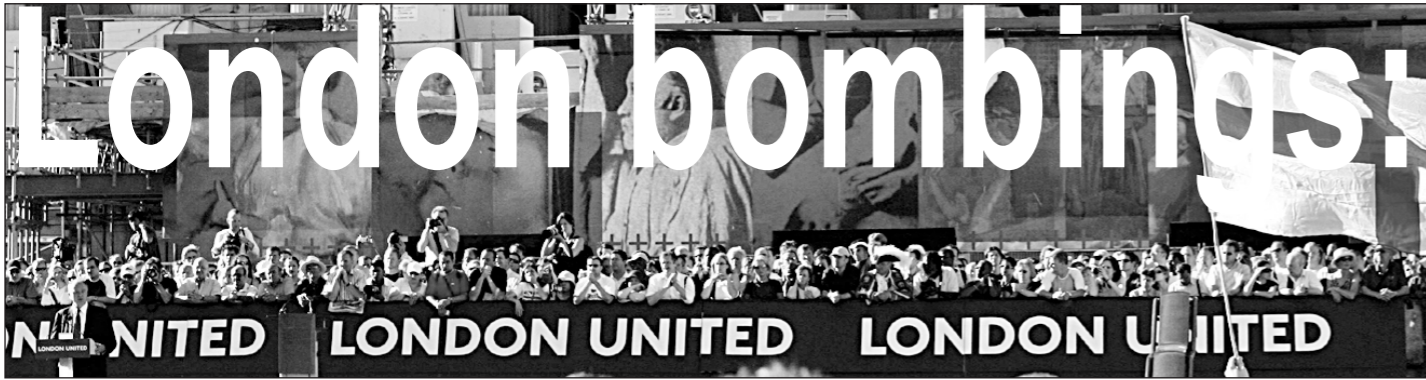


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



It says in Surat Al-Baqarah (Section 24, Verse 190) of the Holy Quran,

"Fight for the cause of Allah/ Those who fight you/ But do not transgress limits/ For Allah loveth not transgressors." An explanation of transgression of limits is given by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, a renowned Muslim scholar: "Women, children, old and infirm men should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down, nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms." Elsewhere in the same explanation it says that jihad motivated by selfish greed and passions is not jihad at all. Given what the Holy Quran says, no God-fearing righteous Muslim can approve of what the terrorists have done in London. Condoning this barbaric act would only result in further tarnishing of the image of the Muslims all around the world. At the same time, barbaric acts carried out by the so-called world leaders of G-8 need to be condemned as these acts are at the root of such terrorist activities that have been springing up since 9/11. Every single life is important. No one can claim that the lives of fifty Londoners are more precious than those of the Iraqi men, women and children. So, along with the terrorists, these world leaders must also be held responsible for the loss of innocent lives in the name of pseudo-fight against terrorism.

We have to make our voices heard against the brutal killings perpetrated by the terrorists in the name of religion. We have to make our voices heard against the blatant show of avarice and power of the so-called world leaders. If we do not raise our voices now, we will no longer have a peaceful world left for the posterity.

Ahmed Tazmeen
University of Manitoba, Canada

The terror attack in London was terrible. It was condemned all over the world. We condemn this loss of innocent lives in the strongest possible words. Security services are very hectic to find out the bombers. Already the British government has pointed fingers at the Islamic extremist group like al-Qaeda. My query is: why al-Qaeda has carried out this attack? Certainly, not for overthrowing the British government or conquering

Europe. Then why? What is their ideology behind this attack? We should understand or read this event, not by separating it from all other political phenomena; especially, the on-going injustice and oppression on the Muslim world by the Western occupiers. Life is very valuable to the Westerners but what about the innocent Iraqis who are being targeted, raped, molested and killed like chickens by the British and American occupiers? The Palestine issue has been neglected year after year. May God continue to bless and save our world from injustice.

Md. Harisur Rahman
Jahangirnagar University

I am extremely shocked, disheartened and angry to know that a brutal and cowardly attack has been made on innocent and peace-loving people in London and at its different parts by unknown terrorists. It's not an attack on the innocent people of London, rather it's an attack on the people of this earth who want to live in peace & harmony with dignity & enjoy their rights. I do strongly condemn this heinous, barbaric attack by a fanatic group. I express my heart-felt sympathy for the members of the bereaved families & pray for the salvation of their departed souls. I want to stand beside the members of those families who lost their beloved relatives.

I urge the world community to be united and to come forward to resist such fanatic groups.

Md. Asiful Haq
Kafur, Dhaka

It was an absolutely atrocious act. The London bomb blasts are not just an attack on Londoners but also on humanity itself. No matter whoever the attackers were or whatever their motive was, it couldn't be tolerated.

However, it is regrettable that any terrorist strikes are labelled as work of Muslim militants or "Islamic militants". This outcry is more of a political nature than religious. Mr. Tony Blair should realise that there are other terrorist organisations like the IRA which are greatly aggrieved by British acts of "diplomacy".

It has become quite a habit of Mr. Tony Blair and Mr. George Bush that whenever there is a violent terrorist strike on innocent people, they blame it on Muslims.

I think they should look beyond the lines and think of other possibilities, rather than blame it on Muslims alone, without proof that is!

Akhter Salim Fahmi
On e-mail

Once again they have attacked "us"—the mankind. Who are they?

British born terrorists, those who love to see blood, Saddam's supporters, who want to take revenge or al-Qaeda, who earlier carried out attacks on New York and Madrid. Who is responsible for this? Tony Blair, the terrorists or Tom and Jerry! The two cartoon characters that make us laugh, so we can feel happy and forget about the forthcoming threats. They are making us depressed, disappointed and disheartened.

London bombings tell us that terrorists can strike us anytime, anywhere. They are your enemies, they are the enemies of peace loving people of this world. If the British, the most civilised westerners, do not understand that it has nothing to do with any religion, then they are, like toy soldiers, trying to fight with other toys, controlled by a mastermind.

Tahsin Hyder
Maple Leaf International School, Dhaka

I was sickened by the horrifying bomb attack on London by terrorists on 7th July where a number of innocent people were killed and hundreds injured, some gravely. It makes you think if this is what the human race has achieved at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Is this revenge, "pay back" or simply insanity. Some horrific scenes of strewn flesh, severed human limbs, blood soaked bodies, bruised and maimed faces and destruction all around capture the human mind. This scenario needs an unbiased review.

Why do these people go to such level to show their feelings of revenge? What makes them so beastly so as to inflict so much pain and injury to another human being? I remember watching the pre 9/11 happenings in the BBC where Palestinians were shown throwing stones at Israelis

What should we do?

tanks. First it started with the Israeli soldiers firing tear gas, followed by rubber bullets and finally live bullets and tanks firing shells. This went on for months together. By that time a number of both active stone throwing youths as well as bystanders were killed. This regular feature shown by the BBC slowly and gradually created a public opinion not much in favour of the Israelis soldiers. Then the 9/11 happened. That has changed everything.

Md. Mahmoodul Haque
Gulshan, Dhaka

I am infuriated that every time there is a violent act anywhere where the perpetrators are unknown, the rest of the world expects all Muslims not only to be crawling on their hands and knees apologising, but also to accept humbly all possible discriminatory acts against them as a group. Osama bin Laden was a creation of the Americans during their war against the Russians in Afghanistan, and if Osama did indeed cause the 9/11 atrocities, it must have been at the directive of his Zionist masters. It is now an official fact that only one Israeli died in those incidents on that day, whereas hundreds of Muslims perished, including scores of Bangladeshis. That certainly does not look like a well-planned act of aggression against those in America responsible for their national policy in the Middle East or elsewhere. It is also a fact that al-Qaeda has never targeted anything in Israel. It seems quite likely that all these ghastly occurrences are part of a game plan to alienate the Muslims from everybody else and weaken their rising force, as well as to put a bar on immigration from Muslim countries and even studentship for bright Muslim boys and girls in western institutions.

In the recent London transport bombings also the target was not the Right Honourable Mischief maker, but ordinary folks who cannot afford to go to their place of work in private cars or taxis, which means many Muslims and no Jews. People like Osama and whoever planned the London carnage are never caught, because they are on the payroll of their non-Muslim masters and also get their ideas and weapons of destruction from them, and then they pay huge sums of money to poverty-stricken Muslim boys to form suicide squads. Unfortunately, fanatic Muslim clerics fall right into the trap and oblige with their predictable fiery rhetoric, and make it a programme to eliminate the possibility of a liberal Muslim force that believes in the equality of all men and the absurdity of any Chosen People from emerging.

Hussain Shafi, Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

They need jobs

There is nowadays a big hue and cry regarding students' involvement in extortion and mugging. Many write-ups of distinguished personalities of the country are being published in the newspapers on this subject.

Students are very much prone to these kinds of illegal activities as they have no future. They come to the big educational institutions of the big cities for higher education with the hope of getting a suitable job that will bring smile to their parents' faces.

Soon after taking admission in all these so called highly reputed institutions they find the dissonance between their expectations and reality.

Hannan
On e-mail

Rab and reptiles!

I note the report on the front page of The Daily Star concerning the debate in the British House of Lords on the continuing extra judicial deaths, in which Rab seem to be, by accident of course, implicated.

I then noted, on the back page, the article about the reintroduction of fresh water crocodiles into the waterways of Bangladesh. Is there any linkage between these two stories?

Have the authorities, embarrassed by the accidental exploits of Rab, decided to continue the purge of undesirable elements via large carnivorous reptiles?

Dr Richard J Murphy
Gulshan, Dhaka

National University

Every day there is some news on the National University.

The government may pretend to be unaware of what is going on here. But we people believe that the government has the duty to look after students' welfare.

If we suffer then the government must be held responsible.

Jewel Ahmed
Basabo, Dhaka

Dalue adivasis

Dalue adivasis have been living in the hilly areas of the greater Mymensingh districts for about 1200 years. Bangladesh has sixty four districts, but the Dalue people live only in the greater Mymensingh district. Once they were majority people in that area. But the situation has changed. Most of them have left the country. They are extremely poor and their literacy rate is very low.

They are so neglected that even text books do not have any reference to them. The government should look into the matter.

Meghnath Sarker Dalue
On behalf of Dalue community

Sinking launches

Whenever a launch sinks there is hue and cry, but after some time everything quietsens down just to prove that "time is a great healer".

The reason behind sinking of the launches is that the weird contraption known as 'launch' is designed to sink. This will be clear to you when you compare the statistics of sinking

of passenger launches with sinking of inland and coastal passenger vessels. While launches have sunk at regular intervals, there has not been one instance of any major disaster involving inland and coastal passenger vessels operated by BIWTC.

BIWTC operates two passenger vessels between Chittagong and Barisal. Though these vessels are over forty years old and have to cross the turbulent sea, no mishap has taken place so far.

Salahuddin Ahmad
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka

Bangladesh Biman's fleet of old and ageing aircraft like the DC-10s are just, in my view, a source of serious worry. If the recent crash landing of a DC-10 is attributed in part to a pilot who was drinking, then that was a serious violation of rules. Here in the US, the FAA clearly enforces no-drinking rules for pilots. They have to be completely sober. Any iota on inebriety will lead them to trouble.

Khan Kabir
Rochester, NY

Fake discourses!

For a long time we are struggling with fake discourses imposed upon us by the advanced countries, agencies, and groups and above all by so called globe shaping school of

thought. Apart from global phenomena, we find many of those are so popular in Bangladesh e.g. fundamentalism, womanpower, poverty alleviation, good governance, human rights, separation of the judiciary for justice and so on. I identified those as discourses because there are convictions, propaganda, studies, promulgation and unbroken flow of facilitating instruments in present society. If everything goes in the right manner, I have nothing to say. But very sadly, I found blunders within interpretations of those discourses as various

Ageing Biman fleet



PHOTO: AFP

banner type think tanks plunged in surface study of segmented issues, escaping the core point of their genesis. So, we don't know how to settle the problems stemming from artificial gear up behind practices. We even don't know how to make general people understand these issues.

Sarwar Kamal
Dept. of philosophy, CU

Load shedding

We have the right to get regular supply of electricity. But at present electricity seems to be something illusive. Many times we have to fall in great difficulty because of the absence of electricity. The study of the students is badly hampered by erratic supply of electricity. When examinations such as SSC, HSC etc. begin, the students have to suffer because of load shedding.

We feel the necessity of regular power supply at every step of our life. Most of the medical tests cannot be done without electricity. And tests are very important to find out the real position of a patient. And the most necessary thing in modern world is computer. We have many modern equipment, which cannot work without electricity. So load shedding completely disrupts our life.

Nayla Najnin Bhuiyan
IUC

Inconsistencies in tax paying

As we know, any person submits his income tax on his actual income. But in case of our diagnostic centres, they shift their tax incidence as tax burden to other people. A few

days ago, I went to a diagnostic centre, with my cousin, as recommended by the doctor to test blood and urine for his ill health. There the accumulated bill was Tk. 2924 and the receptionist said that Tk. 64.35 was for vat. As we saw in the receipt paper, their total servicing fee was Tk. 2860 and they charged the vat at the rate of 2.25% on their income and the vat was also collected from us. But the rule is they should pay their income tax on their income amount, but in practice they are taking their income as well as the amount of tax on their income as a

total from the patients. There is no one to protest these unprincipled activities in our so-called modern society, even some of the patients are not informed about the practice.

Shib Shankar Dey
Arambagh, Dhaka

When shall we wake up?

Will the sleeping giant that we know as Bangladesh ever awake? If we honestly look at ourselves, then we are poor not because of the British who raped and looted our people for generation in the past or the Pakistanis who tried to wipe out our intellectuals and set our country back to the dark ages. Yes, both of these evils did a lot of harm to our people, but we have had opportunity after opportunity to rebuild our nation, but failed.

Why? Simply because we are no longer able to think collectively, the patriotism seen amongst the liberators of Bangladesh has been washed away by corruption and selfishness in all sections of society, particularly the politicians.

Dr. KAhamd
On e-mail

SSC results: Some thoughts

I was watching a programme of Channel I on the reactions on SSC results on 9 July. I was shocked hearing some words said on that programme. I remember one of the narrators saying "Patience of 10 years has finally been rewarded". The tone was very clear there. The narrator was suggesting (as our

media have always been) that all efforts students put in during the 10 years of their school life is solely directed towards attaining a certificate or passing an exam. Our education system has always been too many exams oriented. Every year different boards are producing thousands of students obtaining GPA-5, but very few of them are making substantial contribution to the country. The guardians are very happy with the results of their children (no problem with that), but they seem to be least concerned about the fact that their children are not learning to create anything or to think independently. Students in that programme were very confused about their future plans. They seemed to be interested only in 'getting established' in life. One student simply said her future aim was to do well in the future exams, as if doing well in the exams is the end of one's life.

I see nothing to be ecstatic in so many students getting GPA-5 in this flawed education and exam system. Unless our system is radically reformed with a view to encouraging education for knowledge gathering and creativity, rather than putting all emphasis on exam results, it will always fail to produce thinkers and nation builders.

A Xaman
Dhaka

"Don't be wary of Bangladesh"

I was surprised at the above quoted article in the 'Opinion' column written by Md. Hasan Khaled. He can be best described as an apologist for the misdeeds of our ruling classes. His vein attempt to hide the real problems of Bangladesh by quoting some foreign visitors, and by blaming the media was very disturbing. It was disturbing because he tried to obfuscate the reality by drawing attention

away from the actual problems. He cited some foreign visitors' favourable comments on Bangladesh such as success of microcredit programme, resilience in the face of natural disaster, increasing women participation in national affairs, communal harmony, etc. He also mentioned how Al-Karim Hudda was impressed by chattering women and girls going to school, etc. Are these the only good things those visitors found? What about hundreds of other national issues? Mr. Khaled forgets that when you ask a foreigner about your country, he will mention a few good things. It is called politeness. It was shocking to see that Mr. Khaled does not see any danger of fundamentalism in Bangladesh. What then are those bombings, grenade attacks, killings by Bangla Bhai, attacks on the Ahmadiyyas, terrorising the religious minorities, etc., all about? I wonder how blind one can be. What about the authoritarian rule, massive mis-governance, pandemic corruption, political oppression, state-sponsored terrorism, crossfire, etc.?

Tarik Alam
On e-mail

Language martyr monument in Japan

Our language movement has secured its place in the international arena. It has been observed all over the world since 2000. The latest addition with that recognition is the inauguration of the first language martyr monument in Japan, which is the first of its kind outside our country. It will remind us how necessary it is to protect our mother language. We love it more than our lives, which was proved by our courageous brothers in 1952. So, why not we

take the initiative to protect our diversified domestic languages? From the tribal languages to local languages, dialects have to be protected for their survival. We have to be very tolerant to other languages along with other cultures, because language is the conduit for any culture.

Md. Harisur Rahman
Anthropology Department, JU

Importance of English

I entirely agree with the writer on this topic (11 July) that English is now a matter of *Ruti-Ruji* and its learning must not be discouraged. Perhaps those who discourage this are still living in the colonial past where English was the language of the ruling class. The British empire is gone and useful English for ruti-ruji abroad is now American English or technical English for industrial workers seeking to work abroad. Getting a working knowledge of such a language is an enjoyable process and not difficult at all like the learning of the classical stuff with its grammar, spelling constraints, and literature and poetical treasures.

In addition to schools, colleges and universities teaching the standard English, there should be private language labs teaching working English (and common manners as they are inter related) for which a vocabulary of about a thousand words should suffice. Phonetic use of vowels, compound vowels (diphthongs), consonants and how to use a dictionary oneself (for meaning and pronunciation) by guessing the spelling or asking someone must be part of such teaching.

Audio visual aids along with written texts and question and answer sessions should also form important components of such training.

Shafi Ahmed
London, UK

Water logging



My attention was drawn to your editorial titled "Stop studying, start solving" (DS, July 16, 2005) which discussed the problem of waterlogged city streets following even normal monsoon rain.

Don't you think the problem is caused, at least in part, by drains being blocked by piles of dis-

carded paper from unused studies on how to solve the situation?

Z. Ahmed
Lake Circus, Dhaka

Dr. Yunus and his wish list

We (Bangladeshis) criticise for criticism's sake, as the saying goes and take all statements and comments literally as made by thinkers or politicians or those who mean business. Mr. Mohd. Alauddin (DS June 27) went a bit too far by comparing "gaffur" (talks) and "kirdar" (practice) while he referred to Dr. Yunus' comments & references that he made ("If I would have been Chairman of the Anti Corruption Commission") at a seminar organised by the ACC on 29 May.

I know as the world knows, Dr. Yunus has by dint of his labour and deeds practised whatever he preached and has achieved success. Because of his concern for his homeland

and its people, Dr. Yunus did come out loud with his feelings and impressions. That doesn't mean that he has to be the Chairman of the ACC. Has he not already shown examples of invaluable services to our society with dignity and success? As he has vision he can naturally try to give direction to this hapless nation of ours. It's gratifying to see that he volunteered to come out with some directions for the vanguards of the society who are expected to run the ACC. He (Dr. Yunus) is one man, he cannot be in all places but he can help you deliver goods by his expertise and advice. Take it or leave it, but do not try to undermine the good intentions.



Dr. Yunus has rightly declared that the degree of corruption has reached such an abysmal stage in this country, it's no more limited to whispering within four walls. It's now a bazar of corruption.

AF Rahman, On e-mail