



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.

Butenis' words

"Deaths in custody, mistreatment of the detainees, lack of clarity on who gets arrested and why, and so-called 'secret detentions' are all unacceptable". This quote of the out-going US Ambassador, Patricia Butenis published today (18 June) in Star City will earn her the gratitude of the whole sane world who will no doubt applaud her courage -- provided, of course, that the quote refers to Guantanamo Bay.

However, if it is a remark on Bangladesh, then one can only ignore her for being a part of the usual myopic vision exhibited by recent US governments, especially when she knows all the facts and, indeed was part of it for the last 14 months. I can, therefore, only wish her well in the peaceful and tranquil settings which American diplomacy (read brute force), democracy and acceptance of human rights have produced in her next place of posting --- Baghdad!

Sikander Ahmed
Niketon, Dhaka

Bangladeshis in

Princess Diana

Ten years have gone by since Princess Diana's death, it's hard to imagine that she is no longer with us. The news of her death came to me as a sudden shock. As a schoolboy at that time I knew little about her personal life before her death. But I was always fascinated by her charm and beauty. A beautiful princess like her certainly didn't deserve such a cruel fate, but if we look at her life it seems that misery was a part of it. It all started from her husband Prince Charles's relationship with Camilla Parker, who later became his wife. As Diana's marriage was breaking her relationship with other men also came to light, and on the top of everything media



never spared her for a moment. After her divorce from Prince Charles she became a humanitarian and won millions of hearts all over the world.

This letter is a tribute to the "People's Princess". May her soul rest in peace.

Shafat Imtiaz(Jaami)
Banani, Dhaka

Commission has to address the issue to protect the interests of the workers.

Fahmi Mahmood
On e-mail

Chittagong tragedy

The disaster that struck Chittagong was really unprecedented. The landslide caused by heavy down-pour took the lives of many living on the nearby hilly areas. Everything was just buried under the sea of mud, although volunteers, fire fighters and the common people tried hard to dig the inhabitants out of the heavy chunk of mud but all they could get were dead bodies and nothing else. At least 123 lives were snuffed out. Regrettably, it was a man-made disaster. Some unscrupulous people have razed lots of hills and they planned to make high-rise buildings upon those places, not caring about the fact that the cutting down of hills makes the soil level weak and torrential rain will cause the mud to slide off, sweeping away everything in its path.

The caretaker government should now give compensation to the helpless residents and arrange for their rehabilitation. The hill gobblers should not be allowed to go unpunished.

Shatabdi Biswas
*Officer's Quarter
Regional Public Administration
Training Center (RPATC)
Rajshahi*

Let our businesses grow

Business means employment, which means reduction of poverty and crime. The government will ultimately reap the benefits if the economy grows and gains the confidence of the people. The government must encourage employment by letting businesses flourish and not standing in their way. Ending the hartals is not enough. They should stop scrutinising every bank withdrawal and deposit, businesses have worked in certain ways for years which cannot be rectified overnight, they cannot be punished now for things that were acceptable to every other government. Scare tactics will just stop everything along with progress and growth.

The essentials market is occupied by small time businessmen, they cannot be traced! They are now scared and are doing nothing. If the government wants to tackle this problem, they will have to do it over a period of time with the co-

operation of these "mysterious" fellows. For now, they will have to leave it alone and let them do business as usual. There is too much black money in our economy to be whitened in such a short time, though accepting the whitening process is the first step to being more realistic in approach.

I would like to read the next headline as "The government wants record economic growth in Bangladesh" or "The government backs business sector."

Anwar
Dhaka

Preparing voter list

The job of computer operators in the process of voter listing is really a crucial one.

There was allegation of corruption when the PDB or some other power authorities recruited engineering students for inspection of irregularities in electricity meter operations in the industries towards the end of General Ershad's regime. Then it was only the financial motive that got the better of many students in economic hardship. This time both political and financial motives may very well influence some technically savvy students, if recruited in the voter registration project.

Let us all make a sincere effort to get this voter registration as much flawless as possible for the first time.

Masrur Khan
Sydney, Australia

Appeal for help

I am trying to draw your sympathetic attention towards the unfortunate life of mine. I have been suffering from a fatal ailment and have been hospitalised for a long time. I have no relatives who can support me financially. Gradually, I am nearing the inevitable..

The doctors have said that I need a major operation which is very costly. Can you extend a helping hand? My address and particulars are given below.

Md. Khairul Hasan
Savings A/C No. 4624 Islami Bank,
Dhaka Cantonment Branch, Dhaka-1206
Mobile: 0152637037
Md. Khairul Hasan
Dhaka

Anti-corruption drive

The CTG is conducting an all-out drive against corruption, hoarding, land-grabbing and all sorts of crimes and irregularities. I think the current drive of the CTG is very

much timely also. Therefore it needs support from the people who really love this country because we believe that all the proposed reforms could enhance the prospects of a brighter future. Let's forget about politics for some time and just uphold the flag of the mission of some patriotic visionaries. The govt. might do many things wrong but rest assured, they will not push our country to hold the first position in TI's corruption index for six consecutive years! This is the point.

I also believe that in such a developing country, where most of the people hardly know how to even read and write, there could be trouble in establishing a western type of democracy or the theme "of the people, by the people and for the people." That practice needs an educated nation where people are aware of their rights and simultaneously they also know how to uphold others' rights, without violating them. I believe at present we need a "limited democracy" until we can fully equip our people with proper education, values, awareness etc.

Sultan Mohammed Zakaria
*Researcher
Unnayan Shamannay
Shahbag, Dhaka*

Foreigners and passport office

Foreigners visiting Bangladesh need to extend their visa for any overstay. Passport officials do not deal with these foreigners properly. First of all, the passport officials do not have the required proficiency in English to deal with their clients. The foreigners do not understand their "Banglish".

I suggest that to uphold the image of the country the government address the issue immediately. A "complaint and suggestion" box may be introduced so that specific cases may be studied and preventive measures taken.

The officials appointed at the passport office must be trained to deal with the foreigners. The process has to be simplified, so that the foreigners do not feel embarrassed.

Kazi Nasim Ahmed
*Zigatola Notun Rasta
Dhaka*

Save us

We are the students of State University of Bangladesh. We are students of subjects like BSC in Physiotherapy, Nursing and Medical laboratory technology.

As these subjects are medical related and they are very new in

Dowry and deaths



The dowry culture is largely responsible for domestic violence. It is a curse for our social life. Women become victims of unbearable harassment due to the force of dowry system in society. Most of the time the sufferers are housewives. Many innocent women fall victim to this brutal system and their lives become miserable. Illiteracy adds to the miseries of these women.

Dowry is a serious problem that hampers the normal marriage of young girls. Sometimes the guardians are unable to provide dowry fully and so the new brides are tormented by their husbands. Though almost fifty percent of our population is women, they are not being given their rights and are seriously mistreated by their family members. The family members are torturing women psychologically and physically. The violence against women is increasing rapidly.

I felt disturbed when I read the report 'Violence against women on the rise in Kushtia' in The Daily Star on June 11, 2007. At least 19 women (most of them housewives) were killed in Kushtia district alone last month. They were allegedly tortured by their husbands and their family members. In most of the cases husbands were responsible for violence leading to death of the housewives.

Oppression against women is increasing everywhere and the victims' families keep mum, declining to take any legal support. How long will this continue? It is our duty to save our women through abolishing the heinous dowry system.

Rama Islam
*Lecturer, Department of English
Metropolitan University, Sylhet*

Bangladesh the ministry of health gave us a letter to quit these subjects. The point is that the first two batches have completed the courses.

Now, if we have to quit, where shall we go?

Astudent, On e-mail

The news of corruption and "commission business" by successive governments stunned the people who voted them to power. The nation has the right to know more about it. We want to get at the root of the matter.

We are solidly behind the present caretaker government. It must complete its mission!

Dr. Islam
On e-mail

CTG