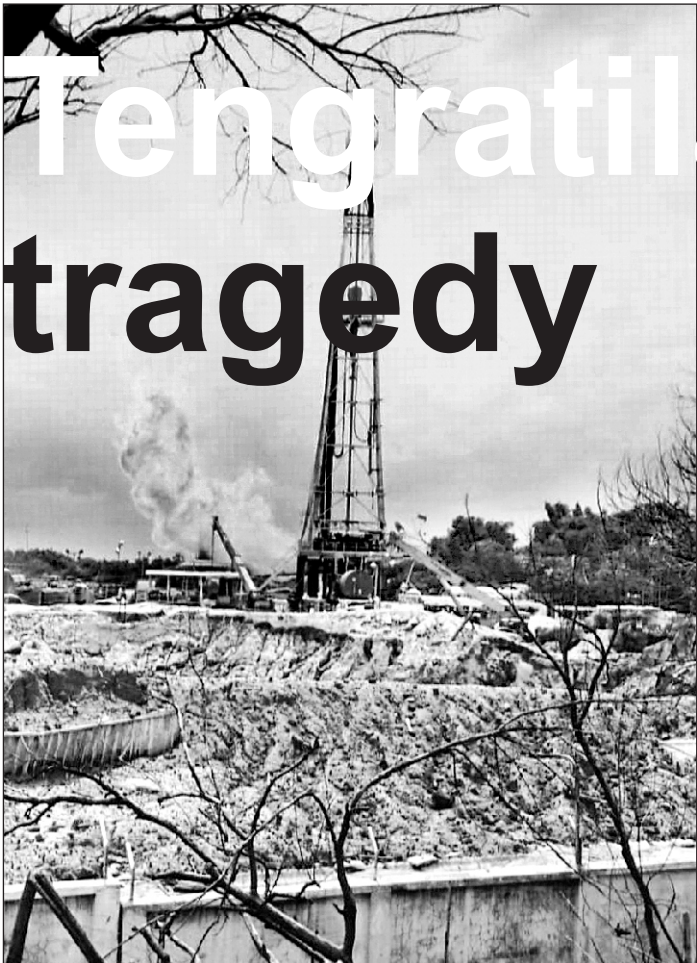


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



A foreign company is involved in deplorable activities in our country. We the people are observing and only the journalists are screaming about it. Niko was accused of bribing our ministers. Through this activity the inner face of Niko has come out. Both the ministers and leaders of the BNP and the AL took illegal facilities from Niko. Today's Prothom Alo (30th June 2005) has dis-

closed the matter in details. The AL gave permission to them bypassing the rules. The officials did not pay heed to the welfare of the country. They did not look at the positive sides of our country, which could be achieved from the contract. How powerful the dollar is! Everybody speaks about his love for the country on the stage, especially before election!

Honorable ministers, if anyone tries to harm your country, what should be your role? You people are staying in the capital of the country getting cool from AC and giving speeches everywhere. It's very tough for you to see the real situation at Tengratila. I stay in Sylhet city, not in Sunamganj. But I saw the fire from Sylhet. Can you imagine the actual height of the fire? It's not just a matter of some specific digits. It should be understood by heart, not by scale. Are you waiting for the next incident, which you may be able to see from the capital?!

On the basis of my rights as a citizen of the country, I will request the prime minister and the finance minister--please discuss about Niko in the parliament and ask them to leave our country. Perhaps there will be an international pressure on us. But we have evidences of what they have done. One important thing, please don't let money replace your heart. Because this decision has to come from the heart. You cannot call an auction for selling the country.

The leaders who can keep the resources of the country safe will be placed in the hearts of the people, which will not be changed after five years or a specific regime. Don't we have that courage to tell Niko, "Enough is enough, leave us".

**Anupom Roy**  
MSS, SUST, Sylhet

Niko is destroying our national assets, one after another, and our government is just an onlooker to it.

We came to know about Niko from different newspapers that it was patronised by some influential people. But that should not blinker our vision.

**Md Abu Raihan Wadud**  
CUET, Chittagong

There is an English saying "Once bitten twice shy" and in Bangla we say "Nera bel tolay ekbaree jay".

However Niko (sounds much like the background noise we hear when Komolika the evil lady plans her bad deeds in Star TV's "Kasoti Zindigi Kee") seems to be a square peg in a round hole. Like Komolika in "Kasoti" TV show; they have the resources to bag lucrative exploration offers despite major failures, and being considered technically incompetent to drill gas wells! After being turned down by our competent gas sector, our powers to be have been persuaded by (Komolika, sorry) Niko to orchestrate one disaster after another! The losers are our scarce but valuable wealth - natural gas, and along with it poor Bangladesh. Unfortunately, GoB wants to go under the bel tree again and again.

The achievements of our powers that be could well be the largest and costliest fireworks show in Bangladesh history (could well be subcontinental history!), but then who cares so long as the actual and alternate sources of power are well fuelled. Pity BAPEX who despite their utmost opposition to Niko have to be a party to the unsavoury deal and the convenient whipping boy of GoB whose higher ups may have

gobbled up all the so called resources of Niko!  
Was the luxury car only the tip of the iceberg? All the hidden ice under the water must have melted and disappeared by now.  
**A fire watcher**  
On e-mail

In an interview with a national Bangla daily the former state minister for energy and mineral resources, Mosharraf Hossain, said that explosion at gas fields is not an isolated phenomenon. To lambaste an important man cannot be the decent method of criticism in a civilised society. But his taking a luxury car worth 1 crore taka that led to his forced resignation has sparked unbridled wrath and dismay among the people.

We are in a murky situation. There is no sign of improvement. All the things that we see around us are ominous. This hapless nation has plunged into the deepest dungeon of helplessness, destitution, corruption and what not. The nation has been grappling with many problems. As a simple man I doubt whether the international community which failed to make us export gas has conspired against the country. But who will investigate the matter as the parliamentarians are involved in seeking their personal benefits only?

**Bazlur Rahman**  
Dhaka University

## Inside the Botanical Garden

A country needs 25% (of its total territory) forest areas. Bangladesh has only 17% area covered with forests. The capital city Dhaka is suffering from severe shortage of trees. There are gardens in the city, of course. The Botanical Garden is one of the well-known gardens in this city. But if you look through this place, I believe you will be disheartened. A great number of call girls and other anti-social elements are always present in this garden. School going boys and girls are found here all the time with their boy or girlfriends.

Meanwhile, the hooligans do not miss the opportunities. They take away money, watch, mobile and ornaments from the couples or other visitors. The police, it is alleged, get the share of the booty from these hooligans. The authorities concerned should look into the matter.

**MAH Nazim**  
Dept of Political Science  
University of Dhaka

## Crossfire

Nowadays the word "crossfire" is very familiar to us, thanks to Rab. They have killed numerous

criminals, while at the same time they might have killed innocent people in the name of crossfire. So, we are in a complete dilemma. Because we don't understand how to justify the "crossfire". At the very beginning, Rab succeeded in improving law and order to some extent but now people are scared of the very name Rab.

I hope the situation will change for the better very soon, because people are more important than the country.

**Aysha Akther**  
IUC, Chittagong

## Police harassment

Of late, a lot of news is being published in the national dailies regarding our police officers indicting minors in different cases. One such news appeared in DS June 28 issue. The learned District and Sessions Judge of Khulna show caused two sub-inspectors of police for implicating a two year old boy under the Explosives Act. These irresponsible and unfair acts of our law enforcing agencies project how incompetent and corrupt they are. The authorities concerned should take the matter seriously and train our police properly in order to put a stop to undue harassment.

**Humayun Hyder**  
Zigatola, Dhaka

## Issues of hartal

Every day we lose many of our brothers and sisters in road accidents, launch disasters, building collapse etc. But our political parties aren't interested to call any hartal for them; only when they lose their leaders they call hartal. Not only the opposition but also the ruling party calls hartal on very silly matters. They are just playing with the fate of the people. This is one side of the page. One the other side, we see a silent protest. There is Asma Kibria, an artist and widow of the slain AL leader Shah ASM Kibria.

Though he was an opposition leader, his family, especially his wife, doesn't call "hartal". Apart from her family members, leading intellectuals, opposition lawmakers, politicians,

freedom fighters, cultural and human rights activists, lawyers, teachers, students, and commoners

stood up silently in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. They organised many human chains in

mother. The Kibria family initiated the "Blue For Peace" programme as part of their non-violent movement demanding punishment to the masterminds of all bomb and grenade attacks across the country that took place in recent years.

They urged the people to observe the programme on every Thursday by wearing blue dresses. It is the best time for Bangladeshi people to join the programme because it is more powerful than hartal.

**Dilruba Nasrin**  
ELL, IUC

**Price hike**  
Price hike means the trend of rising prices. It is a serious problem for the poor people. It has many causes. There are hoarding, smuggling, black marketing, irresponsibility on the part of the government etc.

The government should handle this issue efficiently.  
**Md Akbar Hossain**  
Int. Islamic University  
Chittagong

## Campus situation

The situation in Dhaka University has become unstable again in the aftermath of the death of Shamme Akter Happy in a road accident. As a consequence of this all the examinations scheduled to be held during the period of summer vacation have been postponed.

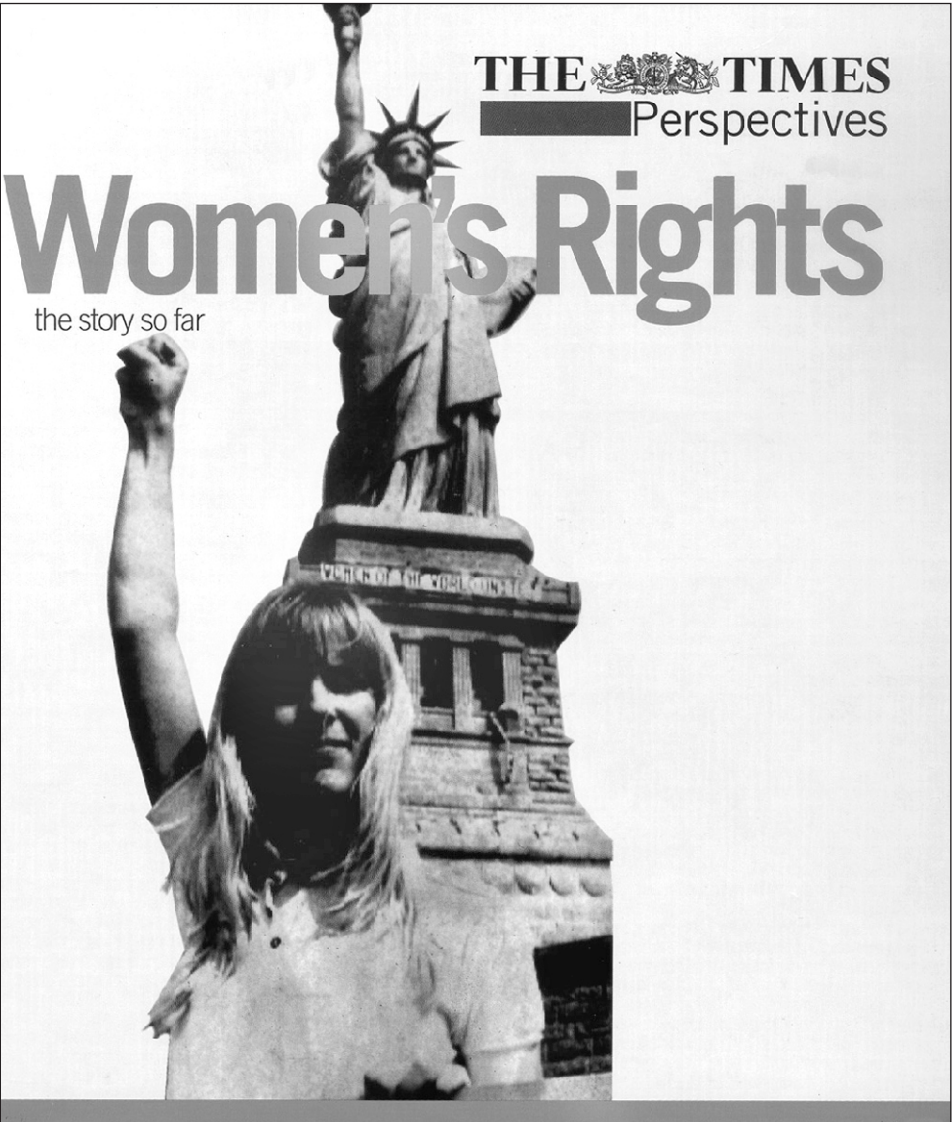
Though the relatives of Shammi Akter urged not to make her death a political issue, yet the opposition backed student wings left no stone unturned to give this accident a political colour. They blamed the police for attacking them and at the same time demanded the

**Nurul Haque**  
Dept of Law, DU

## Propellers on Jet engines!

Your Chittagong staff correspondent's high profile front page report on the DC-10 accident (July 2) has a faux pas in incorporating a propeller to a jet engine in the statement "they saw fire on a right-side propeller of the aircraft before it landed".

The naturally excited airport officials (may be low level) may have said so, but your knowledgeable correspondent should have realised that jet engines don't have propellers which is probably known to almost everyone.



There have been many letters on women's rights. I wish to express my opinion that only notes aren't enough, because at present there're many organisations which shout about the rights of women but practically they are not doing much in this respect. Look at the villages of Bangladesh! There you'll see the miserable conditions of the women in almost every sphere of life. On the other hand, you see the NGOs or other organisations shedding tears for them, but not rendering the service that they need.

They do not feel the pangs of the lives of a huge number of women who are struggling to survive in a hostile setting.

**Engr. Md. Ariful Islam, Ramdebpur, Tangail**

## Conserve Bengal Tigers



Although I began research work on the conservation of Bengal Tigers in the subcontinent as an academic project, the motivation soon became an urge. The glorious creature that stands as a national symbol for almost all nations in the subcontinent astounds me. In Bangladesh, for example, it is the national animal. However, I am surprised at the very few attempts being made by different organisations to inform the public of the imminent threat to not only our ecology, but also to our national pride. I have also seen in the websites of many organisations that there are no current and organised data of how many tigers are actually alive.

I am aware that in the poverty stricken and overpopulated region, the conservation of any animal is not the primary concern of the people-- it will never be until poverty is eliminated. By the time that goal is achieved, if it ever is, it will be too late for us to reverse the damage we have caused to our ecosystem. The Royal Bengal Tiger's name will be inevitably written in the list, along with Dodo, as an extinct species caused by the ignorance of humans. The source of our national pride should not only come from the royal image of a tiger in logos, but also from the live majesty of these big cats.

For this reason, I suggest the following: the threats to these tigers are not well known to many people, especially in nations like Myanmar and Nepal, and many regions of India and Bangladesh. Despite the governments' efforts, little can be achieved without the support and the will of the people. The larger organisations dedicated in the conservation of the tigers should let the people know about the threats, along with the options available for them to participate in the conservation efforts. Especially, options such as 'Adopt-a-pet' that are sponsored by many organisations should be mass publicised; it is easy and effortless. The public should also be informed that their money is being used for a just cause, and the rising number in the tiger population should support that information. This data dissemination should be more frequent: monthly or bimonthly. I know I will not want to put my money toward a cause if there are no results.

The conservation effort should not be the effort of only a group, but the effort of the people. The effects of our deeds, unfortunately, do not end with us but continue through generations to come. If the tiger is lost, we have no one, or nothing else to blame but our own ignorance and lack of conscience. After the Tsunami disaster of December 2004, much of the efforts to restore destroyed areas and assist the people came from people around the world. I am not an idealist to believe that we will be able to gather the same amount of money for tiger conservation, however, with the help of the people, we will be able to do much more than what we can now. I am aware that there are numerous problems associated with these kinds of efforts. However, as human beings we should feel obligated to do some good.

**Tishan Mahfuz**  
On e-mail

# Save our culture

Culture is a complete image of life. Culture usually denotes the ideas, beliefs and customs that are accepted by the people of a society or a nation. In our country some traditional customs have come down from ancient times. It is known as Bangladeshi culture. Basically culture is based on system of education, manners, dress, rural customs, language, religion, social behaviour, music, art, literature, etc. But nowadays some infiltration of foreign culture is seen in our society and we are going to lose some of our customs. We have lack of awareness to save our own culture. In entertainment, we enjoy band Hindi and English songs instead of our cultural folk songs, jari, sari or bhatiali with tabla or flute. Many satellite and TV

channels are engulfing our traditional customs. There have been many changes in our rural culture as well as custom or dress. Most of the urban people wear western dress such as jeans, pant, shirt, tie, blazer that replaced panjabi, salwar, lungi, sari, etc. Nowadays our culture is the fusion of Indian and Western culture. Mostly the teenagers or young generations of our country are following those fashions of dresses. It is a matter of great regret that our social manners are on the way to destruction. In cultural celebrations we observe religious, family occasions and national events such as Eid, Pahela Baishakh, Puja, Purnima, Independence and Victory Days etc. But instead of these events our people are hooked to the

Thirty-first Night or First January, which are taken from foreign cultures. In games and sports people are enjoying football or cricket at present but in the past Hadudu, Gollachut, boat race and other rural sports were very popular. Without taking Bengali foods most of the people are developing the habit of taking fast foods. We need to avoid the ill effects of foreign cultures. If it continues, a day will come when we will lose our own cultural ethos. As a result, we will surely lose our national identity.

So, we should come forward and take proper steps to save our culture.

**Mahamudun Nessa Munmum**  
ELL, IUC

