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The worst president!



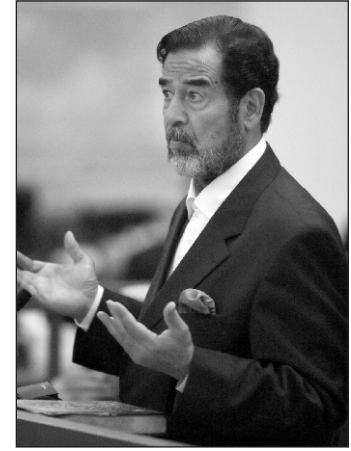
I am writing with reference to "Saddam's end," by Prof. Juan Cole (Dec. 31). Although Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator who committed countless atrocities against his people, the way he was tried by highly biased judges and his almost immediate execution will leave many questions unanswered. US President George W. Bush shared the burden of misjudgement because Saddam was captured by the

American troops and not by the Iraqis. Prof. Cole is absolutely right when he says: "The political ineptitude of the tribunal, from start to finish, was astonishing. The United States and its Iraqi allies basically gave Saddam a platform on which to make himself a martyr to Iraqi unity and independence -- even if by unity and independence Saddam was really appealing to Sunnis' nostalgia for their days of hegemony."

Furthermore, if Bush wanted to salvage his failed presidency by the execution of the Iraqi dictator, he may be in for bitter disappointment. The capture of Saddam Hussein gave President Bush a temporary boost in the polls. But since then Iraq has spiralled into sectarian violence and the US military death toll is nearing 3,000 and Mr. Bush is now considered as the most unpopular president in recent history.

The execution of Saddam Hussein will do little or nothing to bolster Mr. Bush's paltry public approval ratings -- currently 70 per cent of Americans think he is doing poorly in Iraq -- or to improve a deteriorating security situation in Iraq. "Anytime the White House uses the term 'milestone' it's a stone around the president's neck," said Prof. Ray Tanter, national security expert at Georgetown University and a National Security Council member under former President Ronald Reagan. "You do not change the situation in Iraq by capturing Saddam, convicting Saddam and executing Saddam." Nothing changes the insurgency except a political deal. The president might get a little bump from this, but it will quickly go down because the situation on the ground hasn't changed. This explains why Bush is dubbed "worst president" by many prominent US historians. "I would rate him as the worst at this point," said Robert McElvain, professor of history at Millsap University in Jacksonville, Mississippi. When the Washington Post asked five leading historians to assess Mr. Bush's legacy, the best he received was fifth worst. Mr. Lind ranks Buchanan as the worst president in history because he allowed the nation

to disintegrate under his watch before Abraham Lincoln saved it. He ranks Mr. Nixon as "second-worst" because he "perverted the constitution" during his efforts to cover up the Watergate scandal. Mr. Bush, in Mr. Lind's view, ranks as "fifth-worst" behind Buchanan, Nixon, Andrew Johnson and James Madison, who botched the War of 1812. "It seems to me you condemn a president who started an optional war that could have been avoided, even if the costs are lower than a war that was very difficult to avoid, like Korea and Vietnam," Mr. Lind said in an interview. "If you create the crisis and make it worse, then you are a terrible president." Bush still refuses to admit that in Iraq, the cost in blood and bullion has soared because of his insistence on staying on the failed course. The number of US military casualties stood at 2,999 on the day Saddam was hanged. And the conflict will bleed the US treasury by what will soon be a staggering \$1 trillion. Already a lame duck, now hobbled further by Democrat control of Congress, Bush has lost the backing of most Americans. Saddam's hanging will be of little consolation if Bush is consigned to the dustbin of history. **Mahmood Elahi**
Iris Street, Ottawa, Canada



Saddam's execution

When I heard the news of Saddam Hussein's execution on BBC World I just kept on telling myself how cruel it was to execute a person on the day of the Holy Eid. This could have happened later but it was too cruel to punish a person on Eid day. Saddam definitely was a ruthless dictator. He was punished for the massacre of 150 Shiite Muslims in the town of Dujail. If Saddam Hussein is punished then my question is why should the Western leaders get away with it? The US & the Western leaders supported this same man when Iraq invaded Iran. The West & the US supplied all kinds of chemical & biological weapons to Iraq. Saddam should not be blamed alone. Western & the US politicians should also be captured & punished. Bush is the main culprit for the recent happenings in Iraq. Hundreds & thousands of people's lives have been shattered after the US ruthlessly invaded Iraq in 2003. Now if Saddam is hanged for the killing of 150 people then I must say President Bush deserves similar treatment. **Minhaj Ahmed**
Uttara, Dhaka

Rajuk and building code

A news item which appeared in the Star City section on January 14 titled "Rajuk to warn public against unauthorised developers" was not only alarming but it also shows how incompetent Rajuk is in handling its own job. It is quite amazing to read that despite the non-approval of the designs that is needed to start construction of a building or to sell a piece of land, some big city developers are frequently putting eye-catching advertisements in different newspapers, television channels and in their printed brochures enticing innocent and unsuspecting people to buy their property in total disregard of the existing building rules. Moreover, these companies boastfully claim that their properties are totally secure and duly approved by Rajuk and other concerned authorities. However, in reality their claims are totally false and fabricated. Rajuk, on the other hand, could not take appropriate steps due to their influential connections. Taking advantage of Rajuk's inability to take actions these developers became more daring with their ventures and spread their business. It is said that this malpractice of the developers has the blessings of some corrupt people of Rajuk and people of other related organisations. However, the question is, if Rajuk knows that what

these companies are doing is unlawful then why doesn't it take stern action against these builders? These builders can be taken to the court for defying the building code of the country which is a blatant violation of the laws earmarked by the government for the builders cum developers. I am sure if Rajuk is really sincere in its work and takes drastic measures against these lawbreakers, it would definitely serve as a cautionary notice to others. **Humayun Hyder**
Zigatola, Dhaka

My wishes for 2007

Before I make a wish for myself, I would like to wish Happy Birthday to the Year 2007. I know 2007 will be born to live for a year only, yet I would like to wish a few things that I dream of achieving during the lifetime of 2007. I wish to see the end of the dynastic politics of Khaleda, Hasina, Ershad and their likes. I wish to see the end of all forms of corruption in Bangladesh; I wish to see the Tigers win the World Cup; A little bit more dough in my pocket would be nice as well; I wish to see the complete destruction of tyrants like Bush, Blair, Olmert & their likes. I wish to see the Zionists Empire vaporize in Israel and around the globe. But I have a feeling none of my wishes will come true. **Syed Husain**
Old DOHS, Dhaka

Bangabandhu's return

This day in 1972 was another day of victory for the Bengalees when, after the victory on December 16, 1971, they found their most beloved leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman back to the country. In fact, the joy of defeating the Pakistani occupation forces and winning the homeland of our own from the domination of Pakistanis was not consummated until the return of this great man (honoured/graded by BBC poll as the greatest ever Bengalee) who, for his historic speech of 7 March '71 calling his people for all preparedness to brave and thwart all the evil designs of the Pakistanis and concluding 'the fight this time is for emancipation, is for freedom' and ultimately for his declaration of Independence of Bangladesh in the midnight of 25/26th March '71, was taken prisoner and the Pakistani Military Junta was all set to send him to the gallows. The people of occupied Bangladesh barring the collaborators prayed to the Almighty, many observed fasting, for safety of his life during the whole period of our liberation war, apart from the pressure of the world leaders to save the life of the leader of Bengalees. The new generation must not fail to know the real founder of their nation, though a section of our intellectuals are leading them astray by having our history rewritten. **A. H. Dewan,** *South Kafrul, Dhaka Cantt.*



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