

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.

Tigers make us proud



The Tigers made us proud once again. They have put Bangladesh gloriously on the world map. The victory against the mighty Indians is a dream come true. My Aussie friends never believed that Bangladesh could cause any major upset in the strong group they were in. But the boys did it in a glorious fashion. Right from the very outset it was a different Bangladesh team bubbling with grit, confidence and determination.

Mashrafee disturbed the furniture of a free hitting Sehwag. The Tigers sensed blood and went for the kill. Tendulkar and Dravid were reduced to mere mortals. The entire team raised their game. They bowled with a mission, fielded brilliantly and restricted India to a modest 191. Then Bangladesh chased the target with a definite purpose. Teenager Tamim played a blinder, Saquib was flamboyant, Rahim anchored the innings and the

team humbled the mighty Indians. It was a brilliant all round team effort. Hats off to all our boys. We are the roaring Tigers, we are emerging. Let us dedicate the win to Manzarul Rana. Let us dedicate it to all our martyrs. Let our victory continue.

We can keep our heads high in the cricket world.

Saleque Sufi, On e-mail

Although this win is only the second one for Bangladesh against a Test playing nation in the World Cup, but I must say many more will come in the days ahead. The way our boys are performing in international cricket these days is very encouraging. I do believe that if complacency doesn't cripple our players' minds, then definitely we can hope to beat a few more giants in this World Cup. We all know that our players have the talent & the ability to upset any team of the world on a given day. If our players can apply themselves & play to their full potential like they did on Saturday, they can cause a few more upsets in this World Cup. We, the cricket lovers of this country, are expecting a lot from them.

After the tragic death of fellow cricketer Manjul Islam Rana just a day before the match, the players were shocked. Yet our boys were inspired and eager to win the match to show respect to the departed soul of their colleague. And they did it in grand style.

After losing the toss, Bangladesh had to bowl first & Dravid's poor decision backfired on India. Bangladeshi bowlers took full advantage of the early moisture on the wicket. Mashrafee bowled a dream opening spell after a bit shaky first over. Then everything went in Bangladesh's favour. Indian batsmen were seen helpless to the awesome bowling display by our spinners. Only Saurav Ganguly tried to put up a resistance but was not able to save the skin of his team as the Indian batting line-up folded for only 191 runs in 49.3 overs.

And then our batsmen led by the young trio of Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim and Saqibul Hasan decimated the Indian bowling attack to take us to a well deserved win with nine balls to spare. Our selectors took a very brave decision to select the inexperienced Mushfiq, instead of long standing wicket-keeper Pilot and they had to face severe criticism from cricket lovers for this. But now I must say Mushfiq has proved his critics wrong and I hope he has a very bright future ahead of him. Our selectors, coach, players-- all deserve our kudos for giving us a perfect gift ahead of our Independence Day.

Shahadat Hossain Tanvir
St. Patrick's College, London, UK

Brilliant showing

What a spunky performance from the Bangladesh team in the World Cup! We now have another gritty, spirited and match winning team worthy of respect!

Hope we will have some good cricket in future. Congrats, Bangladesh cricketers..!

Gopal Kamat
Mumbai, India

Footpath issue

With great interest I read in the papers about the misuse of car park space and footpaths in front of many shopping malls. I went to see the demolition work and saw that the driveway in front of a market in Dhanmondi was being partly demolished. Some construction work was going on afterwards and I was under the impression that a proper footpath was being made. To my great surprise, I recently saw that it was not the case. Again a driveway was made where cars could be parked if needed. Yes, I agree, that a certain part is needed for the cars to enter the ground floor, but the entrance could be made on the other side of the building from the side road, so that the main road side of the building is free and can be used properly only as footpath. A footpath should be flat and not slanting like it is made now. It is very difficult to walk on a slanting area. It is very risky and people could easily fall and hurt themselves. There are many proper footpaths on the main road and it should be made like that.

Also, all footpaths in Dhanmondi should be properly maintained. I personally was a victim of a poorly maintained footpath. Because of

unevenness, I twisted my ankle and fell. I was very lucky that my ankle bone was not fractured, but my tendons were stretched and a small piece of bone was chipped off. To heal quickly my left leg (from toe to knee) needed to be plastered for two weeks and I had to use a special crutch for four weeks.

I request the authorities concerned to look into the footpath issue.

Nargis Ahmed
Dhanmondi R/A
Member of Dhanmondi Paribesh Unnayon Jote

A job for the CTG

The quick popularity of the caretaker government is surely due to the fact that it meant business not mincing words like the hitherto incompetent and corrupt governments. They (political parties) resort to perpetual strikes (hartal) and bloodletting in the streets of Dhaka, disrupting life and livelihood of the ordinary people, failing to adjust political discrepancies by democratic means, indulge in rampant corruption, nepotism and cronyism for sons, daughter-in-laws and nephews all around the family circle along with the henchmen/women to cling on to power.

The CTG has a mammoth task ahead but the most urgent job is to ensure the stabilisation of prices of essential commodities.

MA Gafur Howlader
Woodstock Avenue, London

Amartya Sen's philosophy

This refers to the responses of two readers (26/02/2007) following publication my letter under the above title (DS, February 19, 2007).

Thanks to the first respondent Mr. Subhash Ghosh who made some critical observations. Well, the fact is I read both the news reports at a time and was greatly shocked to notice that when Nobel laureate Professor Amartya Sen was preaching his philosophy on the importance of tolerance for establishing peace in Dhaka, a very painful incident showing a higher degree of intolerance took place in Bihar (India). With a sense of deep sorrow I was moved to relate the matter with Prof. Sen's philosophy as I thought it was essential on the part of Prof. Sen to work first for banishing intolerance prevailing between human beings due to caste and class systems.

Mr. Ghosh has questioned me, why Prof. Sen, who had his ancestral home in Wari (Dhaka), was compelled to seek refuge in another country.

Well, this was really an unfortunate incident, but it happened with not only Prof. Sen but many other Hindu and Muslim families who were thrown out of their ancestral homes after the partition of the subcontinent! Meanwhile, when Mr. Ghosh has referred the issue to my desk, I would very honestly request Prof. Amartya Sen to come back to Wari, Dhaka and be one of us. I am sure our country will be honoured to welcome him back to his homeland.

Your second respondent Mr. Munir Chowdhury has termed my write-up as unworthy and out of context. My sincere thanks also to

him for making my unworthy letter worthy by responding through a letter to DS!

Prof. M Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka

Changing for the better

The declaration of the state of emergency totally changed the entire situation in the country. The president and the caretaker government made the right decision and the country is coming back to normalcy. The people of the country are now having a breathing space and peace of mind. And the economy was saved from the turmoil of country-wide hartals and further penalty.

I have been living and working over the last 43 months as VSO volunteer in Bangladesh. I consider the country my second home. I sincerely felt at home and proud to be here. People are very friendly, hospitable and generous. I am currently at my second placement working as Programme Management and M&E Adviser in Uttaran, a regional and rights-based organisation based in Tala, Satkhira, to improve organisational management system, develop policies and assist in project development and implementation. Uttaran's overall goal is to reduce poverty through empowerment of the poor in the southwest region, particularly women, children, religio-ethnic minorities, outcastes, untouchables, landless and persons with disability by implementing holistic programmes and interventions. My journey as volunteer is indeed getting fulfilled amid myriad challenges.

Shahidul Islam
On e-mail

We the common people are very happy with the bold steps taken by the present caretaker government to punish corrupt people who have amassed wealth through rampant and unabated corruption under direct patronisation of various previous governments starting from Ershad's regime.

Please urgently focus on the following areas of black money accumulation and siphoning:

The government should appeal to the Malaysian government to provide the list of individuals who have availed Malaysia's Second Home offer through their official agent. The government should

sphere, which indeed amounts to fulfillment of people's dream. As citizens of a democratic country we all want that the country will be ruled by our elected representatives, who will take care of our needs. But the history of the independent Bangladesh says that most of the politicians, civil officers, law enforcing agencies and our representatives were always busy filling their own fortune bags.

So, what we need to do is, we have to stand by the CTG so that they can do whatever is good for our motherland.

Md. Zahidul Islam Bhuiyan
Dammam, Saudi Arabia

On e-mail

appeal to the UAE government to provide the list of those Bangladeshis who have purchased luxury apartments in Dubai, offered by their local agent through a seminar in hotel Sheraton sometime in mid-2005.

Properties of Police, Customs and Income Tax officers should also be investigated.

And prepare a list of those top civil servants who joined politics from 1980.

Towfiq Sattar
On e-mail

Well done

The recent caretaker government has shown how law and order can be maintained and how the efficiency of the people can be boosted.

I wish this government stayed for a longer period of time which would enable us to breathe

freedom, corruption free air. I am really overwhelmed when I see the law enforcers clearing the roadsides which makes me believe, yes, we can do it, if only we believe in ourselves.

I would also like to appeal to the caretaker government to take action against those people who have made Dhanmondi a commercial area, thus turning the place uninhabitable to the residents.

Mushrooming of community centres not only decreased the beauty of the area but also created unbearable traffic problem for the residents. I believe the government will take action against the violators of the law.

Hats off to the caretaker government for the wonderful work they are doing.

Munna
On e-mail

Bangla calendar and Ekushey

To reform the Bangla Calendar, the then East Pakistan government formed a committee headed by eminent litterateur Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah in 1966. Among the recommendations made by the Shahidullah Committee there were the following.

1. The months of Baishakh-Bhadra will have 31 days, the other months will have 30 days.

2. On Gregorian leap years, Chaitra shall have 31 days.

The Bangladesh government adopted much of the Shahidullah Committee recommendations but made Falgun instead of Chaitra a 31-day month on Gregorian leap years.

The date 21 February happens to be of great importance in our national life, and in 1952 this date was 8 Falgun. According to our present day calendar the 21 February becomes 9 Falgun. This gross mistake made by the policy-makers remains unnoticed to the government till now.

February 21 is now the International Mother Language Day and is observed all over the world. In this situation, many people are unhappy to see 8 Falgun does not fall on 21 February. Moreover, the Bangla calendar here is not accepted in India, where they follow the old one. Thus they observe the Pahela Baishakh on 15 April as us.

I ask the present government of Bangladesh to declare 15 April as Pahela Baishakh of Bangla calendar without changing the other rules of it.

With this the following changes can be materialised.

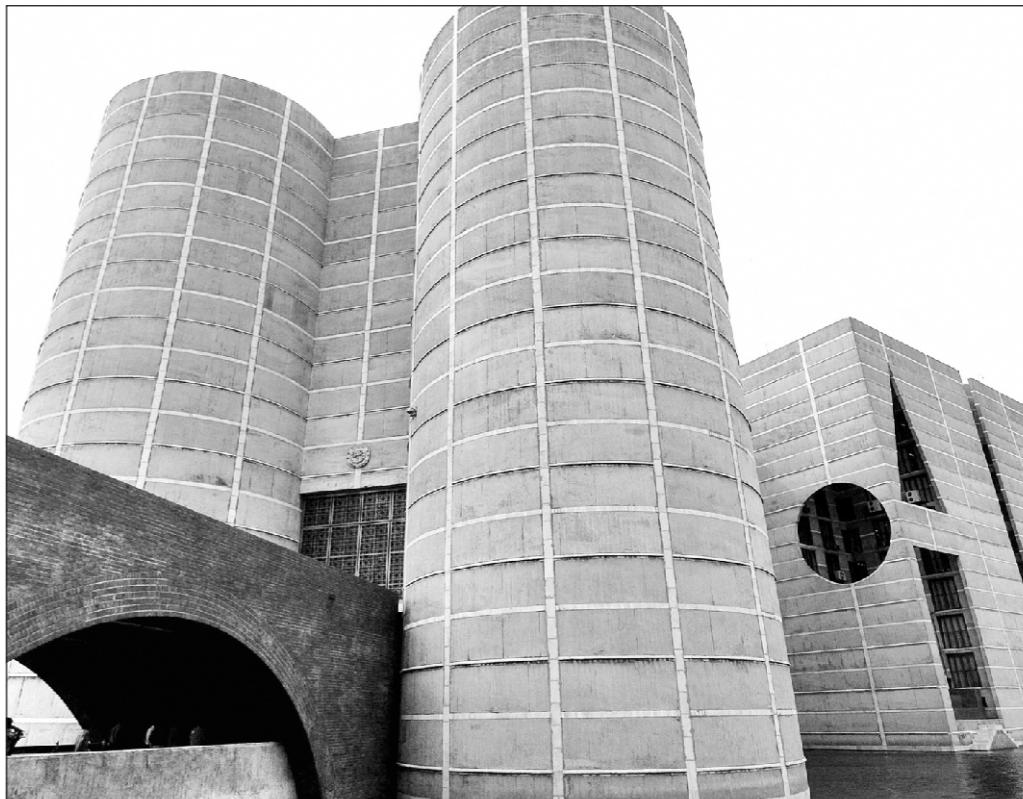
1. February 21 shall be on Falgun 8.

2. People in both Bangladesh and India will observe the Bangla New Year on the same day.

3. The Valentine Day shall be on Pahela Falgun.

M. Inamul Haque
Free School Street, Dhaka

Revive true democracy



The caretaker government, led by Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmad, has taken good care of the country at a time when political squabbles between the two main parties -- BNP and AL -- threatened to destabilise Bangladesh. Dr.

Ahmad should be commended for taking steps to stem rampant corruption by the politicians.

He has also appointed persons of integrity to important positions. It seems that for the first time Bangladesh is trying to address the issues of corruption and misuse of power which have been endemic during both BNP and AL regimes.

Since independence Bangladesh has been facing the dilemma between dysfunctional democracy and military dictatorship.

Democracy is supposed to be a vehicle for public participation in governance. Instead, self-serving politicians turned it into a doormat for the promotion of their own careers. In the process, public participation was completely ignored as politicians and their parties became embroiled in self-destructive partisan wars to win power by any means. And military rule followed.

Although democracy was restored, it remained dysfunctional as the political leaders and their cronies remained embroiled in their partisan wars which made a mockery of democracy and self-government.

In this context, it may be interesting to take a look what former Foreign secretary of Pakistan Humayun Khan wrote about almost similar dysfunctional democracy and autocratic military rule in Pakistan. Writing in The Daily Times, he suggested that to end narrow personal and partisan squabbles by political parties an all national government should be formed "with the condition that no single party,

no matter how large its majority, will get exclusive power. Every party that gets a minimum number of seats will find a position in the cabinet, commensurate with its strength in parliament."

He suggested that each party should submit a panel of names scrutinised by an autonomous, independent board of non-political, eminent citizens who will select from the panel, the most suitable nominees on merit.

Finally, the choice of ministers would be made by the head of the state in consultation with the independent board. This is a very interesting idea which may help to reduce if not totally eliminate bickering and fighting among Bangladesh political parties who are engaged in the most acrimonious bickering that brought the country to a standstill.

The caretaker government should set up such a non-political board before the election can be called. All political parties should be consulted for the formation of the board which will also supervise the Election Commission so that elections can take place without any voting and electoral irregularities.

However, this will be an interim arrangement. Ultimately, democracy must be allowed to function without any constraint. How long the interim arrangements will last will depend on how the political parties behave as custodians of democracy. They must realise that democracy is not a dictatorship of the majority.

Mahmood Elahi
Ottawa, Canada

Formalin menace

We heard alarming news on the electronic media from an expert of the Environment Pollution Control Dept. and a magistrate that consumption of fish or fruit with formalin may cause severe damage to human health. Action

is being taken against fish and fruit sellers. But my point is, do these sellers import formalin? Why are the importers not taken to task?

Mohammad Chowdhury, On e-mail



At first I would like to thank Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmad and his team for their drive against corruption in every

sphere of residential areas

near the tanneries informed the Department of Environmental Protection in Chittagong many times that they were facing serious environmental pollution, but unfortunately they didn't take any action to settle things right.

M. Uddin
On e-mail

CTG and our expectations

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