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# A democratic government



## Tejgaon College

The situation at the Tejgaon College is very unclear now. In our opinion a better solution lies in an amicable settlement between the feuding parties through a direct intervention of the Ministry of Education and National University.

The Ministry of Education may kindly constitute a committee comprising members from the Ministry and the National University for a peaceful solution of the issue.

**M Sadeq**  
Chairman, Dept of Management  
Tejgaon College  
Dhaka

## US Immigration Bill

No. The majority of Americans do not support the current so-called immigration bill that's in the Senate. The survey they gave and (you have to remember the source) was in the wording of the questions they asked. All the questions were asking about "immigrants", not illegal aliens which is what the bill in the Senate is about, which is to give amnesty to the estimated 21 million illegal aliens in the United States. Of course we would want to support the immigrants in our country, not illegal aliens; but the survey was created this way to be intentionally misleading. This is common in American media. And as a side note, the media in America today does not represent the American people. I know that sounds funny, but that's the way it is for now.

**John Campbell**  
Colorado

## A success story

Have you ever considered publishing feature stories to introduce those Bangladeshis (such as myself) who have successfully attained and secured a major leadership stand on a foreign soil? This question recently struck me when I was reported by my company's marketing/PR division (a financial institution of \$217 million asset size, 6th largest within the field of my business in the State of Iowa) who is about to launch a year-round branding campaign to introduce me as their first, female President/CEO and one of the noted Iowa female leadership faces to Iowa commu-

nities. An interesting aspect of this branding campaign is my native origin (Bangladesh) will be cited as part of my career profile. This is a proud moment for me, especially being a Bangladeshi female residing in a foreign land and yet able to conquer such glorified corporate leadership pomp and grandeur against all odds. During my long executive leadership journey in the US, I have had the opportunity to mingle and socialize with various noted corporate leaders, decision makers, legislators, etc. on a regular basis. I have noticed firsthand, what kind of poor perception educated western movers and shakers of the society in today's modern day and age have about Bangladesh and its citizens. It saddened me when I encountered such ignorance of the western world! I often wonder what is the reason behind such negative image! On a positive note Prof. Yunus' recent global recognition was definitely a proud moment for all Bangladeshis around the world.

I have not visited Bangladesh in the last 9 years and have no direct family residing in Dhaka anymore. However, the patriotism, loyalty and special bond I share with my nation- Bangladesh and its golden soil where my father and four fathers rest in peace will always remain unparalleled and unconditional in my heart. I am proud of my nationality and will continue in my endeavor to educate westerners on the positive essence of Bangladesh.

**Shazia Manus**  
Ames, Iowa, USA

## Optimal strategy

It is quite evident that what has happened since 11th January 2007 is nothing short of a revolution. It is an upsurge of popular sentiment against corruption. However, now that we have a government that is dedicated in its drive against corruption, I want to ask what is the optimal strategy?

Economists and political scientists have argued that corruption is harmful for sustainable development as it distorts private and foreign investment.

However, we have to keep in mind that the policies that we adopt to reduce corruption should in no way reduce the 'animal-spirit' in the economy. That is, the drive against corruption

should avoid measures that are harmful for growth. Therefore, we should avoid all those measures that involve making our bureaucracy more rigid in the name of promoting transparency. Furthermore, we should also avoid going back to the 'over-regulating' attitude as history suggests that such attitude can only promote further corruption in future. I repeat in line with our Chief Advisers' statement that corruption is a product of greed and so it cannot be totally eliminated. Hence, I will request our caretaker government to adopt the optimal policies by considering the consequences of its actions in all dimensions.

**Ashikur Rahman**  
London School of Economics, UK

## Bangladesh first

Corruption, deception, exploitation, lack of respect for the law etc are all well entrenched among the most privileged class of the nation. Without force, this habit will never change. Leaders must lead a nation to emancipate it from poverty, hunger, inequality. But they have failed completely to deliver. The present caretaker government, a rare chance for millions of innocent Bangladeshis, should never give up. Put Bangladesh first, regardless of all obstacles. Your contribution will be remembered for years to come.

We are tired of being labeled as the most corrupt, and poor country. We live in shame abroad for being a Bangladeshi.

Let's try to put an end to this situation.  
**Rabindra Bhattacharjee, Ph.D.**  
Research Scientist  
Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)  
Osaka University, Osaka, JAPAN

## ID cards

It is quite baffling to read the news that the voter list and the National ID could be produced in 5-6 months by the army. What is going on?

We had heard lot of exciting news about National ID & Voter ID, that these could be produced in the quickest possible time and so on!! But the whole thing appears to be a hoax.

Please do not make any more mistakes and spoil money, rather stay put and wait for the righting thing do.

**M Razzaque**  
UK

## Habibul Bashar

Bangladeshi cricketer's non-performing skipper, Bashar, has struck again! After all the excuses he made about how he is a Test batsman and not a one-day player, he played a highly irresponsible stroke to be out for a second ball DUCK in the first Test in Chittagong. It was an unbelievably loose stroke at a critical juncture of the match.

Now he has started on a new theory, that if Sourav Ganguly does not retire then why should he? What a joke!

I mean to compare Sourav Ganguly's record as a cricketer with that of Bashar is a farce. What next, he will not give up the captaincy as long as Ricky Ponting remains the captain of Australia? The man has completely failed as a batsman in ODI and now his poor form and worse mental strength have carried over to Test cricket. I am not even going to talk about his very negative captaincy and attitude that cost us the first one-day match against India.

A good government elected in a free fair election is the desire of the fourteen crore people of Bangladesh. It is unfortunate that the people are yet to see a government for the people, though we have seen government of the people & by the people. A government by the people, of the people & for the people -- this great statement was made by American President Abraham Lincoln one & a half century ago & still it holds good for a correct definition of a good government.

Now look at the position of our previous government. It would have been good for us if we could say those running the government were good. But some of the events prevent us from doing so. It is true that not all of them in the government were bad. Because of the presence of some good & dedicated men, though very few, we could see some good work in some of the fields. In some sectors our achieve-

ment was much better than our neighboring countries. Thanks to those men who despite many odds could do something for the people. But all our achievements are overshadowed by the activities of some dishonest men in the government which led our country to occupy the top position in corruption. We cannot but say sorry to them & do not want to see them again in the next government. The present caretaker government is doing everything possible to hold a free, fair and impartial election in the country. Many of their steps have been appreciated both nationally & internationally.

We hope our next elected government will have honest people in it. Let us have a government that will really be for the people.

**M. A. Alim**  
Ex. Bank Executive  
Tejgaon, Dhaka

That Bangladesh did well in the World Cup was despite having Bashar in the team and not because of him! Will someone in BCB please wake up and get us a new captain? Not just for the ODIs but for the Test team as well. There are plenty of candidates. Bangladesh cannot afford a non-performing captain.

**Sam Abedin**  
San Francisco, USA

## Tourism promotion

Why don't you pursue the govt. to introduce extensive tourism promotion as well as infrastructure development of the tourist spots in Bangladesh? Our neighbouring country Myanmar has launched a massive tourism promotion programme, whereas we are still stuck in the Stone Age. Why don't you shake the administration up to do something better for the country and the people.

Can't the newspapers like The Daily Star and Prothom Alo start a campaign and ask the government to adopt an effective tourism promotion plan?

**Tariful Islam**  
One-mail

## Dhanmondi roads

I am glad that Dhaka Metropolitan Police has decided to make certain roads in Dhanmondi one-way. That is something I had suggested in a letter to your newspaper after a visit to Dhaka back in 2004. It seems like the best solution to the traffic congestion issue inside the residential area.

Looking at the map printed in your May 3rd issue, I don't understand as to why the authorities have decided to break up the direction of the traffic flow in the middle of Road numbers 7A through 12A? What purpose does that serve? That makes the traffic flow more confusing. Wouldn't it be better if all the traffic on those streets flowed in one direction between Shat Masjid Road and Women's Sports Complex? People traveling from one end to the other on those streets could drive straight through, without having to take any turn.

This would result in smoother traffic flow, with less congestion at the intersections.

**Waseem Khan**  
Los Angeles, California, USA

## Billboards removed

During my recent visit to the port city, it was truly a pleasant surprise to see changes for the better on the streets of Chittagong caused by removal of all the billboards. The Tiger Pass hills covered with gigantic boards glaring at you have been removed and you can enjoy the scenic beauty of the hills. The medians have been cleaned of the boards which gives an openness. The bill boards almost choked the huge rain tress that beautified the islands at the entrance of the Tiger Pass from Agrabad. They are all dead now.

There are still some more boards around, which I hope will soon be taken care of. The opposition to billboards has been not only for aesthetic reasons but also for driver's safety. I hope they will not make a comeback and the Dhaka City lords should take a lesson from Chittagong.

Thanks to whoever took the decision to get rid of these ugly boards.  
**Akku Chowdhury**  
Banani, Dhaka

## 27th BCS

I guess specific allegation(s) had been received by the competent

authorities which caused the health check-up being postponed in the midway for the successful candidates of the 27th BCS. I think the investigation could have been done without stopping the health check-up. Because health check-up is not the final stage of appointment. Even after issuance of appointment letter, if anybody is found guilty the authorities reserve the right to cancel the appointment. Medical check-up

and police verification take a lot of time. My humble suggestion is that if the authorities are convinced that they will not arbitrarily cancel the 27th BCS but still collect information of gross irregularities, then the procedures, like health check-up, police verification, etc should continue. Finally, the guilty candidates should be eliminated/penalized. Thus the innocent candidates can get rid of tension, age problems and wastage of time. Due to the unusual delay in the 27th BCS, circular of 28th BCS cannot be published and a huge number of students are being deprived of the chance of appearing in the exams.

It is my firm belief that the caretaker government is neutral and it will not do any injustice to anybody.

**A successful candidate of 27th BCS**  
One-mail

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It is said that about 5,000 candidates who scored well in written test of the 27th BCS were given below 40 marks in the viva voce as they didn't pay bribe. If they got only 40 marks in the viva voce, many of them would have got the job. At the same time, many candidates got 80% or 90% in viva voce although they did not do well in the written exams. Obviously, the quota system for the freedom fighters' sons & daughters is one of the most commendable steps to improve their poor fate indirectly, as most of our freedom fighters are not leading a decent life. But it is a matter of great regret that allegation is there that many of freedom

fighters' sons & daughters were not given the qualifying marks.

This is a strange thing that a candidate, who scored 60% to 65% marks in all the subjects, got below 40% in the viva voce while a candidate, who scored only 45% marks in the written test, got more than 80% marks in the viva voce.

The PSC should investigate the whole thing and do justice to all the candidates.

**Tamanna Rahman**  
Department of Pharmacy  
University of Dhaka

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It has been learned from the newspapers that the new chairman of PSC has said that the fate of the 27th BCS exams will be decided after consultation with three groups i.e. the successful and unsuccessful candidates as well as the media. It is good news that the genuine and meritorious students will get appointed in the cadre service. The new chairman deserves credit for this. But the way the matter is being handled needs rethinking. Here there is also scope for manipulation by any of the sections/groups. It is being heard that some stakeholders are working to organise groups in their favour and contacting with candidates of the 27th BCS to obtain opinions in favour of their position. Already there are a number of groups for and against cancellation of the exams. They definitely will not leave any stone unturned to get a decision in their favour. The genuine candidates may not be interested in any such exercise.

The PSC may make the list of candidates allowing only those who obtained 50% marks in the written test. Here there will be no question of injustice to anybody. The authorities can consider the proposal.

**M. Omar Faruq Khan**  
East Razabazar, Dhaka

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Opportunity never comes again and again. I am referring to the talk of canceling the 27th BCS

## Save the playgrounds

A few weeks back, I happened to know about a recent initiative taken by the National Housing Authority to demolish a beautiful playground in Mirpur-2 for establishing a shopping complex in the area. The idea bothered me because every time the NHA and RAJUK come up with new schemes on lame excuses of developing the lands of Dhaka city, their motives are quite different from what they claim to establish. They are actually favouring the rich businessmen who cannot resist the temptation of lucrative opportunities of profit-making. The government housing authorities facilitate them by grabbing lands which are taken over on false pretence of public-amenity development. Now the NHA has uprooted hundreds of trees turning a children's park into a commercial shopping centre under the name of Dhaka Urban Infrastructure Development project. I don't think that this would mean much improvement because the city needs playgrounds and botanical gardens to have an environmental balance as it is getting overpopulated and congested day by day. The recent project of NHA will surely deprive the children from having the little source of entertainment that they used to have.

Beautification of the country should not merely be confined to constructing multi-storied buildings but also preserving the limited natural resources that we have, be it the green trees or the playgrounds.

**Naome Syed**  
Mohammadpur  
Dhaka

Most of the people in our country only talk about corruption that reportedly took place in the viva voce. But the bottom line is that this examination was not fair enough-controversy started from the leakage of question papers. I think this was done in a very clever way. That is why students got the question papers after 3.00am before the exam day, so that no newspaper could publish any report regarding this matter.

Now this is the time for the PSC to set things right.

**Neyamul Hasan**  
Dhaka

## Education

The key components of education are 'Teaching' and 'Learning'. Students never stop; they are learning, though the procedure may not always be right. What is the ultimate goal of the government in the education sector? Is it creating a scope for unemployed people? If so, the quality of education wouldn't be a real factor. If the goal of education is to build up the people as human resource, a lot of things will have to be achieved through proper planning.

**Md. Saydul Huq**  
Technical Officer-Education  
Dhaka

## Hats off to Mashrafe

I believe, never before in the history of Bangladesh cricket, tail enders salvaged a big international match, against a top team of the world, by their batting, avoiding an inevitable-looking follow on and an ignominious defeat in the Chittagong Test. When the top order totally failed to make any kind of impression, Mashrafe came in as the no. 8 with the score of 122 only on the board. There was a real possibility of a follow-on. Then Shakib, followed by Rafique were out at 149 when Shahadat came and joined Mashrafe. Not many people at that time believed that follow-on could be avoided. But then the largest partnership of 77

between Mashrafe and Shahadat eventually saved the day. Mashrafe, basically a bowler, played like a 'Pucca' batsman at the most critical period of the match, like his play in the last ODI -- four sixes in four balls! Mashrafe initially (very rightly) played defensively, blocking the ball skillfully when required to do so. At this time I remembered the great Hanif Mohammad's defensive blocks that I had seen myself on the ground. Then I was surprised to see Mashrafe opening up. Not only did he defend his wicket successfully but started getting runs as well, hitting boundaries and sixes. If somebody who didn't know him, he would have thought him to be a master batsman, not a bowler. He has indeed now blossomed into an all rounder.

Perhaps from now on the captain and selectors could think of elevating Mashrafe in the batting order.

I must do justice by adding that it was not only Mashrafe's innings of 79 but also Shahadat's inning of 31, (77 runs together) and his support which made it possible on that day to avoid the follow-on and eventually to get a draw from a seemingly lost match.

I know what games can be like (because I was captain of two national teams of two different games, and President of the Bangladesh Basketball Federation for 11 years, and member of the National Sports Council and Olympic Committee). Therefore I would not dismiss off our batsmen for this failure on a particular day. Rather, I would add the words of Mashrafe himself in one of his interviews "Perhaps it was not their day, but who knows they may come good tomorrow and may be some other day they will cover up my failure."

I congratulate Mashrafe and Shahadat and it was of course very right that Mashrafe got the Man of the Match award.

**R Ahmad**  
Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka

## Electricity conservation

At long last, the PDB, the sleeping giant (Electric power wise), has wakened up to the acute paucity of power (15 May). They plan to motivate their customers to reduce power consumption at all points of use.

Let us hope it brings some relief, anticipating the summer heat due any day now making our lives miserable. However, the PDB should take up the case with the government, and the interested private sector to reduce the cost of batteries and inverters (UPS). In a sense, this will enable each house to have its own virtual pollution free power generation source during load-shedding, based on each household's minimum needs; giving back up power say for 4 to 6 hours (maximum).

Another issue is to increase the awareness of energy efficient drives, particularly for the new industries being set up. Also, we must identify most energy efficient makes and models of ACs, fans, refrigerators and other common home and office appliances. These identified brands of products should then have a preferential lower import duty and taxes to make it attractive for potential customers. This can easily be done by Buet in its Electrical & Electronic Engineering Department.

This is an overdue exercise. It may cost at most Tk 30 to 40 lakh to have samples of various models of equipment of identical capacity and finding their energy efficiency. Compared to the long term benefits it is really chicken-feed. The government should immediately finance this exercise at Buet on a topmost priority basis!

**S.A. Mansoor**  
Gulshan, Dhaka

# Credible election

The Daily Star editorial of 13 May emphasizes the need for quick holding of election. It focuses, as I understand, on a credible election, not a traditional election that we experienced in the past.

Credible election demands identifying every single corrupt politician. They have to be declared ineligible by appropriate electoral laws, alongside preparing a correct voter list and ensuring that each voter exercises his voting right. Illegal money and muscle power must not play any role in the election process.

These are preconditions for holding a credible election. The government has to efficiently deal with these issues so that it can hold election in the shortest possible time. The ACC has a significant role in this regard. The eighteen months timeframe foreseen by the EC for holding a credible election is logical as I guess from the recent statement of the ACC chairman, that corruption in the country is so deeply rooted that mass participation is essential to eradicate it from society. The corruption cycle has to be broken before holding any election; otherwise credible election will remain an elusive goal.

Now an atmosphere has been

