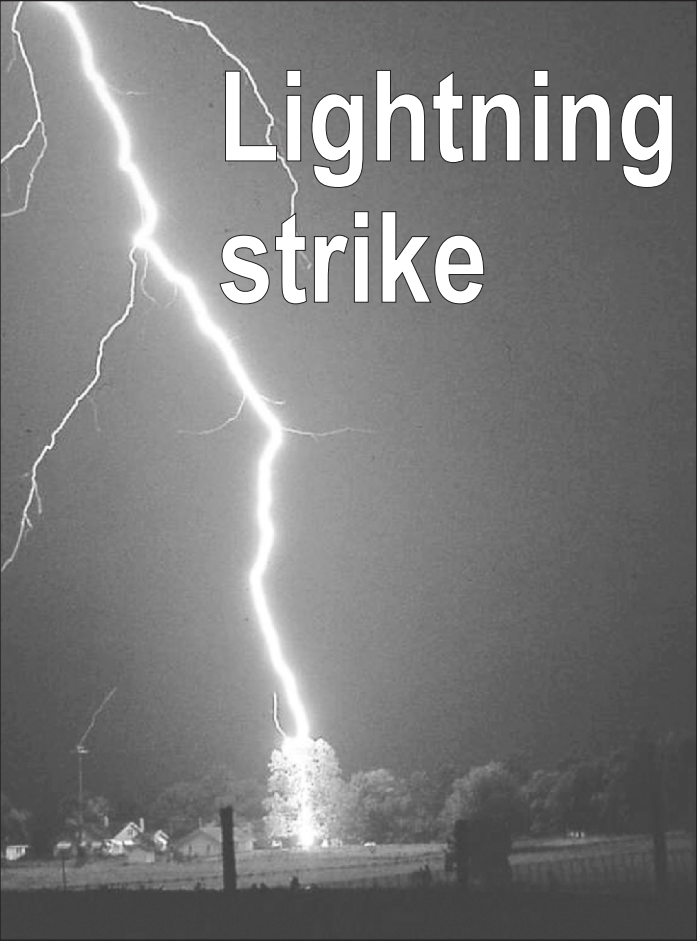


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



# Lightning strike

Many people are getting killed in lightning strike. This is because of the fact that people don't realise the danger of lightning and they don't know how to protect themselves from it, especially the people who work outside in fields and construction sites.

We can save many lives from this unexpected danger just following some tips given by experts in National

Weather Service of the USA. And we have to broadcast the tips regularly in the electronic and broadcast media during this stormy season.

Here are some tips to protect ourselves from the threat of lightning strike:

When one can hear thunder, he or she is close enough to be struck (by lightning), then one should take shelter indoors in a house, building or other solid

structure. Small sheds or picnic shelters, for example, aren't a safe idea.

Every effort should be made to get indoors. If that isn't possible, a vehicle is the next safest place. Because, the lightning travels through the metal of the car and go into the ground, we should not touch any metal part of the car.

Being outdoors is the least safe place to be in a storm, but if we have no other option, we must try to get as low as we can, minimising the contact area with the ground. To do this, we need to crouch down on the feet.

If we're in a wooded area, we need to stay near smaller trees and avoiding tall, lone trees. Standing underneath a tree which is kind of on its own, that's like standing next to a lightning rod.

Lightning rods, however, can be effective if they are properly grounded with wire that will carry the electrical charge deep into the ground, away from a house.

Once a storm has passed, lightning can still strike; one should stay inside until the thunder is not heard for about 30 minutes.

Summer is the peak season for lightning-related injuries and deaths. For more information and safety tips, visit [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov).

**Zebunessa Laizu**  
*Thailand*

**Public nuisance**

Among other things in the mega city of Dhaka, one will find beggars, the physically handicapped ones, knocking at the car windows almost in every traffic signal point asking for alms while the red signal is on. Besides, book sellers, fruit vendors, household hawkers and others disturb the commuters in the cars and in all sorts of transports which causes traffic jam also. This picture is not at all seen in any other big city of other countries. It can be termed a public nuisance.

The present government among other things is determined to reduce traffic jams and keep the roads free from illegal occupants. The image of the country in the eye of the foreigners is badly tarnished by this street problem. This nuisance should be stopped by the law enforcers forthwith which would also help reduce traffic jam. The physically handicapped beggars may be rehabilitated elsewhere.

**Dr.S.M. Rahman**  
*On e-mail*

**Indian journalism**

Many countries like India use the term democracy just for no serious purpose: the democracy plank is employed by them to entertain corruption and nepotism. The Indian news media, just as those in the USA and other "democracies" do not appreciate any criticism of their favourite political platforms, howsoever wrong the situation that warrants criticism may be.

At times they don't mind if a journalist from any underprivileged community condemns a particular political party or its policies in accordance with the political philosophies of the media concerned, but they cannot approve of criticising the media when the norms of Indian "democracy" just don't allow that!

**Dr.Abdul Ruff Colachal**  
*JNU, New Delhi*

# “We fought for freedom”

I left Bangladesh more than three decades ago. The contributions of Bengalis abroad for the struggle of the independence of Bangladesh are very significant. Unfortunately, the contributions of the Bengalis abroad are not found anywhere in the annals of Bangladesh. This letter is written to remind the newer and older generations of Bangladesh citizens about the contributions of the unrecognized freedom fighters, who proved that the pen was mightier than the sword. We also fought with the pen for Bangladesh from America, Canada and the United Kingdom.

I will focus on what a very small group of Bangladeshis in Colorado did to help the independence movement in Bangladesh. It consisted of only three Bangladeshi families living in Denver and similar number of students at Colorado University (CU) and Colorado State University (CSU). At that time no more than several thousand Bengalis were living abroad in the USA, Canada and the UK. The movement for Bangladesh independence in North America was in a much bigger context. It was considered necessary to form a national organisation to represent and unite all the Bangladeshis of the USA, and also to represent views of the Bangladeshi people. With that in mind, the Bangladesh League of America and Canada was formed in Chicago along with other umbrella organisations, such as the Bangladesh Defence League formed in New York, and the Bangladesh Information Center formed in Washington.

The national committee was needed to establish certain legitimacy: that most Bangladeshis were in favour of a split from Pakistan into a separate nationhood; that the new nation already had a government in exile; and that the Bangladeshis living in North America were representing the will of Bangladesh people. The committee also wanted to establish certain facts: that there was a genocide perpetrated methodically by the Pakistan army with the full approval of the Pakistan government; that the American weapons were being used in the killing, and,

therefore, arms shipment to Pakistan must stop immediately; and that an immediate relief effort was necessary to reduce the plight of the refugees. The committee wanted to include the support of academicians, activists, Senators, Congressmen, journalists, musicians, and simply the world opinion. The task was not easy considering that Nixon-Kissinger had sided with Pakistan in a defence treaty alliance. In America we arranged and participated in numerous meetings with American media, politicians and laymen just to stay ahead of Pakistani propaganda in the US.

I was the President of the Colorado Chapter of Bangladesh League of America at that time. Our beloved brother late Dr. F. R. Khan, the world famous architect, designer of the Sears Tower in Chicago, was the President of its national committee. It was a time of great tension and anxiety for us watching on television the great sufferings of the Bangladeshi people. That disturbed us. The members of the league would spend sleepless nights with a mission to make American citizens aware of the political cause of the Bangladeshis. The league wrote letters to U.S. Senators, Congressmen, and influential people in America. Our group contacted newspaper reporters, who published stories about the massacre of Bangladeshi people and its leading intellectuals. I was interviewed a few times by the journalists and the local television newscasters. Justice Mahmud Hussain, who had just arrived from Bangladesh at the time, joined the lecture circuit traveling to various campuses in Colorado. (He later returned to Bangladesh and retired as a Justice of the High Court in Dhaka). Mr. Abdul Muhith, the Economic Secretary of the Pakistan Embassy at that time defected from the Pakistan Embassy. Mr. M. R. Siddiqui arrived in Washington, D.C. during this period, and on August 5, 1971 he represented Bangladesh as the first ambassador to the United States from Bangladesh, a nation not yet recognised by the US government. Both Mr. M. R. Siddiqui and Mr. Abdul

Muhith came to Denver, Colorado, to help advance the cause of Bangladesh independence and we organised a news conferences for them in the Blue Room of Denver Stapleton Airport.

The Denver group also organised a cultural programme to raise funds for Bangladesh. Among the fund-raising efforts to help the Bangladeshi refugees, George Harrison's concert, Concert for Bangladesh was held in New York that attracted the attention of most of the world.

Our efforts paid off. The efforts of the Bangladesh League of America brought about some significant changes in the public opinion in America. On May 6, 1971, the Senate Relations Committee unanimously passed the Case-Mondale resolution that stopped military aid or further arms sale to Pakistan. The US government recognised Bangladesh as a new country, which paved the way for financial help from the world community for the survival of the new Bangladesh nation.

Our struggle for Bangladesh independence has been recently recorded by Dr. Abul Kalam in a magazine named KATHA published by Bangladesh expatriates living in the State of Colorado (Ref: KATHA, second volume, page 10-12, published in April 2005).

The present caretaker government of Professor Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed is a blessing for Bangladesh. He and his colleagues are showing real statesmanship in governing the country in a manner unknown to the people of Bangladesh in our history. We, the expatriates living in America, fully support the efforts of the caretaker government and its determination to root out the evils of society,

**Dr. Sher Ali**  
*US*

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12X2

12x3