourage the others. We strongly trust our doctors- our own brothers and sisters, to render required medical services to all. The country can only flourish if we trust our own people.
SN Mamoon, Dhaka

Despair of private bank employees

The private Banks have recently started to flourish, earning colossal

profits that are divided between the shareholders and employees. The private banks are under close watch of the Bangladesh Bank to settle any unwarranted and unjust measures adopted through their compliance reports. But what the Bangladesh Bank mostly looks into are the deposit, loan, liquidity, interest rates etc. The employee's miseries seem to go unnoticed.

A leading private bank has recently announced 40% profit, but has deprived its employees by not paying incentive bonus to everyone. It was told that the incentive bonus was based on performance. The question is, what were the tools for measuring the performance. Was it a standardised method for judgement or it was subjective? Having no other means to protest against the whimsical Chairman and the Managing Director, all the employees have succumbed to their follies. It is an appeal to the Bangladesh Bank to see if all the employees have been paid the incentive bonus. If not what are reasons for depriving the employees?
Anon, On e-mail

Alleged infiltration of Bangladeshis into Assam

India has been raising the issue of Bangladeshis infiltrating into Assam for quite sometime, objecting mainly to the entry of Muslims. The present Sylhet Division was a part of Assam in the British days and people of this district used to move into any part of Assam and nobody cared about it.

Some people from greater Mymensingh had also moved to Assam since 1940 famine in Bengal and had settled in the uninhabited areas, cultivated fallow lands and got an alternative habitat. The first

time anyone raised the issue was when the Congress nominee, Mr. Bordoloi was elected as Chief Minister of Assam in 1946. He started eviction of Muslims settled in Assam. Moulana Bhashani started a movement against Bordoloi's "BONGAL KHEDA". I was a student of class VI in Karimganj Govt. High School and as a member of Shobuj Bahini took part in processions.

Mr. Bordoloi's scheme was a reflection of the hidden communal face of Congress and this inner contradiction within All India Congress Party was the reason for Mohammad Ali Jinnah quitting the party and joining the Muslim League. Apparently the inner face of the Hindu Indian leadership, now in the hands of people from former greater Punjab and U. P. has not changed. Look back at their attitude towards Bangladesh in not solving various issues, rather creating problems with imaginary ones.

The central Govt of India has been accusing that due to infiltration of Bangladeshis into Assam five neighbouring thanas adjacent to Bangladesh have become Muslim majority areas. I do not have the statistics about one thing I can say that in the then Karimganj thana of Sylhet district, Muslims were majority when the referendum was held to determine accession of Sylhet to Pakistan. But due to the special relation that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had with the Mountbattens the Radcliffe Award sliced our two and half thana off into India, just in order to have a communication link with Tiperah and Cachar districts. Thousands of Hindus from East Bengal entered into Assam but very few from Karimganj or Assam came to our side in return.

I was watching 'Hard Talk' in the BBC World where the Chief Minister of Assam was interviewed. He acknowledged that infiltration now is few and far between. He refuted the central Govt's contention and said infiltration included both Muslims and Hindus who had links with relations who migrated there many years ago.
Altar, On e-mail

Improving English language skills

I believe your paper and its readers will agree that generally the standard of English in Bangladesh, both written and spoken, needs improvement.

Your daily is doing its bit to encourage the readers to express their opinion on any subject of interest which is published in your opinion and feedback pages after editing as required. An added feature is your regular presentation on English language vocabulary, grammar, usage and expression, which is a great help to those who read it regularly.

In this connection I would request you to publish stories, skits, poems, essays in your weekly literary page. This may not be the top-notch stuff that comes out, which unfortunately is mostly foreign based or ex-bureaucrat's (who are trained in writing) memories and comments. This step will encourage many shy amateur writers to send in their work, which after three weekly publication may be followed up with a month-end critical appreciation by your Literary Editor, along with any

worthwhile feedback from other readers. This will create a flow of writings and generate skills and interest among prospective (untrained but having potential) amateur writers and poets, who will be encouraged as well as learn from yours and other readers' monthly feedback.

I believe such a step will encourage many budding writers and go a long way to improve the overall standard of English writing of the general readers.
S.A. Mansoor, Gulshan, Dhaka

Indian doctors in Bangladesh

My attention was drawn to an advertisement in a leading Bangla Daily on 22 June 2005, which said that an Indian doctor would stay in Dhaka and see patients on 24 June. There were only telephone numbers to contact him. One finds many such ads of visiting Indian doctors.

We know that it is compulsory for any foreign doctor to take registration from BMDC to practice in Bangladesh. But it seems there is no authority to oversee this. There are lots of highly qualified doctors in this country but nobody can imagine working in India because they won't be given permission to do so. To me, this is a slap on our national pride, authority and independence that the Indian doctors do not bother to take permission from the authority concerned. There are collaborators who, just for earning money, arrange visits of the Indian doctors. I request your attention and probe into the matter and take up with appropriate authority. The doctors' organisations such as Bangladesh Medical Association remained silent so far, and have proved themselves inept in this regard.

M Amin
Debi Das Ghat Lane, Rahmatgonj, Dhaka

An endless struggle

On the way to my shop I very often see many children engaged in laborious jobs. Most of them are between 10 and 15 years of age. They want to study but can't because of financial problems. Apparently, poverty prevents education or better life. We all know that instead of being on the streets they should be in school. Their means of livelihood is in itself an irony. It is a sad commentary on those of us who shout at the top of our voice for the rights of the unlucky children. It makes us think of the realities of our society which force these unlucky children to wage an endless struggle against all odds to keep their heads above water.

Gen. Ershad, after coming to power in the beginning of the 80s tried to consolidate his power by undemocratic ways. After 9 years of rule he was forced in the face of popular movement to hand over power to the interim government. It was 6th December, just another victory day like 16th December of 1971.

The then interim government arrested him and 19 cases were filed against Ershad. After the general election in 1991, B.N.P formed the government. And General Ershad remained in jail. And unbelievable it may sound, the main opposition AL started to seek alliance with the Jatiyo party and launched a movement to topple the BNP led government.

With the support of Jatiyo-party, A.L. formed the govt in 1996, and Ershad started to get bail in 17 cases and in 6 months came out of the jail and became a free man. At the end of the A.L. tenure when he changed his face and started to make alliance with the then main opposition BNP, AL restarted all the previous cases and sent him to jail. But he did not like to be in jail. He then broke the alliance with B.N.P to come out of the jail. The rhymes of history go on today.

Why is this game? For the people? For democracy? If A.L. were in power now what would they have done? May be they would have played the same brazen power game in the name of the people or in the name of democracy.

Murshadul Hakim Shuvro
New York

Village potters

Thank you for your wonderful article regarding the village potters and Karra Export-Import Private Company Limited. I should say, as an expatriate, it has enlightened me regarding my motherland; that it is just not full of political violence/killings or muggings or ferry disasters or floods. We have lots of good things to offer including the Grameen Bank and now the Village Pottery and Tiles, to the West and to the rest of the world. Please pass on a big 'thank you' from the bottom of my heart to your Sathkira correspondent for this positive and wonderful story and my congratulations to Mr. Ruhul Amin and Mr. Rafeli of Karra Export. I would appreciate if someone could let me have its email address, phone or fax numbers.

Arit Chowdhury
Sydney, Australia

I read with great interest the article in today's Daily Star: "Village potters

AL Politics



AL has a peculiar psyche. They think they have the divine right to rule this country whether people vote for them or not. When they are in power then everything is right.

While they were in power between 1996-2001, there was no clamour for any change in the Caretaker Government System or of the Election Commission. Everything was fine. During the AL tenure they could not catch any of the criminals responsible for the

bomb explosions in different functions. All the top criminals were happily doing 'business' in and around Dhaka.

The present Alliance government may be responsible for the criminal activities and grenade throwing. But AL does not own up when their activists smash and set fire to buses and burn the driver of the CNG tri-wheeler to death on and before the day of hartal. They claim to uphold the secularism but they are

mysteriously silent about the persecution of the Ahmediyyas. There is political capital to think about!

If the AL have their way then all the important decisions of the nation will be taken on the streets and Jatio Sangsad will exist only to give the perks and privileges to their leaders without attending it.
Iskander Meah, Dhaka

trailblazers, the Italian Rafeli who dreamed about a new product for a new market, and his indefatigable Bangladeshi partner, Ruhul Amin who persevered with the dream. And then we see how the trailblazers linked up with smaller enterprises, in this case the artisans, helping them to enter global markets.

More such stories in the pages of the Daily Star will help create the momentum that will hopefully

learning English

Education is the backbone of a nation. It is one of the basic needs of human beings. English is an international language without which we risk being isolated from the international society. Unless we know English, we cannot have access to the latest benefits of science like computers, internet and many more. In our country, education after intermediate is called higher education. Before entering higher education one has to cross three levels primary, secondary and higher secondary levels. Generally in these three levels we can acquire knowledge Bangla. At the university level English is the language that is used for teaching. So when a student comes to the university level, he faces many problems. For this reason, every student should practise to learn English. There are many ways to learn English. Firstly, there are many books such as English literature, grammar, storybooks etc, which are written in English. Everybody should study these books which will make him or her skilful in English. Regular English Grammar study will develop a weak student's skill in English. English literature is the richest of the world literatures. If we cannot acquire mastery of English, we will not be able to derive pleasure and knowledge from the famous works of English writers and poets.

Tanjila Haq
Intl. Islamic University, Chittagong

Hartal is a flagrant abuse of political right

To call hartal without going into the necessity of it is the quintessence of political immaturity and degeneration.

In politics, difference of opinion is a reality, but it should be expressed through political etiquette, not through hartal. The fact that needs to be understood is that the State, society and its

mores are completely incumbent on the politicians. Therefore, any political action must have acceptability of the people. Unfortunately, over the last decade, our oppositions have been breaching the democratic norms by forcing the people to accede to the hartal culture.

Some people hark back to the fifties and sixties to justify hartal. This realisation seems to be politically motivated, as today's frisson of time can not be matched with that of the fifties and sixties. Period is of high essence in political development. And politicians who fail to recognise the echo of time cannot deliver any good to the country, rather they drag it back to a morass little by little.

Hartal is such a destructive mechanism to belittle the standard of the country. It cripples the foundation of economy without keeping any scope to resuscitate it. It makes uncertain the security of life, stability of society and development of the country. And so, it deserves to be abandoned.

The traditional trend of announcing hartal on Thursdays or Saturdays demonstrates a selfish mentality. It compels us to believe that those who call hartal do not do so out of political rivalry, but out of intentional political whims. How the political parties can remain apathetic about people's feeling, student's exam schedule, traders' transportation scheme of goods, or the loss of governmental revenue, is beyond my knowledge. If politics is for bringing welfare for the common people, hartal is definitely not the means.

Sulav Chowdhury
London, England

Traffic Jam in Dhaka



We all know that Dhaka is the most busy and crowded city in Bangladesh. Recently, I visited my aunt's house in Dhaka and it was my first visit there. I was surprised to see the traffic on the roads. It took me one hour to reach my aunt's house.

There are two fly-overs but I think they aren't sufficient for Dhaka traffic. The other problem is that the roads are very narrow. So I request to the government to build more fly-overs and increase the width of the roads to reduce traffic jam.

Mahbubur Rahman
Dept. of CSE
International Islamic University, Chittagong

Let us join hands to make a better life for these unlucky children.
Md. Toufiqur Rahman
Rothkola, Kishoregonj

The cost of talking

As a pensioner, I looked forward to having a mobile phone when I heard the Finance Minister reduce the import duty from Tk 1500 to Tk 300; but in the next sentence he planned to recover the revenue loss by imposing a new tax on SIM cards (initialising a set). What he gave with one hand, he took away with the other! Not fair. The user is not the gainer in the budget, and the govt is not the loser!

A new point has come out. The CDMA telephone sets do not need SIM card. We are a talkative society, but the cost of 'betar' (wireless) talking is very high.

Give us the right to communicate at 'poverty' rate!
A Husnain, Dhaka

Crisis of the ruling circle of Bangladesh

What is happening in Bangladesh since 1971 clearly indicates that the ruling class is in deep crisis. The autocratic General H.M Ershad and his family issue is just an open wound and symptom of this crisis.

Some of the intellectuals and political leaders of the main opposition circle are trying to portray this as a crisis of the ruling party. Is it so? Let's take a look. There is a popular saying, "History does not repeat itself, either by tragedy or by farce. But it rhymes". What we experiencing now in the political arena of Bangladesh is nothing but the rhymes of history.

go global: A backwater neighbourhood churns tiles for European markets".

This is what E pro-poor growth is all about. As experts all over the world debate on ways to make growth more beneficial for poor people, the Rafelis, the Ruhul Amins and the Debalal Pals of the world show how this can be done in practice.

What we see here are two

galvanise policy makers and others in Bangladesh to take the actions necessary to promote competitiveness and broad-based growth. Let us work together to make the "Made in Bangladesh" brand a universally popular one.

Syed Akhtar Mahmood
World Bank

Importance of

An endless struggle

On the way to my shop I very often see many children engaged in laborious jobs. Most of them are between 10 and 15 years of age. They want to study but can't because of financial problems. Apparently, poverty prevents education or better life. We all know that instead of being on the streets they should be in school. Their means of livelihood is in itself an irony. It is a sad commentary on those of us who shout at the top of our voice for the rights of the unlucky children. It makes us think of the realities of our society which force these unlucky children to wage an endless struggle against all odds to keep their heads above water.

Let us join hands to make a better life for these unlucky children.
Md. Toufiqur Rahman
Rothkola, Kishoregonj



Ugly regimes



Fareed Zakaria (probably a US citizen) writing in the Newsweek has called the Iranian government 'an ugly regime'.

I do not think Iran has an ugly regime, and probably no one in Bangladesh thinks so. We have had a very good relations with Iran (both govt. to govt. and people to people) not only today, but since centuries, long before the United States of America was even born. Iranians are a highly civilised

and proud nation, which had not been a colony of any country since the time after Alexander the Great.

I do not understand why you had to reprint Mr. Zakaria's 'How to change ugly regimes' in the DS (June 23) containing a US point of view that is likely to offend the sensibility of many people in the world including our friends the Iranians?
Humayun A. Hye
Baridhara, Dhaka