



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.



Tigers trounced

There seems to be no end to how low our cricket team can sink in the arena of Test cricket. Their complete lack of will to win and the bad habit of making the same mistakes over and over again, year after year, bring shame to the nation and the sport. They have lost all the goodwill generated from the last World Cup and are very firmly back to their old status of minnows. They cannot even last the first session of the first day of a Test match, as proved by their 89 and 62 all out scores.

To preserve the integrity of the game, the BCB should suspend all overseas Test tours for at least the next three years and use the time

to overhaul and rebuild the domestic cricket infrastructure. We must first develop a competitive and viable domestic first class cricket competition. This will allow us to be more competitive in the Test sphere. Only after the team starts winning (yes, winning) at home on a regular basis, should they be allowed to compete abroad.

Continuing with catastrophic tours like the on-going one in Sri Lanka will only further embarrass the nation and call into question our very Test status. Suspension of foreign tours may hinder some BCB officials' foreign jaunts but will preserve the Test status of Bangladesh.

One last thing, if nothing else, can we please drop Shahriar Nafees and Habibul Bashar. They have had enough opportunities to regain both their confidence and form and have been consistently useless. It is time for someone else to get an opportunity. Only God knows what "influence" Bashar and Nafees have on the BCB that they cannot be dropped.

Bangladesh should make the hard decisions or give up the Test status.

Right now, the Tigers are an embarrassment to the game of cricket.

Sami Abedin
California, USA

she/he is still your best friend.
So I just love Bangladesh.
Sabir Ahmed
Leeds, UK

Save our lives

We highly appreciate the recent steps taken by the caretaker government following the disastrous landslides in Chittagong.

The monsoon has just started. More cautionary steps are necessary. For many years there has hardly been any dredging of the country's rivers. As a result, there is possibility of widespread floods in Bangladesh this year.

Here is an earnest request to the caretaker government. More than a century-old Chittagong court building stands on the brink of great danger. The upper roofs and floors are in bad shape and an accident may occur any time. Even the insurance companies of the country are unwilling to give any insurance coverage to the users of the old Chittagong court building. Every time I am in the building I keep on praying to God for my protection. Every day thousands of judges, magistrates, lawyers, general public, and court officials use the

dilapidated court building which is now nothing but a death trap.

Will the caretaker government kindly look into the matter so that the lives of the thousands of judges, magistrates, lawyers, general public, and court officials are not endangered. The courts in the old building need immediate shifting to some other place (say, in some other tin-shed or semi pucca structures in any open area until the new building is constructed).

The issue must not be neglected! It is an SOS from us!

A.B.M. Shamsud Doulah
Advocate, Supreme Court
Mirpur, Dhaka

Banning political parties

I want to thank Mr. Wahid for his views on abolishing the corrupt political parties. From the point of view of a student, the dominant parties of the past decade had only time for spitting harangues at each other and treating the misfortunes of students with unpardonable callousness. Will they compensate for the invaluable time we lost during their party processions, the fear of falling back and the suffer-

ings when hartals coincided with exams?

Who will guarantee that the "reformed parties" will not behave the same way in the future? The elected political parties will certainly bail out their corrupt members. They are incorrigible and must take the full blame for what has happened. Forgive me if I am going too far.

Ananya Das
A Level student
Cephalon International

Wastage of water

Wastage of water is surely something we should all be increasingly sensitive about, whatever country we live in but particularly here.

In May, I moved to a nice, newly built flat in Gulshan 2 and was promised permanent hot water as part of the services. However, when at last I was told it was available, I found that I had to leave both the basin and bath taps on, full blast, for at least 8 minutes and even then, sometimes, no hot water arrived! My conscience is rebelling and I usually boil water instead - and wash my hair in my club.

Is it too much to hope that there is a way of complaining to Wasa about the offender 'Asset' - and that Wasa would do something about the rotten system of water heating that is bright and new on the roof and, as far as I am concerned, if it cannot perform in any other way, should be given the same treatment as the encroachments on the footpaths?

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

AL reform

AL presidium member Mr. Abdur Razzak has put forward a reform proposal for the AL - the oldest political party in the country. The way Mr. Razzak revealed his reform agenda (he claimed so) seems to lack fortitude, at least to me.

I am not referring to any particular individual, but it's true that most of our politicians are corrupt. To save their skin, they have turned into so-called reformists. These corrupt and opportunist elements should not have any place in politics.

Mallik Akram Hossain
The University of Hong Kong

BGMEA Bhaban

Recently the LGRD adviser declared that the BGMEA Bhaban was built illegally without Rajuk's approval. I wonder how could BGMEA, being the largest and the most efficient trade body, do so? My question to other government agencies is that is the BGMEA Bhaban was not built in a day; what did they do when such a big structure was being constructed?

Demolition of the building is not the solution. One should keep in mind that it is a national asset. Demolishing this asset will harm the entire nation, but it is also true that the canal on which the building was built must be preserved.

The wrongdoers, including the Rajuk officials concerned, must be brought to book.

Kazi Nasim Ahmed
Zigatola Notun Rasta
Dhaka

Our political reality

Considering our state of development, poverty, level of literacy, inclination towards dishonesty, a country like ours needs very strong leadership. Therefore, the attempt to curb the powers of the party chief will bring only chaos. The party chief must also be the PM in order to ensure strong leadership.

Besides, if the party chief cannot be the PM then there will be no motivation to secure this position. So, the quality of leadership will go down!

Farad
IUB

Airport terminal

Dhaka airport terminal is a nice looking terminal. The front side of the airport building is covered with tall trees, as a result the people while passing through buses and taxis cannot easily watch the beauty of the airport terminal building. Many people do not get the opportunity to enter the airport but can easily watch it when they travel along the Airport Road. To make it a beautiful airport terminal the following things can be done:

(a) Remove the tall trees on the front side of the airport terminal building (just from the road up to the domestic & international terminal building) and replace them with more beautiful, shorter trees.

(b) Make a separate approach road to the domestic terminal building.

I hope the authorities will consider these suggestions to make the ZIA terminal building a really attractive one.

Saidur Rahman
West Rampura, Dhaka

Minus all of them!

I was surprised to read the post-

editorial on the above subject. I am not sure if you are aware of the consequences of what you are encouraging. At the outset, let me say that all reforms in the political parties must be done taking all into consideration, including the top leaders (current chairperson or the president) onboard. Otherwise the consequences will be as follows:

1) The reformists will not be able to go to their areas/constituencies when the top leaders or their followers will be out in the political field.

2) The major democratic parties will split (some already have broken up) giving rise to serious political instability, opening the way for horse trading and frequent fall of governments. Look back to Pakistan between 1947-1958. And the aftermath? Martial law or any other form of authoritarian rule.

3) Fundamentalist outfits will be strengthened, and all our achievements like democracy and gender equality will be threatened!! Militancy will be on the rise. You are standing on the sidelines and clapping!!! You are saying nothing about reforms in the Jamaat. Do you think the party that is regimented, refuses to even talk about reforms and refuses to recognise women's representation in their committees and is headed by war criminals, can be allowed to take part in the elections?

Dr. M. Hussain

On e-mail

Change of water colour

Last night (01-07-2007) in the TV news there was a report on the change of water colour of the rivers in the Sundarbans. Hilsa and other fish started coming up through the stream of the rivers. Salinity has also increased to a great extent. The causes behind this change should be found out immediately. Bangladesh is in a vulnerable zone as far as earthquake is concerned.

The following steps could be taken to ascertain the causes behind the sudden change.

a) Analyse the water colour in the rivers.

b) Water temperature in the rivers and in the Bay may also be recorded.

c) An aerial survey can give some clue.

d) Some other tests can also be carried out.

Our neighbouring countries like India and Myanmar may also be contacted to know their views on the unusual development.

Engr. Siddique Ali Miah
M. D. Robotel Limited

Biman

The detailed discourse on this subject in PCP (29 June) mentioned the change of name, the slimming down of manpower, the restructuring of the board, financing for retrenchment, share allocation etc., and various other matters at length to make Biman profitable.

All this sounds like the suggestion of rearranging of deck furniture on the Titanic when it was going down! The only thing that will make Biman a viable concern is a new fleet of planes, and trained pilots and engineers to run it smoothly, keeping its international schedule and developing a reputation of safety and punctuality. The old and outdated planes and the supporting mechanism need to be scrapped at the soonest and the new fleet introduced.

There must also be a regular plan to periodically renew parts of the fleet, so that in about 20 years the fleet is completely renewed. Unfortunately, there was no mention of this fact in the article!

Engineer Shafiq Ahmed
London, UK

Siachen conflict and environment

I got chance to read a very informative story "Siachen conflict and South Asia's ecological doom" by Mr. Ekram Kabir.

I must congratulate the writer for starting a technical debate. I immediately shared this story with my colleagues here in London. We believe Bangladesh and the Maldives should claim compensation from Pakistan and India for the damage caused by floods or cyclones. Particularly, the track record of Pakistan is very poor either in politics or environmental protection.

I also believe that there should be a technical committee to evaluate the losses we have incurred due to this conflict.

Dr. Moosa (PhD)

University of London (UK)
Post Doctoral Research Fellow

Economy

While it is commendable what the current government is doing to eliminate the corruption that had engulfed our national politics for the last 15 years, it is very crucial that the government keeps its eye on the ball of the economy as well.

Whatever might be the crimes of

EDITOR

Bangladesh vision 2030

1. Build four-track highways between Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Khulna, Dhaka-Rajshahi, Dhaka-Sylhet.
2. Build a deep seaport in Chittagong.
3. Build a bridge over the Padma.
4. Build two nuclear power plants for electricity generation.
5. Convince the people not to have more than two children.
6. Build electric train lines between Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Khulna, Dhaka-Rajshahi, Dhaka-Sylhet.
7. Provide technical training to the general people about IT/agriculture/engineering/fishing etc.
8. Invite constructive proposals from all experts/professionals.
9. Provide free education to all children.
10. Ban hartal /student politics.

Dr. Farid Majumder

Software Engineer

Darmstadt, Germany



the past government, the economy was growing at a respectable rate in the past few years and also the road networks in our country had improved substantially.

Commercial activities cannot come to a halt now. So, the government must encourage enterprise in all sectors of the economy.

Otherwise, the situation may change quickly.

Khurum Siddique
Uttara, Dhaka

"Education traders"

The Private University Association and several individuals recently requested the govt. for a moratorium on income tax and VAT imposed upon the private universities.

They put arguments that higher education in the private sector would be affected and the cost of education would be increased. In this connection, I would like to mention that majority of the sponsors had built their fortune by this way or that way and most of them are not qualified enough to be associated with education. They became education lovers overnight and wanted to

make business using education as a commodity. They hired senior and retired or about to retire academics from public universities with fat salary packages and sell their credentials to attract students.

As a result, the students of public universities are being deprived of better quality education. This group of people (sponsors) do not care for the quality of education. The income tax and VAT imposed by the govt. would be realised from the students and the so-called education lovers would be able to make good business at the cost of the students and their guardians.

I would, therefore, request the government to impose income tax and VAT on the individual sponsors in addition to what they deposit to the exchequer. The government also should keep an eye so that these "education traders" do not increase fees in the name of income tax and VAT.

Dr. S. M. Rahman

On e-mail

Submarine cable

"mystery"

For the past several years the internet using community of

Bangladesh has been quite excited that Bangladesh is going to join, and as per press reports, has already joined the information superhighway. The connection to the submarine cable meant that internet speeds all over the country were supposed to increase by approximate 68 times.

However, we, the internet using community, have seen no such rise in speeds.

Talking with my own broadband providers, I came to learn that they are connected but are still doing tests on the submarine cable. I wonder what kind of testing takes more than one year, when the technology and the know-how already exists.

You should investigate the matter as to why the submarine cable bandwidth expansion has still not occurred.

Azfar Khan

On e-mail

I would like to thank 'The Daily Star' for publishing such a nice article on tobacco ban ('England goes smoke free from July 1, when Bangladesh?' published on July 1, 2007).

The effort of the author in raising this concern is highly appreciable.

The law came into effect this year but the UK private sector had introduced it much earlier. In the late eighties, British Airways first introduced a ban on in-flight smoking in all its domestic services which was subsequently extended to the international sector.

Possibly, that played a major role in raising public awareness against smoking.

This ban on smoking in enclosed areas in effect

saves the non-smoker from passive smoking, which is less harmful than direct smoking.

In Bangladesh, the private sector can play a leading role in banning smoking in their respective places. For example, a factory owner can strictly prohibit smoking in his/her 'factory'. Private university authorities can prohibit smoking in their campus buildings.