

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, keep it up!

After the long tour of about two months in the West Indies, Bangladesh cricket team is now homeward and on behalf of all the fans (may be unlike some of them) I want to greet them, "Bravo Tigers!" Expectation was always high and it touched the apex when our cricket team beat India and South Africa. Most of us thought that they were going to play in the semi-finals. Though in some matches the Tigers were outplayed by some strong teams like Australia or New Zealand, they made us realise that they were preparing for the World Cup-2011.

Now, there must be something we have to be concerned about -- why the Tigers were lackluster in some crucial matches and whether they were beaten under pressure due to their inexperienced recruits or anything else.

I personally feel that our BCB management is responsible for the failures. Most of the boys here are still teenagers and yet to reach the age of shouldering responsibility, both physically and mentally. So the board management should have handled the matter with great care. The players are away from home for about two months. They must have been suffering from homesickness (how can we deny that most of them are very young to overcome such psychological impediments?) throughout the World Cup tour where players like Ricky Ponting also expressed his disgust with the intolerable length of the World Cup. Now the refreshed and relaxed India are coming on 7 May. Our players are going to have only 12 days' time to recover from the weariness. It will be a great test for Bangladesh.

Md. Maidul Islam
Department of English, University of Dhaka

Adulteration of foods

The Star Weekend Magazine (April 6) has an article ("What's on Your Plate Today?") with elaborate description of the adulteration processes and methods in just about all-conceivable food items in this country. So, shall we just continue to make such lists or are we ever going to find a way out of this mess? I fail to agree with the VC of Khulna University that, "...only way consumers can save themselves from the effects of adulterated food is by being more conscious about this issue..." Are the consumers expected to be the sole experts and judges against things which may involve even technical sense and knowledge on characteristics of chemicals in some cases? What about the government? On the contrary, I think the government should play the main role here and go for very stringent laws, stern measures and exemplary punishments to stop the unscrupulous producers, suppliers and traders from these evil practices.

How do the authorities of our neighbouring countries take care of such matters?

CNR
Chittagong

Sheikh Hasina stuck abroad

Why has the government decided to bar Sheikh Hasina from returning to

Bangladesh? What allegations are there against her? Is the government trying to establish democracy in a undemocratic way through misuse of power?

This is not the promise that the government had made when they took over power. The problem is nobody is willing to learn from history. Work to establish the human rights, peace, democracy and corruption-free Bangladesh. Give

peace and democracy a chance!
A concerned Bangladeshi
Australia

Case against Sheikh Hasina

Mr. M Hussain from Canada (18 Apr) is amazed that although the Jamaat (the victim party) had filed no charges against Hasina, she has been charged with murder. There is a clear distinction between civil and criminal cases, as the later is conducted and prosecuted by the State on behalf of an orderly society and not by any harmed individuals or their relatives.

Engineer Shafi Ahmed
London, UK

Dr. Yunus' wealth statement

I am an expatriate Bangladeshi and a supporter of Dr. Yunus. I believe he possesses all the qualities to be the leader of "Future Bangladesh." He has the vision of our "Dream Bangladesh" and I am sure that he has prepared his mission already.

I have read the points raised by Mr. Ashikur Rahman in an article published recently. I do fully agree with Mr. Ashik on all the points except the last one he wrote to shut the mouths of the critics. His last point was, "Why does Dr Yunus suddenly need to give the account of his properties? For what reason? Is he filing a nomination paper in an election? Has he been appointed in a government position? Then why did the journalist ask him that question?"

I would like to tell him that if Dr. Yunus' annual income is exceeding the maximum non-taxable amount, he must submit his tax return to the govt. along with his other assets' descriptions. I am sure that as a sincere and honest citizen and future leader of the country he is

already submitting the same to the govt. So no question should be raised in this respect. I believe that Dr. Yunus should in fact declare his properties to public to shut the mouths of his critics and to set an example which will influence other high profile professionals & intellectuals to do the same.

Md. Arifur Rahman
MTCL, Chennai, India

Unfair "deal"

Asking someone to leave his/her homeland is not the right response to crime and corruption. I find no fundamental difference between any such "deal" and a "mastaan" saying to his victim, "Give me the money I want or I will pick up your teen-age daughter."

There are many issues that can be raised here. What has happened to the corrupt civil bureaucracy? How many secretaries have been

prosecuted so far? What about income tax or customs officials who have become filthy rich while serving on very modest salaries?

Nimo Hassan
Sydney, Australia

Our politicians

Our bigwigs of politics have started to come out of their shells and it is time to see how dirty they are.

In the name of development of the nation they just sucked the blood of the people when they were in power. They should get the same punishment as Ershad did after the BNP came to power in 1991.

Rajul Hasan
University of Ballarat, Sydney

Army chief's observations

Gen. Moeen has proven himself to be an outspoken soldier. He has rightly depicted a picture of the present shabby situation of our country. But I wonder he has crossed the Rubicon. Preaching a political thought is a clear violation

of the service norms and contrary to the conduct rules.
Aneeka Rahman
Khulna

Catch the corrupt

May I request Dr. Fakhrudin Ahmed to bring the corrupt among the law enforcers to justice. We know that lots of SIs (sub-

inspectors) even ASIs (assistant sub- inspectors) of police are millionaires. Please catch them. Also please consider introducing a pay scale for them that will enable them to survive.

The war against corruption must be fought on many fronts!
Mohammad Nasir
New York, USA

Violence in Virginia

The latest shooting by a young Korean student at Virginia Technical College killing 33 fellow students and professors brings to mind the 1991 mindless shootout at the Luby's Restaurant at Killeen, near Houston, Texas where a lone gunman, armed with an assault rifle, shot dead 22 staff and customers. Again on Feb. 28, 1993, another shootout at the Branch Davidian cult's compound near Waco rocked the nation.

In an editorial after Waco, the Houston Chronicle railed against the Texan gun culture. Recalling also the massacre at Killeen, the editorial said: "These high-profile slaughters are sickening. But are they really any more so than the slow-motion mayhem going on in virtually every city?"

"A steady drumbeat of violence plays itself out daily, felling our fellow citizens one by one... But society seems to cruise along, largely oblivious to the depth of the problem, until one of these mega-events occurs and then society goes ballistic."

While these observations are largely accurate, society going "ballistic" for gun control may be a pious wish, for most Texans, these bloody shootouts are essentially freak-shows -- something happening to somebody else. Somehow they fail to relate events like Killeen and Waco into their own lives and habits, any more than they do the routine bloodshed on the streets of Dallas and Houston. Perhaps it is because they don't understand or don't care. But perhaps the deeper truth is that Texas doesn't really want to change. Or as Harold Dutton, a former state legislator, remarked: "In Texas, we have this idea that you can mess with my wife and my dog, but don't mess with my pick-up or my rifle." A much more likely outcome may be that the every day, slow-motion shootouts will continue in Texas and there will be more Killeens and Wacos.

The confusion and indifference over what to do about the anarchic proliferation of guns is not confined to Texas. In Washington, the



Brady Bill (a modest gun control measure named after Ronald Reagan's press secretary Jim Brady who was maimed in the 1981 assassination attempt) was allowed to expire by the earlier Republican-dominated Congress. With Democrats now in control of the House, it is hoped they will revive the bill.

The shooting at the Virginia Technical College underscored the absence of gun control in the state. Like Texas, guns can be purchased easily in Virginia and without any background check. It is time for the Americans to wake up to the damage caused by the anarchic proliferation of guns which are increasingly being used by ordinary people to vent their frustration on their fellow citizens. It is time for America to go "ballistic" for gun control.

Mahmood Elahi
Iris Street, Ottawa, Canada

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