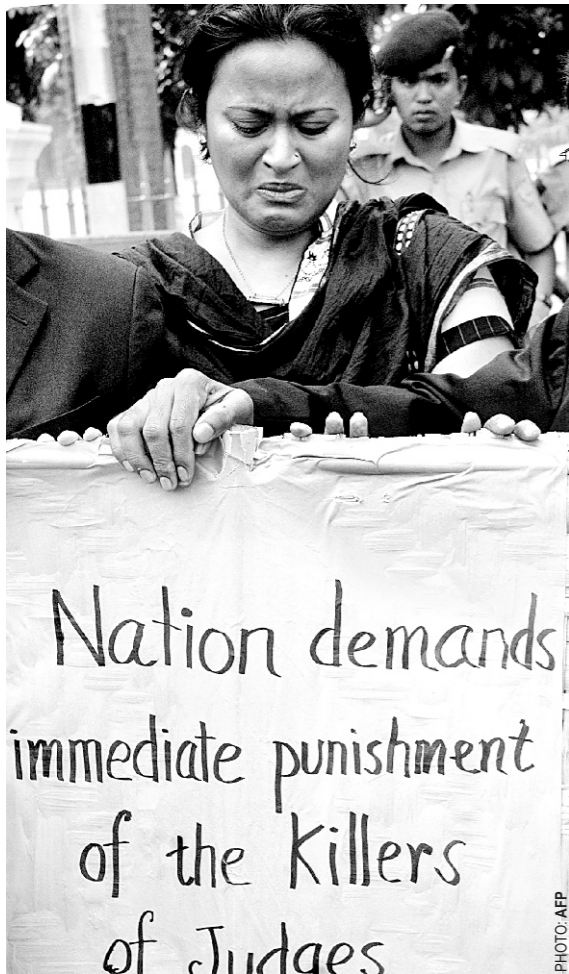


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



**Slain judges**

We have read the news of the heinous and shameful killings of judges. We have no words to console the grief of the slain Judges' near and dear ones. One thing struck me while going over the news that there was no message or reaction expressed by truly knowledgeable persons on the Islamic law.

I congratulate Mr. Justice Mostafa Kamal for his timely observations on the Islamic law or Islam. I believe there are many neutral scholars in this area in our country who would come forward to enlighten the people on what is right or wrong. We get confused when we hear that an arrested man confessed before a magistrate with great pride that nothing would deviate them from their belief until the rule of Islamic law is implemented.

We must face them collectively. Otherwise, the situation may go out of control.  
**Ehsanul Habib, One-mail**

destroyed it in a jiffy. A part of the history and heritage of Afghanistan blew up into the air and got lost into oblivion.

Only infinite patience and pragmatic corrective measures against causes of religious terrorism, counter-motivation can save the majority- the sane and hard working world, civilisation and humanity, and also the 'poor' souls - the 'would-be pseudo-shaheeds'.

**SN Mamoon**  
*Dhaka*

**Terrorism**

I wish to ask our government what are they doing and what steps they are taking to protect the citizens of Bangladesh. I am a Bangladeshi citizen and I'm living in Melbourne, Australia. I wanted to come back to my beloved country and wanted to do something there. I'm working as a general Manager in a steel company in Australia and I'm willing to come back. But the terrorist group JMB seems to be more powerful than the government and our opposition party. All they are doing is throwing mud at each other but none of them is able to come up with a solution to this problem. We have got all the security people that are needed to protect the country and its citizens but we are not using them. We only developed Rab, but why don't we deploy the ARMY to help us out of this crisis. They can't find Bangla Bhai. That's a joke! He beat the hell out of people and beat them to death and police said they could not find them. The BIG politicians are not losing much, they only go to people when their relative die and say some words and come back. They have got all the security personnel around them so that they can't be touched. They are so called VIPs. But what about the common men who are exposed to all kinds of violent activities?

**Iftekar Hassan**  
*Melbourne, Australia*

**Bomb attacks**

What are we trying to achieve through this barrage of bombings on people we don't like?

If we do not like the justice system, or we don't like this person, can we simply bomb them away and take care of the issue? Don't these incidents look very similar to a certain country in our neighbourhood? We seem to be on the fast track to become the country we once loved to hate.

Even after the August 17 bombings, the government is yet to nab any of the real kingpins.

Mufti Hannan was arrested, but clearly he was just a leg of the spider and the brains are still out there. There have been several other bombings since then, showing that the group has not been weakened a bit and they mean business.

A part of the BNP always provided support to the fundamentalists and they must be very happy to see that the 'project' is going well according to the plan. The right-wing extremists used

the BNP to become powerful and are showing their true colours now. When will the BNP realise the real story - or are we to assume that they actually want these to happen?

Those of us who live abroad and anxiously read the news updates each day tend to vigorously defend our country against remarks suggesting that we are on the way to becoming the next 'Taliban' country. I myself argued with Indians a number of times about this.

But the ground reality today is really a matter of great concern. We cannot any more dismiss the presence of extremists lightly.

I have faith in my countrymen that they won't allow such a thing to take hold - but the threat is ominous. What are we really doing about it?

**Shafiqat**  
*Seattle, USA*

**Sudden sparks in darkness**

If we can't give quality education, we better close our colleges and universities. It's a shame that our universities can't offer the standard level of education. Still our politicians and well known politicised teachers and intellectuals will run after their own needs. To them, the value of the meritorious students and the future of the country and its education don't matter at all.

Everyone is concerned about his own interest only. No one is eager to build a good environment that inspires the students. I heard a respected teacher of a reputed state run university saying, "Session jam is a regular and usual thing here. Love it or leave it". I'm hurt! It's very difficult to get chance in public universities and after getting admitted here, when the students will see these indifferent faces and attitudes of their respected teachers, they will have their heart broken definitely, I'm telling you.

Seems nobody has any duty. Teachers are also happily avoiding their duties and going to take part time classes in the private universities under the banner of their imposing degrees. Some teachers go abroad for higher studies and don't come back. Some teachers are directly involved in politics, they themselves are enough for political inspiration and influence.

Until, or unless we ban student politics and violence on educational campuses, our country can never compete with the developed countries like US, Canada.

Look at Malaysia and Singapore. We can't think of standing beside them, cause they have gone too far ahead of us. And where are we standing right at this moment?

India is also a poor and third world country like us. But Indian universities are doing very well. Indian politicians don't let their political crisis ruin the peaceful campuses. We will have to find out where in this world politicians use the universities for their own purposes.

We need to be more patriotic. Solving our major internal problems with little willpower will be far more

effective than showing off dazzling and extravagant lighting. Sudden sparks in the darkness may harm our eyesight!

**Cantara Wali Ruhi**  
*Dhaka University*

**Our newspapers**

We have many English language newspapers. Literally describing, each one of them looks different from others in writings, source materials,

Although an unknown friend, yet I know him from his writings in your newspaper. I was a great admirer of him and have learned certain things from his writings.

**D. Nabil**  
*Captain Bazar Road, Dhaka*

**Women's lot**

Brutality to and abuse of women seems to be a common thing in Bangladesh if one scans the daily

Physical beatings, torture, kidnapping, acid attack and even rape is a multiple daily occurrence, reported in the press. With insignificant prospect of social and moral rehabilitation; the unfortunate female victims of these cruelties are mostly left to themselves, causing irreversible mental agony leading to suicide on occasions. Suicide being an unnatural cause of death is a known and reported event. Unknown however are many victims left with a broken

women particularly in rural areas have markedly increased! Urban areas with a more secular educational background show a lesser trend of un-Islamic attitude to women. This scenario presents a paradox, which although unfortunate, is a fact. It should be an eye opener for the mentors and teachers of Islamic based religions institutions. They should study and find out why this paradoxical un-Islamic trend of cruelty towards women

**Rickshaw pullers**

In Bangladesh rickshaw pulling offers a limited opportunity for very poor people to survive.

Millions of poor earn their livelihood by rickshaw pulling and now their existence is threatened by ban on rickshaws on many roads. Rickshaw is the only environmentally sustainable and zero emission product of Bangladesh.

Rickshaws were probably introduced to the city of Dhaka in the early part of the previous century. Those of us who have been brought up in Dhaka have seen its existence since childhood and it has become a part and parcel of our everyday life. It is by far the most common mode of public transport used by people of all walks of life. To a certain extent, the existence of rickshaws may reflect the true nature of our socio-economic condition. Those who are involved in pulling rickshaws mostly belong to the deprived class of the society. For a large section of these people, their poverty is the direct consequence of economic mismanagement and ill distribution of wealth in our society. Some of them have lost farms and lands and others have lost their homestead devoured by river erosion.

Monga is a sort of famine that stalks the northern region during the lean period when there is no work for farmers or agricultural labourers. The jobless people lose their food purchasing capacity. "As the local economy is not enough to keep the locals in their own areas, they roam around and finally migrate to the capital as part of their coping mechanism," the Economist said. There is no official or unofficial data on how many people migrate to Dhaka each year during Monga.

Rickshaw pullers often get sick and as they get older this way of life becomes increasingly unsustainable. Their children receive only limited schooling and grow up with few occupational choices and opportunities to escape poverty.

**Zishan, Lalmatia, Dhaka**



**Terrorism and madrassahs**

Will somebody write an article covering the following thought provoking topic-- the prevailing madrassah education system-- syllabus, enrolment, mode and method of education, madrassah hostel life etc. in details, what instigates an innocent 'madrassah' boy (innocent when admitted into madrassah) to become a fundamentalist terrorist or a suicide bomber, the mindset of a fundamentalist, of a suicide bomber and the remedial recommendations like change of madrassah curriculum, how to bring them to the main-

stream, de-regimentation, alternatives, creating job opportunities for them, unifying and simplifying madrassah education system etc. The root causes will have to be found and addressed.

Interestingly, the mentor of a suicide bomber does not send his own sons, relatives or himself to such a mission. If 'pseudo-shahadat' was so virtuous why doesn't he volunteer himself for such a mission?

It took many years to build up 'Bamiyan' in Afghanistan but a few powerful explosives by the ruthless, cultureless, inhuman, misguided paranoid psychotic 'Talibans'



**Saarc and Sheikh Hasina**



Although I am not a member of the Awami League, I have tremendous respect for its leader former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Her words and actions, whether in Power or in Opposition greatly influence the lives of Bangladeshis everywhere. Therefore, along with my respect I also have a great deal of high expectations from her.

Unfortunately, her decision not to attend the 13th Saarc Summit here in Dhaka does not meet the standard of my expectation from her. I believe, whatever may be her reasons, she made a big mistake by not attending the Summit and missed an opportunity to be viewed as a world-class leader. The worst part of the whole thing is that she is giving an excuse of Monga for her such decision. She was visiting the Monga-affected areas and distributing food among hungry people while the Summit was going on in Dhaka. Her feelings for hungry people of Monga-affected areas cannot be denied; however, I will most definitely question her sense of judgement as a leader and the timing to show such feelings for the affected people. Could she have employed her trusted party members to distribute food among the hungry people for a mere three or four days on her behalf while she could have attended the Summit? Or was she using Monga as an escape route for not attending this historic Summit? I hope not.  
**Aziz Ahmad, New Eskaton Road, Dhaka**

The Saarc Summit was held in Dhaka to improve the socio-economic condition of this regions' people but what the residents of Dhaka underwent during those days would remain in their mind as an ordeal. It reminds us of the days of Ershad where curfew was like bread and butter to us. Everybody knows what will be the effect of these meetings and how much influence they have on people's lives.

It is a pity that when people of Rangpur were dying Special Decorations were made in the city. The memories of Saarc will

remain as a nightmare.  
**Badal Hasib**  
*Dhanmondi, Dhaka*

I don't know if I should congratulate the Bangladesh government for spending (or wasting!) hundreds of millions of taka for the Saarc Summit. It seems the only achievement that would make Khaleda Zia happy is the "Saarc Podok". So basically we, the general people, have gifted this "Podok", to our leader. The irony is we are failing in every sector of life. Did anyone ever question why a country had to come to a standstill to organise a conference.

Does the government have any right to stop people from living their regular life for an international talk show? What is the outcome of this event, can anyone please tell me? I don't think that Bangladesh would be able to earn the money that they have spent through doing business with the Saarc countries.

I would like to ask my fellow countrymen what do they think they have achieved through their representatives in the 20 years of Saarc.  
**Nayem Hossain, California, US**

Nothing will change unless India

changes its mindset. It has unfriendly neighbours on all four sides of the compass.

New Delhi should address the problem.  
**Abd Khan**  
*Dhaka*

To enter into Taj Mahal it takes only 20 rupees for an Indian, but if you are not an Indian, you have to give 780 rupees to view the wonderful tomb of love. As a non-Indian I had to pay 780 rupees. It would be really difficult to pay 780 rupees for many South Asians. Have our leaders raised the issue of visiting such places in India for

less money?

There are many other issues that can be addressed by Saarc countries to promote relations among them.  
**Sharin Shajahan Noami**  
*Law department, DU*

It was enlightening to see that while the whole country and the capital city in particular focused its attention on the Saarc Summit, it did not seem to create much ripples in other countries, especially in India, the largest country. All our newspapers have covered the summit extensively on the front page and in supplements,

giving full coverage to all countries respectfully. But, glancing through the major Saarc country newspapers on the Internet, I don't see anything near the same attention.

Is it because we gave it too much importance, reflected in the forced standstill for our capital city dwellers, who faced inconvenience and loss of income for the supposed positive image of our country? If so, why is there no positive result reflected in the news media of the other Saarc countries?  
**Sanjoy Kumar Nath**  
*Chittagong*

**Saarc Summit**