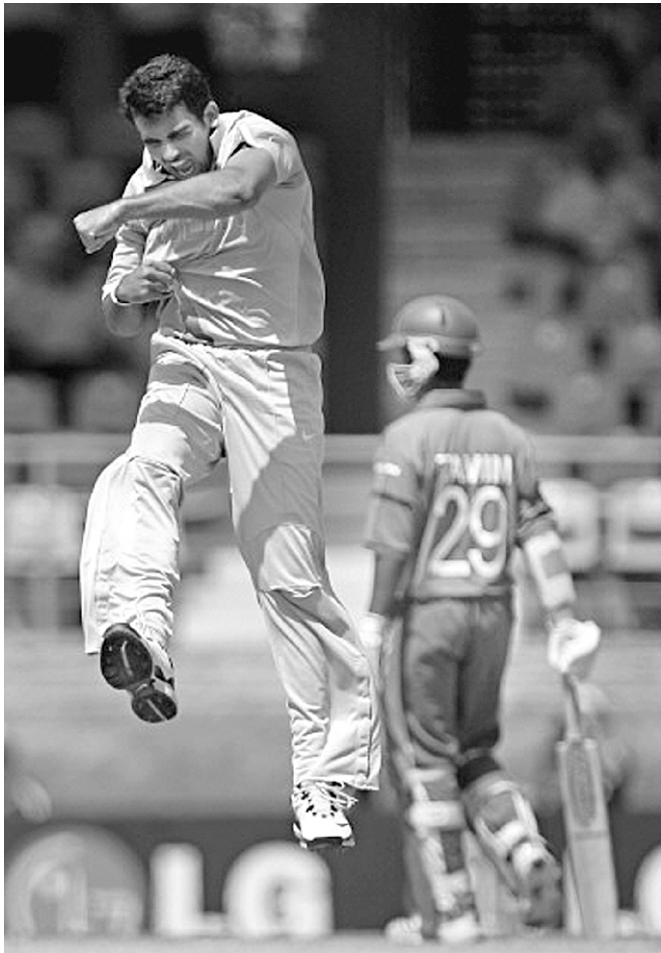


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



World Cup cricket



The debacle of India and Pakistan in the current World Cup disheartened millions of cricket lovers, especially the people of the sub-continent. The attraction of the World Cup has decreased.

The people eagerly wait for long four years to get the opportunity of enjoying the World Cup. Each supporter has his own team or teams of choice. About 1500 million people of South Asia are very keen to watch the event.

Of course, in a game there must be a loser, but if it is India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka or Bangladesh the remaining matches become dull to their supporters. It happens that the supporters do not watch the remaining matches, even on TV. On the other hand the sponsors, advertising firms and the media are left in complete disarray.

The two superpowers of cricket--India and Pakistan-- lost to two emerging powers-- Bangladesh and Ireland respectively in the first round. It is a good sign of competition. Many countries will now be interested in cricket. But due to the disastrous departures of the two cricket giants, the supporters of the two countries have, no doubt, become very frustrated.

In order to make the World Cup interesting, exciting and fascinating the following suggestions may be considered by the ICC:

The present system of grouping for the first round may be continued.

After the first round, there may be scope of elevating two more teams to the second round.

Within those losing 8 teams there may be knock-out play between the first and the last team, second and the second last team and so on. Within the 4 winning teams, two teams can be placed in the second round after knock-out play among themselves. Two or three matches may be held in a day in order to minimise the length of the tournament.

The two winning teams will play with the earlier elevated 8 teams in the second round (which may be termed super-ten).

This will encourage the host countries, sponsors, media and the advertising firms and make the future tournaments more exciting.

Tapan Kumar Baral, Joint Secretary (Retd.), Dhaka

Not a good decision

The government has allowed the shopping malls to remain open all the seven days of the week. But I don't think the revised decision has been hailed by the business community, may be for the following reasons:-

The peak hours of business at the posh shopping centres are in between 1700hrs to 2130hrs of the day. I am sure the shop owners will not mind opening late, say after 12:00 in the day and will definitely prefer to keep the business open till late evening. The hot summer is another good reason for them to expect the majority customers in the evening.

May be it was an oversight, and the authorities did not consider that the large number of poor salesmen and all other workers employed in the shopping malls will be deprived of their one day weekly off as a fallout of the decision. In this country in many private factories, industries and other business establishments/offices etc poor workers are intimidated to work all the seven days and even without any compensation/overtime. Hope, The CTG will address this fundamental issue. By keeping shops open all 7days more electricity will be consumed with no tangible gain for the business community. True, load shedding has been brought down considerably to the great relief of all. Credit goes to the CTG for efficient planning and resolving this perennial problem.

So, I appeal to Adviser Tapan Chowdhury to review the decision and make it a pragmatic one.

Mohammed Zakaria
East Shewrapara

Mirpur, Dhaka

Pakistan and Saarc spirit

The Saarc summit ended in New Delhi. A joint statement has been issued and a rosy picture has been painted. The leaders have promised many wonderful things. Let me point it out that when Pakistan was created in 1947 by dividing the British-ruled India, there was no mention or discussion of any cooperation between the emerging countries.

The eastern wing of Pakistan separated from West Pakistan to become Bangladesh in 1971. First, the language issue was a stumbling block. The East Pakistanis believed that the western wing and its leaders were trying to impose the Urdu language on them. The biggest problem at that time was disparity. The disparity between West Pakistan and East Pakistan. West Pakistan, especially Karachi, was industrialised because of the fact that many businessmen and industrialists from India moved to Karachi. Most head offices of the banks and industries were based in Karachi. This led towards the separation of the two wings. The autocratic General Yahya Khan of Pakistan didn't know what he was doing. He unleashed a horrendous crackdown on innocent Bengali people.

Language and culture were the cause of the disintegration of Pakistan and Saarc can't fill this gap.

Sadat Ali Khan
Pakistan

Don't occupy open spaces

We used to enjoy gathering in open fields in the afternoon. Boys and girls were playing their various games and sports. It helped them to grow up with a strong physical and mental health. Now every open space is being occupied.

The city planners should look into the matter.

Mohammad Anisur Rahman
Abdul Goni Road, Paharati Chittagong

Politics as usual?

Is the honeymoon of trust and hope coming to an end? The glorious battle against corruption that promised a new beginning was vastly diluted, if not put under question mark, when a confirmed young brigand was apprehended and released to negotiate a "departure deal". If there are valid charges of corruption against an individual and a leader, why should not they be prosecuted under the law of the land to make an example instead of sending them off on a paid vacation? What assures that they will not return at some point as grudge-bearing heroes?

If for one leader there was "negotiation," for another leader there was downright arbitrariness.

Again, if that individual has committed a wrong, she should face the laws of the nation and not a group of MPs in a foreign country. The equation of our national crisis as the quarrel between two women is naïve and downright misleading, and deliberately ignores the deeply entrenched disease amidst us.

The moral uprightness, the ethical resolve and the palpable transparency that the current government presented and promised show signs of strain, and we are left wondering if after all the hoopla and expectation, it is going to be politics as usual.

KA, USA

National dress

This issue has been debated for a long time. I believe we can adopt the dress worn by Prof. Yunus at the Nobel Prize giving ceremony.

We may adopt it as the national dress.

Shafiq Ur Rahman
On e-mail

Political developments

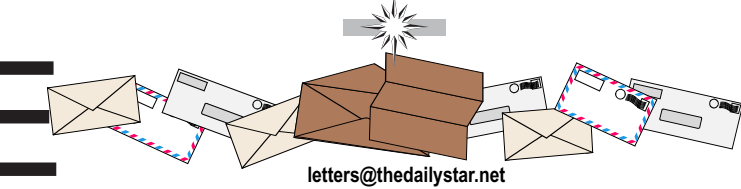
Recent events in Bangladesh have turned me into a begrudging pessimist with respect to establishment of a democratic civil society providing basic economic security and dignity to the country's poor. I am referring to the effort by the government to muzzle the right to free speech and freedom of association. As I noted in a previous letter to you, such actions will only strengthen the hands of the extremists and undemocratic forces and lead Bangladesh down an abyss. In the failed attempt to exile Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia, I observe a parallel with the actions taken by the present Pakistani military ruler, Pervez Musharraf, in forcing into exile Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto.

I vividly remember when the Pakistani dictator, Ayub Khan, first came to power, his primary focus was on rooting out corruption and we all know how it all ended corruption, nepotism and arbitrary rule became the basis of his dictatorship. **Shahed Nasrullah**
On e-mail

Voting right for expatriate Bangladeshis

The news that the Election Commission is considering giving right to the Bangladeshi expatriates to vote in the election must be taken with a grain of salt. It is widely known how divided the Bangladeshi communities are already along the lines of political affiliation, internal fighting, creation of political party chapters without the approval of the governments, and widespread absence of trust among the community members. We do not want more division. We want our children and ourselves to remain out of the mainstream of Bangladeshi politics and concentrate on the work we are happy with. To have political consciousness is not the same as engaging in politics directly or supporting a group or the other in Bangladesh through exercising the voting right. We are happy to be called Bangladeshi Americans, or Bangladeshi Canadians or Bangladeshi Australians.

This decision of the EC will certainly help new parties or other civil society oriented groups to command huge votes in their favour from the 77 lakh or more voters but will this do justice to Bangladesh? The voice of the downtrodden in Bangladesh, our 'khete khaoa manusher' vote should not be hijacked by the expatriate Bangladeshis, many of whom do not even care about the country's future, let alone being able to read or write Bangla. The EC must also consult with the governments of the foreign



Wrong information in textbook

In the English Text book of NCTB, meant for the students of class 11and 12, there is a Unit titled World Heritage which includes a lesson "A Testimony of Mughal Architecture". This lesson contains a description of Shatgambuj Mosque of Bagerhat, built by Khan Jahan Ali. In this text the mosque is termed as a Mughal architectural site.

According to the Banglapedia Khan Jahan Ali built the said mosque in 1450 and he breathed his last in 1459, while Babar the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India was born in 1473. That , Khan Jahan Ali, who came to this part of the world during the rule of Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah, died fourteen years before Babar was born! Is it appropriate to categorize the mosque constructed by him as a specimen of Mughal architecture?

Textbooks are supposed to provide authentic information as these are used by thousands of students across the country. If these books serve wrong information, then the young generation will remain confused about their past. This certainly doesn't serve the purpose of teaching them about their heritage.

ZabedWali
Paharatali, Chittagong

countries before such voting rights are granted as some countries do not allow such rights for its citizens who may be allowed a dual citizenship but not a dual voting right. Australia is one such country.

Please do your homework before jumping to please a section of the expatriate Bangladeshis. Do not divide our happy community. The news of this voting right has overnight caused some tension among the community groups in Australia. This should not happen.

Dr Raihan Hossain
Australia

US Ambassador's comments

I am again dumbfounded by the statements of the US Ambassador in Dhaka, Patricia Butenis, at a meeting with the Chief Election Commissioner. She urged the EC to declare a timeframe when the elections are likely to be held, because the people of Bangladesh want to know it. One question has popped up in my mind. Is she capable of reading the minds of 140 million people within such a short time?

She also said that the people are concerned about the election. I am confident that if there is a referendum, above 95% people will vote against any election within three years. I am often astounded by the interfering attitude of the ambassadors of the various countries like US, UK, EU etc regarding our internal affairs. Their intervening attitude about our domestic politics has reached such an extent that it seems to me whether we are a truly independent country. But these foreign diplomats never dare to speak anything about the internal affairs of our neighbouring country, India.

Now consider the economic superpower, China, a communist country, which is progressing rapidly superseding the existing economic superpowers. We can also cite the example of another communist country, Vietnam that is also developing by leaps and bounds. So democracy is not the only way to peace, progress and prosperity. Bangladesh where most of the people are illiterate & poor will not flourish under the present democratic system.

We, the peace loving people of Bangladesh, wholeheartedly support the activities of the present interim government backed by the army and other law enforcement agencies. We don't want any election within three years but want to see more positive changes in every area, particularly in our democratic system so that terrorists, extortionists and corrupt people can never plunder our beloved motherland. **SM Mostafizur Rahman Palash**
Khalishpur, Khulna

Attention: BCB

This is an open letter to the BCB. We Bangladeshis often react prematurely and act out on our emotions. I urge the BCB to be careful and think twice before making any decision regarding the coach of Bangladesh cricket team. In my humble opinion, Dav Whatmore is the best thing that has happened to the Tigers. Even though it was a little disheartening to hear about his decision to quit his present assignment, but as a human being I guess everyone wants to be challenged. The nation should not point fingers at the coach on the basis of one or two games. Look at our performance as a whole -- we have gone so far but we also have so much to accomplish!

We should not be arrogant but work with the coach to come to a solution that is best for our team.

If we have someone like Dav Whatmore, why not go for a good showing in 2011!

Tahsin Alam
Boston, USA

Factory in a residential area

Rajabazar under PS Tejaogaon is a densely populated residential area. Would you believe that right at the centre of this locality there is a big garment factory! It is surrounded on all sides at arm's length by multi-storied residential buildings. The factory operates 7 days a week and has more than one thousand employees. The factory has been causing serious pollution to the environment. The level of sound is extremely high accentuated by music played belligerently aloud for recreation of workers. Air which is exhausted at the back by five big fans making enormous sounds is highly polluted. Those of us who reside in adjacent flats are living in conditions of exasperation and anguish. In particular, lives of the aged and children are completely devastated. A child has meanwhile lost hearing due to sound. Hearing of the aged is seriously affected.

We lodged complaints many a time to the authorities concerned, but to no avail. The irony of it is that the Department of the Environment itself accorded approval to the factory.

We appeal to the higher authorities to look into the matter and take corrective measures.

Rezaul Karim
Tejgaon, Dhaka

Weaknesses of the caretaker govt.

By Fakhruddin Ahmed taking over as chief adviser to the caretaker government, a focus on the country's successes and failures may be considered timely. As always, the caretaker system is not only the victim of the circumstances but also vulnerable.

Let us see how he handles and changes the country. **S.M. Masum Billah**
Faculty of Agriculture
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka

US visa for

Bangladeshi students

I have carefully gone through a press release recently issued by Ms Elizabeth P. Gourlay of the US Embassy, Dhaka which was published in a number of English language dailies.

I am much glad to learn that the US government has taken various measures to ease the visa obtaining system for the foreign students intending to pursue higher education in American institutions.

Meanwhile, I heard from some students that the Embassy takes a long time to process visa applications of those students who were born in middle-eastern countries.

In fact, many people from Bangladesh go to the middle-eastern countries for employment. Sometimes they bring their spouses to live with them. Hence, their children are born there. There is no doubt that these children live as bona fide residents in those countries where their parents went for the sake of their jobs.

May I request the authorities concerned of the US Embassy in Dhaka to please look into the matter and help genuine Bangladeshi students obtain visa in time without facing any problem.

Zahidul Haque
Chairman
Department of Language
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka

Save "Binod Bibi Mosque"

It is well documented and known, that the Binod Bibi Mosque, which was constructed by Bakht Binat, daughter of Marhamat was built in 1457. Renowned historian Hassan Dani firmly points out that, "The two domed mosque is the earliest existing mosque in Dacca." The mosque has more architectural and archeological value than other surviving mosques, because it is the only surviving pre-Mughal structure in

Dhaka. The mosque is well documented in all books of history dealing with Dhaka, and its importance cannot be questioned. After the construction of a new building nearby, last year the old mosque was abandoned, and in recent months it is on the verge of destruction. Already the mihrab of the structure has been torn down. Other segments including the inscription (which was documented by famous historian and ephigraphist HE Steptellon) will vanish within weeks. I urge the Director General of the Department of Archeology and Museum and the Adviser to the Cultural Ministry to take immediate steps to stop the destruction of this mosque, and to preserve it as a protected monument and a heritage site.

The mosque has survived for 500 years. We should protect it.

Ishtiaque Ahmed Khan
Member of the ASB
Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society

CA's visit to Bangabandhu's mazar

In the last five years, the BNP-led alliance government made it one of their agenda how to delete Bangabandhu's name from the pages of history and denigrated him in all possible ways without any scruple. So his name was forbidden from being uttered in the state-run TV. They even went further ahead to do violence to the Mukti Juddher Dalipatra and to the Constitution by deleting from them the proclamation of Independence by Bangabandhu and installation of the Mujibnagar government on April 17, 1971. Any survivor of the tumultuous days of March 1971 going down his memory lane would simply find how the towering Sheikh Mujib caught the attention of the whole world as the sole leader of the seven crore people of the then East Pakistan.

The nation was really happy and it was really a moment of rhapsody to

see the honourable CA showing respect to the great leader.

We can hope that the CA will also visit the grave of the announcer of our independence message and great freedom fighter-- late President Ziaur Rahman.

We could not understand why the CA could not be flanked by his colleague advisers in offering fateh at the mazar. It is, however, comforting that the CA and the council of advisers have ordered the PWD to look after the maintenance of the grave that the BNP had left out in the cold. Finally, I cannot but say that that we were dismayed at our President's failure to send a message on the occasion.

Ahmed Niaz
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

To the top two...

Through this daily I would like to earnestly request the two very respectable leaders of AL and BNP to resign from their parties and take a permanent leave of absence from politics.

It is about time they realized that their brand of divisive politics that condones corruption in the name of rewarding loyalty is not good for a country as fragile as Bangladesh. Our country is in a very delicate state right now and could very well take a turn for the worse if these two leaders start creating trouble with their fiery rhetoric.

The country and its hapless people will be well served if, just for once, they sat down alone and thought about all the damage they have collectively done to the economy and to the future of Bangladesh. Any leader with a minimal sense of pride and shred of value would have long resigned their positions out of shame and disdain over what their followers have done. I can't help but wonder how overwhelming the hunger for power has to be to have blinded these leaders.

But to say the least, what sickens me most are the spineless fringe politicians from both the parties who claim that their parties would cease to exist if these ladies are not their leaders any longer. What a shame!!! Be a Bangladeshi for once in your life and ask your Leader(s) to step down because they failed everybody so miserably.

Babar Anwar
Mississauga, Ontario

Anti-graft drive

The government's anti-corruption drive lacks experience. It is understandable that everybody could not be a jack of all trades, while the objective remains to catch the corrupt, to bring the perpetrators to justice, no matter how slow the pace of progress and how much time it takes. The high profile Mafias who have been involved in corporate corruption would be harder to tackle, needing the specialist to investigate with meticulous details to apprehend the criminals.

"The NBR has been twisting and twirling its moustaches to swoop upon the suspected tax dodgers during the caretaker government when the MPs would have no power." This powerful institution was made a puppet of the corrupt government to suit its objective.

The whole of Bangladesh is behind the CTG, supporting the crusade against corruption and installation of democracy. You have created a new chapter in the political history and the younger generation would salute you as the saviours of their national identity and dignity.

A new dawn is heralding with the formation of a party by Dr. Yunus-- "Nagorik Shakti" with honest and competent people onboard to carry on (hopefully) the mantle from the CTG after the general election to build a prosperous Bangladesh.

MA Gafur Howlader
Woodstock Avenue,
London

