

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.

Islamic education



Many religious Muslims of our country send their children to madrassahs as they can learn Deen-e-Elm. Islam is a complete code of life—so it's impossible to comprehend the teaching of Islam without the teaching of social, political, geographical and scientific knowledge. In our madrassahs students are taught various Islamic books written in Arabic, Persian and Urdu but as they are deprived of the knowledge of their surroundings it's very natural for them to misinterpret Islam. As a result when their teachers or leaders show them the way of being a Mujahed by killing innocent people or by creating anarchy in the society— it's hard for them to

understand what is right. In the wake of the investigation of the recent bomb blasts across the country all the newspapers held till now have failed to trace their mastermind. So we still don't know the apex of their hierarchical chain. It's hard to believe that organisations like Jamaatul Mujahedeon or JMB which mostly consist of students of madrassahs have the ability to carry out well-planned and well-disciplined bombings like this all over the country at a time. I think they are only the puppets, behind the curtain there was somebody well trained and professional.

Did the bomb blasts do any good to Islam or give the westerners another chance to claim that Bangladesh is a country of Islamic fundamentalists? We must remember that Laden or Taliban, though being Islamic extremists, are the Frankenstein created by the US. We for the last few years have been watching various influential western media making an attempt to prove Bangladesh as a failed state or a prospective country for Islamic Revolution. So it might not have been impossible for the international agencies to stage this heinous drama using the bigots of the country.

Kamrul Hasan, BUET

Damage is done!

The maximum possible damage has been done. Our image as a peace-loving moderate Muslim country has been damaged beyond repair. Finally, the world should listen that we, 99.99999% Bangladeshis, never support this kind of fanaticism. And dear political parties, please take care and it is high time to take recuperative drug, otherwise, by exploiting your paranoid blame-

thing of the past? **Sadik Mahmud, University of Dhaka**

Say 'no' to dowry

Right now, dowry is resulting in an ordeal for Bangladesh women and violating the concept of women's empowerment & human development. Due to the close door exploitation by their husbands and in-laws for dowry, their plight is worsening day by day. Is it not the failure of the government and the conscious people that the rights of women are being flouted? It's a matter of grave

concern that the incidence of dowry related assault has risen to 371 in 2004 from 129 in 2003. This mind boggling information has been disclosed recently by the study conducted by Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) and was reported by The Daily Star a few days ago. So, we have to delve into the principal causes of the ongoing distress of our rural women. The fear of social backlash, lack of education, lack of awareness against dowry, and so on are responsible for the sufferings of women. Besides, poverty is another factor that is giving incentive to the dowry practice. So, let's come forward to ensure social security and human rights of women through national congresses so that dowry is banished from society for ever. **Sadik Mahmud Shabuj, University of Dhaka**

The bombs failed to detonate! This shows the most advanced and sophisticated western intelligence network and technology had no clue about the bombers—their entry and escape from the subway carriages and bus. London city was under red alert, round the clock it was under surveillance of more than 15,000 policemen, intelligence agents with gadgets and monitored by more than 1,70,000 close circuit cameras installed at important and strategic places. Even then human intelligence there failed to identify and

cause for this attack is the failure of the government to unearth the mystery of previous bomb attacks and to detain the concerning miscreants.

Unfortunately, Bangladesh is now suffering from a critical image crisis all over the world and this kind of incident will only add fuel to the fire. Therefore, the government should tactfully handle this matter. We are a peace-loving nation and it is the best time for us to prove it. **Nakib Mohammad Nasrullah, Dept of Law, DU**

Whither Bangladesh

The bomb blasts throughout Bangladesh is the latest in a series of outrage that should serve as a wake-up call to all Bangladeshis who believe in pluralism. Yet, in this time of national distress, a large number of us are incapable of recognising the nature of the threat, let alone be in a position to confront it.

The present government and their supporters are so blinded by their hatred and suspicion of the Awami League and its motives that they see AL hand in every blast, including those directed against its own leaders. The leaflets found near the latest bomb sites, the numerous reports of police arrests, the many eyewitness accounts are not enough to derail them from their line of thinking. They are so caught up in their zeal of protecting Bangladesh's image abroad that they are not willing to face any reality that may suggest otherwise.

In the Awami League way of thinking, the government must be involved in perpetrating every violent event, even though an average citizen is left to ponder how a party in power gains anything by destabilising its own government. While they themselves have been victims of violence, the knee-jerk anti-government reaction from the AL after each event makes it more unlikely that the real culprits will be pursued. By failing to recognise any distinction between different forces that comprise the present government and inflicting mindless harras on the common people, the AL leadership has essentially ruled out a broader coalition against those who threaten the very fabric of our society.

The forces the society confronts today should alarm virtually every group. With law enforcement capability of our government in tatters, it only takes a small group of fanatics like JMB, Bangla Bhai and their cadres to completely destabilise the society and make room for a violent revolution.

Today's targets are the NGOs, cinema halls, cultural institutions, journalists, Sufi shrines, Ahmadiyas and religious minorities. If these forces are unchecked, tomorrow's targets will also include mainstream Muslims who merely disagree with them.

With the memories of 1971 indelible in the mind of the older generation in

Bangladesh, there should be no illusion about those who are willing to murder and maim in the name of upholding religion. **Saleh Tanveer, The Ohio State University**

August 17 carnage

Bangladesh in the context of its geographical area can be called a small country with the density of population per square mile being the highest in the world. We also boast of being quite friendly and reciprocal to each other. I don't think it is really that troublesome a job for our intelligence agencies to hunt down and bring to justice the perpetrators of the August 17 carnage. **Humayun Hyder, Zigatola, Dhaka**

Delhi's stand on Dhaka

Delhi wants major donors to impose economic sanctions on Dhaka. There goes our true pal. I wonder what all those pro Indian newspapers, lobbyist, organisations, and politicians have to say. Their true face has finally surfaced. This is the country that benefits from 4 billion dollars of exports to Bangladesh, and yet shamelessly trying to destroy Bangladesh following its biggest tragedy that took place on 8/17. India wants economic sanctions on Bangladesh, because by their counts, Bangladesh is a breeding ground for terrorist organisations. If we consider the ill doctoring of India, and their drunken logic, then economic sanctions may very well be justified on UK, US, Spain, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia for failure to clamp down on terrorists, and foiling terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, because of its short-sighted foreign policy, it has failed to realise that it is ridiculous to think of such thoughts, when the fight against terrorism is a global campaign. In reality, the terrorists are everywhere, and their strategy is to launch cowardly attacks, and hide like a spiteful snail. They don't plan overtly and this is why we never saw it coming. Bangladesh is a secular democratic country home to Hindus, Christians, and Muslims. Our self-correcting democratic values are much richer than any nation's, and cannot be destroyed by a few fundamentalists. India is ravaged by human rights violations, frictions, and violence in the cast driven society, social injustice, corruption, and spread of deadly HIV epidemic. Furthermore, it is on the verge of economic collapse as its IT sector is continuously

losing US businesses due to the inability to provide quality service. India is urgently in need for diverting all the unwanted attention aimed at exploiting the 8/17 tragedy. They have chosen a country that drives their economy. I question, what will happen if we stop consuming Indian products, and stop the 4 billion dollars yearly trade. How will India feed her vast uneducated & growing unemployed population? I say, it is their problem. It is their problem and not ours because they have repeatedly broken our trust and generosity. **Shadabul Mujib, Los Angeles, US**

Terrorism

It is very difficult to understand why terrorism is spreading in Bangladesh. We all should balance religion and our culture life, rather than focusing on one because it is very dangerous. We have never had these problems before. **Mustapha Ali, One-mail**

No more bombs

As a conscious citizen I really condemn the series of bomb attacks carried out all over the country. It is really unfortunate for us that this kind of incidents are taking place again and again. The underlying

Market, super-stores full of merchandise, local and imported. Ice-cream parlour, modern pastry shops filled with people. Fish market filled with all kind of fish. The price is silly. You sell a piece of 'papaya' or a kilo of 'begun' at Parbatipur, Bogra or Savar, its price is multiplied about five times at Dhaka's retailers. Is it greed or market anomalies? A square feet of land or a living area anywhere in the city, a meal in a roadside or shinning restaurant, all have price tags bearing no rationale, yet shoppers crowding. Tutorial providers making frequent trips to East Asia. 'You have inhumanly greed and no ethics' agreed with me the economics tutor in one of the popular tutorials, majority of them will unload their 'patriotism and devotion' at the first conversation. One arrogant Professor holding out alone without joining Blue or White panels called himself a great patriot. Taxi drivers jump out of the car to open the door. Sir, boss, I was addressed as I passed by shops. Electronic billboards, new cars, buses, beautiful landscapes, shopping malls and multi-storied residences where lives our affluent middle class with maids and butler. Their income is from unknown source and mostly unearned or earned only under political patronage. We call it 'corruption'. One scoop of Swiss Ice cream cost Tk 75

Trip to Bangladesh

Going home on vacation is a very cherished event.

But the reality at home is grim. Thousands of struggling people all around, hundreds of commuters yet can't reach their destinations on time. It took more than two hours from Old Dhaka to reach Lab Aid in Mirpur Road, by that time the stroke patient had died. You are sandwiched between two buses in a three wheeler, can easily develop a fear of arson. People are aimless, hopeless, guide-less.

A kilometre strip of 'char' on the south side of Jamuna Bridge, in the midst of 'Srabon', the national highway is clogged with traffic. Bazaar and barefoot passers-by allow only a speed of sixty kilometres.

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Materialistic affluence can be seen around. In Aziz Super market, a small hand made pottery will cost at least Tk 300, around four sq. feet watercolour pictorial costs not less than Tk 5,000. But the quality of the society has not improved a bit. At 10:00pm from an affluent cardiac hospital in Gulshan the neighbourhood looked so dark, hardly a 40 watt light is on in the gates of the houses, where live the people who have German automobiles. **MM Haque, Jeddah, K.S.A**

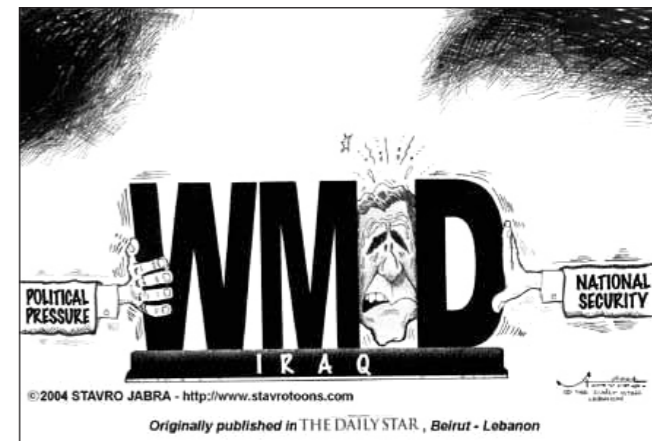
WMD



The US/UN reminisce on the 19th August, the day of anniversary of the attack on Iraq which was made on pure hearsay that Iraq had WMD (weapons of mass destruction), which later proved that the report of American intelligence agencies were dead wrong. The whole report, what a shame, turned out to be War Mongering Dossier (WMD)!

Now I want to know, after the declaration and acceptance of wrong doing what the world community would do to punish the US and the UK, though any punishment to the criminals now cannot give life back to those who had to

house of the civilisation as old as thousands of years. I can only pray for the salvation of the departed souls and punishment to the



leave this world for the treachery and torture by the tormentors and cannot replenish those treasure and treasury looted from the store-

perpetrators in the court of Allah, our Creator. **AF Rahman, On e-mail**

Synchronised bomb blasts

The almost synchronised bomb blasts across the country on August 17 indicate that no one is safe anywhere anymore from the fanatic forces.

We are always haunted by the fear of the next attack; we just don't know when and where it will happen.

The ever-increasing incidents of bomb blasts by the fanatic forces are shrinking our freedom day by day. They are endangering our fundamental rights and civil rights frequently without

any resistance of any kind. Rather, it is tormenting to see that both the government and the opposition engage themselves in a blame game after any bomb blasts. They make it a political agenda, instead of protesting the crime and bringing the culprits to book. And it helps the culprits to get away.

So, we should no longer remain indifferent to the issue. **Md. Faisal, ELL, IIUC**



game, those fanatic groups (within) will utterly usurp our democracy and sovereignty. **Abu Raihan, South-Hall, CUET**

Our image problem

Needless to say, right now, Bangladesh is suffering from a severe image problem. Due to massive corruption, the rise of fundamentalism and the rising political unrest, we, the ordinary people of our country, are experiencing a great saga of distress. And the international community is very much concerned about the sustainability of democracy in our country. Recently, well orchestrated bomb blasts over the whole country have jeopardised the security of our lives and our image to the international community as well. How many times shall we have to face this type of ordeals? Is it not our responsibility to resolve our internal conflicts by taking some corrective measures? And isn't it our responsibility to make our country a good place to live in where corruption, fundamentalism and political unrest will be a

concern that the incidence of dowry related assault has risen to 371 in 2004 from 129 in 2003. This mind boggling information has been disclosed recently by the study conducted by Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) and was reported by The Daily Star a few days ago. So, we have to delve into the principal causes of the ongoing distress of our rural women. The fear of social backlash, lack of education, lack of awareness against dowry, and so on are responsible for the sufferings of women. Besides, poverty is another factor that is giving incentive to the dowry practice. So, let's come forward to ensure social security and human rights of women through national congresses so that dowry is banished from society for ever. **Sadik Mahmud Shabuj, University of Dhaka**

Security intelligence

After 2 weeks of 7/7 bombing of London subways and bus, the repeat attempt of bombing in the same locations was not foiled by British intelligence service. It is said

track the bombers in advance. The only clue they had is assumption of the image of the enemy. Who else would be the enemy after their invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq? So they analysed the images available from the closed circuit cameras. The innocent Brazilian who had similarity in look with Asians was shot nine times in the head by the police. In our country, it is therefore unkind to put blame on our intelligence system for failing to identify the bombers or saboteurs. Bangladesh is a poor country, over populated and technologically undeveloped. We can't afford to maintain manpower and high cost forensic and electronic equipment like the western countries have. If people here do not come forward to co-operate and political parties do not bury their rift for national interest, it would be impossible for any govt. to prevent recurrence of such incidents. **E. Ahmed, One-mail**

Feedback on "our teachers"

And finally the media reports have come true. Being successful in their maiden operation, they (terrorists) are trying to pursue their goal. The entire nation is terrorised and awed but not our leaders of the party in power or in opposition in the parliament. Had they paid heed to the media reports earlier, probably this would not have happened. And still they are playing their traditional game of mud slinging. **Sarwar Hossen Liton, University of Dhaka**

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