



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.

Voter list

I fail to understand what is the problem if voters application forms are distributed to all municipalities and city corporations holding numbers with request to residents to submit the voters forms duly filled in along with two passport size photographs. The Election Commission people can deliver the form to residents and collect it back after a week. Those who cannot submit forms with photographs can go to special camps and

get photographed. This can be a small beginning before moving for voter list at village level. If western embassies here can issue digital visa stickers with photographs of passport holders on it, why can't the Election Commission do likewise for identity cards? Private data processing firms can also be employed to process voters application forms and identity card. I feel in the present era of high tech this is not that big a job or problem as

the Election Commission seems to be facing. I hope all letters in your daily on this particular subject will draw the attention of the Election Commission. After all, opinions of would-be voters should also be taken into consideration. Why wait for only politicians' opinions?
Ziauddin Ahmed
On e-mail

pete for the next BCS exams. I have to depend largely on public jobs because the private sector is still offering only a limited number of jobs. Please create an environment where we can compete for jobs in a fair way.
Md. Asaduzzaman
*Department of Sociology
University of Dhaka*

Ready to wait
People are happy with the caretaker government. People are ready to wait patiently, they want to give the interim government as much time as is needed to hold a free and fair election.
The Awami League and the BNP are spent forces. People are not interested to cast votes in their favour. New political parties should be formed with people of good reputation. Until then we are ready to wait.
Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Leaders at fault?
A letter written by Mr. Ahmed from Boston, USA, questioning 'Sheikh Hasina's argument' appeared in The Daily Star of May 25, 2007. The writer has not only questioned the stand of Sheikh Hasina but also that of Khaleda Zia on 'dynastic politics'.
But are these two ladies solely responsible for what happened in Bangladesh in this respect? As 'succession to the throne' did not come to them by virtue of their own efforts and the grooming of their offspring for succession to the throne after them, it appeared to be a joint venture between the two ladies and their yes-men. Hasina and Khaleda are not solely responsible for the situation created in the political arena.
When Sheikh Hasina returned to Bangladesh staying abroad for a long time after her father's assassination, the senior leaders of the Awami League immediately placed the young, inexperienced woman at the helm of affairs. There was no fault on her part to think that she rightfully inherited the position from her late father. Similarly, when Khaleda Zia, a housewife, was placed at the top of the BNP by its senior leaders after her husband's assassination, she took it to be an inheritance from her late husband who had founded the BNP.
About grooming of their successors by the two ladies, Hasina and Khaleda are not solely responsible. People of Bangladesh have seen on TV how Sajib Wajed Joy, the young son of Sheikh Hasina, was received at Zia International Airport with garlands when he came from the USA for a short stay in his home country. It was a royal reception. Sheikh Hasina came to the airport accompanied by senior leaders of the Awami League and supporters of the party gathered to line up along the roads to Shudha Sadan. It did not occur in the minds of the leaders that Joy was 'nobody' of the Awami League, only the son of its president!
Similarly, people have seen on TV how Tarique Rahman, elder son of Khaleda Zia, crowned a Sr. Joint Secretary of the BNP overnight, started attending meetings of the BNP at different places of the country as chief guest, while senior leaders of the party, some of them of his late father's age or even older, only served as "accompanying" persons.
Were not the leaders of the two major political parties of the country more responsible than their chiefs for patronising dynastic politics? No leader was ever reported to have resigned in protest against the conduct of their chiefs or their offspring. The shame is more on the political leaders of the country at large, than anybody else.
R. D. Qureshi
Uttara Model Town, Dhaka

Pregnancy allowance
The proposed Tk. 300 allowance for pregnant mothers will help to increase the already high birth rate in our densely-populated country. It will encourage destitute women to have more children.
A less detrimental policy would be to provide the allowance only for mothers expecting their first child. Whether the pregnant woman has any control over the use of the funds meant for her is also a matter of concern. Rather than handing out such doles, I think the government should take meaningful steps towards providing destitute women with equal opportunity and safety when both inside and outside their home.
Qamrun Taslim
*Department of Economics
University of Dhaka*

An appeal
Is it possible on the part of the City Corporation to remove the garbage container stationed at College Gate on Mirpur Road (entrance of SAU) in the interest of public health and environmental safety???
Professor M Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University

Dealing with graft
In the United States the courts have handed down long jail sentences for corporate graft. Some of the convicted senior executives of big companies will spend the rest of their lives behind bars.
If the authorities in Bangladesh are serious about rooting out corruption, then they must enact laws that will ensure that the punishment for corruption will act as a real deterrent and not as a mere slap on the wrist.
Shahed Nasrullah
One e-mail

VIP status in jail
I read in one of the newspapers that the court had ordered the govt. to give VIP status to Tarique Rahman. But my question is, why should the govt. give him that status? What has he done for the country?
Not only Tarique Rahman, I am also talking about the other so-called politicians. They have ruined the country. So what's the point of spending more money for them? Do they really deserve the VIP status in jail?
I don't know what the readers have got to say about the issue.
Zahid Karim
One e-mail

Good decision
After a long controversy, the government has finally decided to cancel the 27th BCS viva voce. It is a very good decision. Allegation of corruption against the 27th BCS viva voce has been proved. According to newspaper reports, there was widespread corruption in this respect.
There was the report of question paper leakage before the written exams also. At any rate, I congratulate the government for its bold decision.
Abdul Malek Shikder
*Amor Ekushey Hall
University Of Dhaka*

For a better image
During the 24 years of Pakistan and 36 years of Bangladesh, our nation has seen gradual progress in political, economic, social and religious harmony. If not balanced, uneven steady growth across the country can be observed in our every day living. At present, people can travel from one end and reach the other end of our country within the same day.
For a better image, we all should concentrate on increasing outputs in the fields, factories and offices!
Now the 'repair and maintenance' in all spheres of our society is the most urgent and vital issue!
Golam Ashraf
Gulshan, Dhaka

Our cricket
The progress of Bangladesh cricket team was unimaginable a few years ago, but now it is a reality. They are now trying their best in every match. But the real problem is



PHOTO: STAR

Price hike & governance

The CTG has miserably failed to contain prices of essential foods for the already hard-pressed citizens of the country. It presents the typical attitude of an irresponsible administration with "no responsibility and no accountability" in its actions!

Without establishing an alternative distribution mechanism and inventories, the CTG has merrily gone about beating up the whole-sellers. This has created panic and chaos in the long established

commodity market mechanism!
The result: no dealer now dares to maintain an inventory. The CTG hastily went about setting up inventory limits without understanding the seasonality of various food items, and lead times! This has derailed the established market chain of procurement by distributors. The buck is now passed on conveniently to "international prices", with seasonal effect being forgotten!
Did the CTG study the trade and mar-

keting chain for imported non-perishables; like edible oils, pulses, sugar, garlic, ginger, turmeric, potatoes and other such kitchen items?
What concrete action plan does the CTG have to stabilise this run-away prices, besides issuing dictates and fiat's? Sorry to say, they have failed the acid test of civil government!
S.A.Mansoor
Gulshan, Dhaka

Garment factory
A garment factory was established with two buildings at Indira Road with a few hundred employees working there. Due to the presence of this factory in a residential area like Indira Road, the area has become unfit for living! When a few hundred workers mostly females come to the factory before 8:00am, when they leave at noon and another shift begins and when they leave at night, it becomes very difficult for people to move through the crowd of workers. The factory creates disturbing noise through the huge exhaust fans which are directed towards the adjacent apartments. The owners were requested a number of times to look into the matter, but in vain. In fact, no one dares to lodge any complaint openly.
In the interest of people residing in our locality, I appeal to the authorities concerned to address the issue.
A resident
Indira Road, Dhaka

Let's rebuild the country
Many things are happening right now all over the world, but you should think about the country first. We must say in one voice "yes" to this government, now or never-- we trust you for your honesty.
Let's make history.
Some Bangladeshi children
Montreal, Canada

Begum Zia's com-

Womanhood - A state of being
I am a 'woman', and I am proud to be one are you? Maybe not. Know why? Because ever since you were a little girl it was drummed into you that a 'woman' is any overweight female with about three kids and facing midlife crises. Wrong. That is far from being a woman.
Ever went to a party and heard ripples of laughter and girlish giggles when a grown up man enters and says 'hey girls'. Compare them to the response you would get to 'hello ladies', and worst 'ah women'. Nope not even a smile to that last remark. Ever wondered why?
I'll tell you why. The word 'woman' is associated with so many negativities that no female wants to be called a woman. Shame isn't it? Draw a mental picture of a 'woman' in your mind. Now let me rip that apart. Because a 'woman' is far from what has been portrayed and the general connotations people associate with 'womanhood'.
Misconception 1: Womanhood does not come with age. It is an attitude, a state of being. Womanhood is not a physical state, but rather a stage of mental maturity and emotional intelligence. It is maturity not only of action, but thought and emotion. Perhaps that's why it is usually misinterpreted with age. But a 20 -year old female can also reach womanhood.
"Womanhood" is the most beautiful, fulfilling yet challenging experience any female can have in her lifetime if she ever reaches that level of competence and security within herself.
A woman knows that she has to and is capable of running a house, rearing children, being extremely competitive at work and can still spoil that child-like man in her life. Women are the only beings which can juggle so many tasks and still not lose their feminine touch.
Ah! 'feminine' does not mean stiletto's, a perfect figure, manicured nails and picture perfect looks. Feminine is again a feeling. Within your heart you must know that you are the most beautiful creature God ever created. That even 'hell hath no fury like a woman scorned' and the most beautiful adornment of heaven is also a 'woman'!
Womanhood comes only from the test of times, and signifies strength paired with delicateness. A woman is graceful not in her physical attributes, but in her manner, her poise, her actions. She can compete at the highest levels of intelligence and still not be classified only in one box. Any female who comes even near the feeling, the always vibrating emotion of womanhood in her existence - like being in love can conquer the world any day, and will love to be called what she is not a girl, not a baby, not a lady, not a little lady but just a woman and oh that is so hard to be!
Afreina Noor
Pakistan



PHOTO: AFP

Budget

The interim government is free from corruption and people expect good things from the government. Every year the govt. declares a

budget with lofty goals, but it does not bring welfare to people.
People want the kind of budget which will ensure an equitable distribution of

wealth and equal facilities for all.
Md. Ziaul Hoque
*History(3rd Year)
University of Chittagong*