

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.

Terrorism

Chalking self-interest in political web is despicable. Chalking self-interest in religious web is abhorrent.

Ours is a country that has a majority of Muslim population. Our people rich or poor alike are religious. We may have a small collection of atheists here and there, but the main stream of our educational, political, professional, private, public all cultural arena is strewn with code of Islam. We have religious scholars and religious groups. Suddenly JMB comes up with bombs to change what? Do JMB want to change the history or do they want to stop globalisation? Even if the clock were turned back would they be able to change anything? Is Islam such a weak religion that some small note of modern age will weaken it?

Do JMB know what Islam is? Bathing in the blood of misled followers and innocent citizens what prowess are they boasting of? Greedy for the limelight and black money, it's their own choice to create a hell for themselves in this life and hereafter and in the process create unnecessary chaos.

Sadly, this anti people group got a chance to flourish because Bangladesh since its birth is going through political and economical turmoil. It is our differences; our mistrust born out of our selfishness, greed, indifferences, jealousies and lack of intelligence and farsightedness that is responsible for the birth of this lawless group.

Rahila Shahin
Maghbazar, Dhaka

Ghost in the post!

I am living in Uttara for the last fourteen years. I was enjoying receiving regular postal mails from home and abroad without any problems. All my letters, parcels etc were being regularly delivered at my home address. However, for the last two years or so, I am noticing changes in the situation; I was missing many important mails both from Bangladesh and abroad. I thought these might have been isolated cases; and kept on noticing the matter. With time, I started thinking to believe that something was really going wrong. I had some correspondences from the US and other countries as well; they were blaming me for not receiving and responding to their mails. I was continuously asking for the duplicates, even those did not reach me. I spoke to the Post Master; he flatly denied any faults from his side. I tightened up my house guard, no luck. My friends in the US asked me to give them an alternate address. I supplied them my office address at Gulshan. And immediately I got the letters delivered.

Although we are now much advanced in modern communication systems such as emails, couriers etc, we still have to depend in many ways on our traditional postal service, which is an essential service.

I always prefer my personal letters to be delivered at my home address, not at office, so how can I get that?

I herewith sincerely and honestly draw the attention of the highest authorities of the Postal Department to look into the letter delivery system of Uttara Post Office. I am sure many others believe that something is happening inside the office. The "ghost" has to be driven out.

Asufferer
Uttara, Dhaka

World champions



PHOTO: AFP

Who gains from hartals?

Hartal has become a very usual phenomena in our country and a lot has been written about the negative impact of hartals. The question is who gets benefited from the hartals?

The answer is inevitable, none other than the political parties who call them.

Although the politicians claim it is for the best interest of the common people but the common people are the ones who are most affected by hartals.

Commoners like me feel that the political parties of our country are just the opposite sides of the same coin. They

enjoy the sufferings of the common people for their own political gain.

Politicians in our country are busy satisfying their hunger for power. They have little interest or time to think of us. We are merely their tools for exploitation.

Saquifa Binte Seraj
Dhanmondi, Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

in corruption

Whether we like it or not, whether we accept it or reject it, it is a secondary question. But does it not tell upon our image, honour and patriotism that the Transparency International, Germany, has awarded our country with world corruption championship

for the fifth consecutive year?

We feel that the activities and performances of our ruling as well as opposition parties are equally responsible for this great damage and disrespect done to our country.

Every man or woman, literate or illiterate, rich or poor, if not mentally retarded or physically handicapped,

has some work, duty or responsibility to perform. This is quite natural and normal but if it is not done, it is unnatural, abnormal and undesirable.

Millions of our people live in abject poverty, hunger and unemployment. They live in thatched houses or slums without electricity, supply of pure drinking water and sanitary

facilities, not to speak of owning a car, television or telephone. Is it not a matter of concern and regret that some of the members of the opposition parties in the JS are drawing thousands of taka per month from our public exchequer as their salaries, allowances and emoluments without

Put an end to it

There must be end to this chaos. Killing of innocent of people and the process of creation of anarchy must come to an end. All these things are happening because we, the so-called educated conscious and elite people, are not talking.

All these things are happening just because we are not standing up and saying "Enough is enough". Just because of our silence, illiterate and uneducated Mollahs are creating hell in our motherland. This must come to end, at any cost.

Just because our people are poor and uneducated, these people are brain washing our youths with their money sources and exploiting them with emotional ploys. In the name of religion, they are destroying our culture and destroying our civilisation. When will the time come to stand up and say "Enough is enough"? Please tell me when?

We must act decisively now. Please wake up, everybody. For God's sake, please. We must identify and eliminate all apostles of hell. We must restructure the whole educa-

tional system of our beloved country, our motherland, and our identity Bangladesh. Blood of so many martyrs, the unfulfilled dreams of so many mothers cannot go in vein.

What is the meaning of Madrassah? It's an Arabic word. It means School. Why should we have two parallel threads in our education system? Can we afford it in a poor country? No, absolutely not. This is simply a sheer misuse of our limited resources. We must start thinking constructively now. No more delay.

If you look at the education systems of the Arab countries, you will see that they have only one education system. Look at Saudi Arabia, look at Oman, look at Qatar and look at United Arab Emirates. When they say Madrassah, they mean school only. What obligation do we have to carry a burden on our shoulder?

All Madrassahs must be converted into schools. This education system must be abolished. We must invest our limited resources for productive and creative education of



PHOTO: AFP

our children. To impart religious education, in order to produce Muezzins and Imams of mosques, establishment of one diploma level education centre in every district will suffice.

M. Khan, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

SAARC SUMMIT

Going back to Saarc. According to the Foreign Minister, "It will be a curfew like security in the city." Without making all-out alternate arrangements most of the important roads were closed to the public during the momentous event, public were kept at bay along with children! In order to maintain the security for our honoured guests such measures were justified since we have had the bitterness of receiving threats from the terrorists at large.

As far as state security is concerned, there cannot be one hundred percent warranty and, God forbid, any unanticipated, unwarranted incident could happen. So security had to be beefed up. But the inconvenience caused to the people was too great.

Tajul Islam
Gulshan-1, Dhaka

The 13th Saarc summit was held in Dhaka from 10-13 Nov. The main venues involved in the "Mahasammelan" were Bangladesh-China friendship conference hall, Hotel Sonargaon, Hotel Sheraton, National Martyrs' Monument, Holy Cross School, Nilkhet Gurdwara etc. And behold



PHOTO: AFP

what an elected government and its intelligence and law enforcing agencies have inflicted upon the tax paying working commuting common people, traders, businessmen, populace and voters of Dhaka city.

Kawran Bazar, the biggest whole sale market of Dhaka remained closed for four days which means the wholesale market, retail market, fish market, meat market, retail cloth markets, fruit market, general

market, groceries, and what not, resulting in loss of Tk.1200 Millions to traders, their employees, common day labourers--who will probably borrow money from a money lender to buy food (the lender may

be a BNP man because they have all the money now!), loss to the transport sector, add to it hassle and harassment to the common people, commuters, workers, etc. The most important roads remained virtually closed, foreign travel for workers -- the biggest FC earners of the country, common travellers, patients, business people was hindered as a de facto curfew was in force in the airport area.

We very well understand and appreciate the anguish, anxiety and insecurity of the present government. They could not hold Saarc Summit twice due to various reasons after so much of preparation.

The Saarc Summit was held in Bangalore, India. One eyewitness narrated that it was performed in such a way that people were not harassed or troubled. They did not suffer any loss of trade, business.

There lived a King called Muhammad bin Tughlak. We are well informed of his activities. Does he have any relevance in today's world?

SN Mamoon, Dhaka

We, the general people agree that strong security was needed for the

attending their duties and responsibilities as MPs and representing the problems and grievances of the people in JS for which they were elected by the people.

In no democratic country in the world the members of the parliament boycott it for months together and draw their salaries and emoluments without any qualms.

But in our case it is an extraordinary privilege for the MPs to draw their salaries and emoluments without attending the parliament.

We feel that in view of the tug of war, jealousy, hatred and malevolence between our ruling and opposition parties there is no accountability and transparency of duties and responsibilities, lapses, mistakes, irregularities and misuse of public money by our ruling party due to the absence of our opposition party in the JS.

We also strongly feel that no matter which party remains in power or in opposition if they fail to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities sincerely and honestly we would never be able to free ourselves from the clutches of corruption, and the untold sufferings of our people would never come to an end.

It is imperative and a moral duty of our ruling and opposition party leaders to render their services for the welfare of the people, rather than serving their personal interests, failing which the very existence of country may be jeopardised one day.

A stitch in time saves nine. Amity and cooperation between our ruling party and opposition is a must for our survival.

O H Kabir
Dhaka

Monga hit people

In these days of every year we see hundreds of poverty stricken people of the greater district of Rangpur thronging the highways, nearest market places for food and cash money. In their colloquial they call it monga, which means without or having an insufficient quantity of food due to absence of employment. The situation is disquieting no doubt and newspaper columns are full of dissertation by the leaders of the society and political parties, although no permanent solution has been found. The government in the current year's budget has earmarked a sizeable amount for amelioration of financial hardship of the marginalized people but nothing

tangible has been reported. A good number of NGOs have been working in those areas only to lend money at high interest rate, but failing to guide them as how to invest the fund.

Rezaul Huq
Lamatia, Dhaka

Shahid Nur Hossein Day

I was very moved to hear messages from the President, Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition on the occasion of Shahid Nur Hossein Day. They were commemorating the same occasion, and it made me feel very happy to hear our leaders talk of it in unison.

Is it too distant a dream that on other occasions - such as Independence Day, Victory Day etc, we will have unity from our leaders, as these days belong to the nation, not any political party?

Sanjoy Kumar Nath
Chittagong

Passing away of an Icon

This is in response to the tribute you paid to the late Enayetullah Khan published in the first page of The Daily Star on November 11. First of all, I would like to thank you for your bold, timely and adorable writing. I am keen to echo you. One is gripped with shock & grief, by the death of veteran journalist Enayetullah Khan, who enlivened everyone with his distinguished writing & words in the New Age & the Holiday as editor.

He was always clear thinking, an excellent & critical political analyst, a well wisher of common people. I can say without hesitation that his was a life entirely dedicated to journalism. No doubt, he was a remarkable person he touched the hearts of many people with his great personality as an icon for journalism as a profession. He also was frank & direct; he would never hesitate to raise his voice even if it means scathing those he supported.

We must never forget his unending Fight for press freedom.

Md. Toufiqur Rahman
Rothkolla, Kishoregonj

Monga politics

While the whole nation was glued to the TV channels watching news on Saarc, our opposition leader was roaming around greater Rangpur district to distribute relief materials to monga-affected people. This was no doubt a noble gesture. But one would be tempted to wonder why at that point of time! Why not a week earlier or later? We came to know through different media that she was invited to attend the important events of the conference with the rank and status of a full cabinet minister and we understand that is the protocol. The nation would have loved to see her in the midst of the dignitaries. That could perhaps give the nation a more democratic outlook. The question naturally comes why she had chosen exactly the Saarc timing. To avoid the Saarc? Was it not parochial thinking on the part of the opposition leader? Then question also arises how many times she visited the monga affected Rangpur when she was the prime minister. This is a question one might be interested to look into.

But my question is when will our leaders come out of the shell of such politics?

N.Z. Khan
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

One-mail

We do feel proud of our great leaders of the South Asian countries. All the Saarc countries have attended the 13th Summit held in Dhaka, and have contributed towards achieving the goal of regional cooperation and development. India and Bangladesh played a vital role. Our Shaheed President Zia dreamt of the present Saarc for which he has been given the most prestigious Award.

We convey our heartfelt thanks and warm felicitations to all the South Asian leaders for making the summit a great success.

Peerzada Syed Rofiqul Hussain
Gulshan, Dhaka

I want to raise a rather different issue regarding Saarc and it is also related to the people of our city as well as of the whole country. During the summit, people who commuted in Dhaka from its one farthest point to another found travelling totally free of traffic jam. My concern is how to sustain this position on a regular basis.

Dhaka city is very congested and needs open spaces and wider roads. Moreover, we should retain our endeavour to extend the periphery



Bidding corruption goodbye!

Corruption has almost become a second nature to many people of Bangladesh, but how can we rid ourselves of corruption while so many people are living a poverty stricken life? Is corruption more prevalent in the lower income groups or among the affluent people? The magnitude of corruption is greater among the elite societies of Bangladesh. Recently, I was reading some very interesting 'Yahoo groups' articles and felt like offering my own perspective.

I think the root causes of corruption are economic want and an overly consumerist society. You will agree that we have become an extremely 'gadget driven' society. We are looking for more, more and more.

Yes, economic welfare is of paramount importance for successful living, but when we stretch it too far, then many ills creep in with it. Corruption is that evil. We have to unwind ourselves for a change and return back to peaceful living. That perhaps will allow us to have a new direction for a better and humane society.

I must also speak of ethics, civic sense, a good dose of fraternity and virtuosity as elements of righteousness that need to be inculcated within our younger generation who happens to have an impressionable mind and a guilt free conscience.

Let us voice our opinion against corruption and send messages to all corners of the world that corruption is a 'disease that eats away human dignity.' Indeed, time will come when the corrupt people will feel encouraged to return to the paths of righteousness. With a corruption free environment, the growth of the country will expand in leaps and bounds; the economic pie will be enlarged, allowing everyone to share the riches. Let us strive to make this wish a reality.

Let us talk more and more of corrupt practices that need to be uprooted and let us share the reasons why getting rid of corruption will ultimately bring prosperity to the nation.

Start saying 'no' to corruption and 'yes' to transparency, progress and prosperity.

Ziaur Rahman, CEO, IITM

of the city. The decision makers and planners should address the issue in right earnest.

Tawhid Shams Chowdhury
BRAC University, Dhaka

I would like to raise a question about the euphoria of the government regarding the Saarc Summit that we witnessed. The decorations and lighting of the Sheraton Hotel and the grand arrangements to receive the honourable Saarc guests including the sophisticated security measures like patrolling the city with dogs and using mine detectors in order to ensure safety for the guests amused us to some extent. We had not seen anything like that in the past.

The point that I want to make is that Bangladesh is an underdeveloped country and the beautification costs of the summit must have been very high. It was done with people's money. The government had no right to spend so lavishly for an unproductive occasion like the Saarc Summit.

Naome Syed
Mohammadpur, Dhaka