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# Sheikh Hasina's arrest



The small hour drama at Dhanmondi was naturally a newsman's delight. Hundreds of cops including elite ones defying incessant rain cordoned a house where a lady stays 24 hours under state security. She never came out of her house without the consent of the agencies deployed, nor could anybody visit her without permission of the same agencies. We can very well ask the authorities why such huge deployment was made to arrest an already caged lady. They even arranged a big prison van to carry the frail lady who not only is a former prime minister but also the daughter of our father of the nation. The government spokes-

person, the information adviser, gave some reasons behind the arrest. But as a lawyer is he himself satisfied with his the explanations? Even if it is a legal formality or obligation, couldn't she be released on bail? We, the law abiding citizens, would refrain from making any comment. But the man on the street has already started thinking otherwise. Reformist politicians of all the parties are making loud noises in their houses and the media, though many of them are known to be corrupt. Conscious people may get wrong signals from such incidents. **A citizen**  
*One e-mail*

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No one is above the law. Everyone is equal before the law. Therefore, the government should ensure a fair trial for Hasina, following the standard procedures. The three heads of the four governments that Bangladesh had during the last 25 years are alleged to have been involved in widespread crime and corruption. I am sure people of Bangladesh will be happy to see them behind the bars, and away from the political arena of Bangladesh for good - if they get a fair trial and if charges against them can be proved beyond doubt. Moreover, I believe people of Bangladesh will welcome a

new leadership. **Razib Mohammad**  
*Canberra, Australia*  
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I have just red your Commentary. Good piece of writing!  
But frankly speaking it's not enough! You have to keep on writing and mobilize public opinion. It's very unfortunate that we are AGAIN heading into a dark future.  
Surely, Hasina is not above the law, for that matter nobody is ! But even a kid understands what is going on. You have correctly said, "No-body is above the law MUST also mean that law is not the handmaiden of anybody either."  
I would only hope that this govt. will immediately shift from its present course and will do what they are supposed to do.  
Let the people of Bangladesh decide who will be their leader! It's not the job of the government.  
**Fuad Rahman**  
*Boston, USA*  
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Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina was arrested due to her party's policy.  
When this caretaker govt. took charge, it was the Awami League's good luck that they were cleaning up the huge corruption of the immediate past BNP govt. But unfortunately the AL went too far in criticising the CTG.  
**Sarwar Amin**  
*West Nakhalpara, Dhakaz*

of tax to be paid is very high, they will rather spend the money instead of paying the tax.  
I think the income tax department should extend the date of tax payment and the process should be explained fully through the print and electronic media.  
**S.M.A. Razzaque**  
*Mirpur, Dhaka*  
**Gordon Brown's job**  
With doctors trying to bomb, Britain is again facing religion-incited terrorist attacks. It is increasingly becoming clear that even the most lofty profession is not immune from violence in the name of religion. In this context, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown may like to take a look at how Lord William Bentinck wiped out such terrorists in 19th century India.  
When Lord Bentinck arrived as Governor General of India in 1828, the country was in the grip of a great terror. A group belonging to an Indian religious organisation of murderers and robbers, known as Thugs (the word "thug" derived from them), were terrorizing the length and breadth of India. In this way, they were forerunners of many modern terrorist outfits. Although, the Thugs had no political agenda, they used religion to glorify their violent acts in the same way al-Qaeda is using religion to glorify their acts of violence. The only difference was that the Thugs belonged to a Hindu sect.  
Faced with such a terrorist threat, Lord Bentinck made wiping out the Thugs his top priority. He assigned the task to Col. Sleeman and Col. Sleeman created a network of informers with the help of loyal Indians. He laid the foundation of an intelligence organisation which came to be known as Central Intelligence Department (CID) -- forerunner of today's CIA in the US. In a series of operations, he rounded up Thugs. Many Thugs were hanged, many were given long prison sentences. The 19th century British justice was swift and ruthless. By the time Lord Bentinck left India in 1835, Thugs were largely eliminated as a security threat.  
Lord Bentinck remains an iconic figure in India even today. Women of India will remain always grateful to Bentinck for abolishing the cruel practice of burning of the widows. He made English the medium of higher education. He laid the foundation of the Indian Railways. Bentinck was the founder of modern India, but his greatest achievement was the suppression of Thugs.  
British Prime Minister Gordon Brown should follow in the footsteps of Bentinck and infiltrate the terrorist ranks in Britain. Terrorists linked with al-Qaeda are thugs of the 21st century and they can be wiped out provided Mr. Brown is resolute and ruthless. The key to Lord Bentinck's success was loyal Indian informers who helped to track down Thugs. British Muslims can play an equally useful role by helping the authorities to intercept terrorists before they strike.  
**Mahmood Elahi**  
*Ottawa, Canada*

We want the CTG to guide us to a better socio-economic order.  
**Ekram Belal**  
*On e-mail*  
**Maintain neutrality**  
When this caretaker administration under the leadership of Dr. Fakhruddin took power in Bangladesh, people heaved a sigh of relief as it ended the misrule and corruption of the BNP-Jamaat government. The anti-corruption drive of the government was appreciated much and it was expected that the administration would act neutrally.  
The government declared that it would take action against the big fish who were involved in massive corruption, not the small ones. In parliamentary democracy, the prime minister is responsible for all the actions of the government. So, why is the immediate past prime minister not being held responsible for what happened during the Jamaat-BNP rule?  
**Kamal Mostafa**

*Ottawa, Canada*  
**Sheikh Hasina's claim**  
Hasina mentioned to the media that during her administration people could buy a litre of edible oil for Tk 28. I am just wondering whether she knows the current price of edible oil in the international market.  
I am puzzled as to why no journalist asked her if she could offer the same at this point in time. I would kindly ask her to stop these cheap talks to confuse people. If she can offer edible oil at Tk 28 per litre to the consumers, then I would advise this caretaker government to give her the sole responsibility to do so.  
**Shadhin Ahmed**  
*Canada*  
**Corruption**  
We are aghast and just cannot believe that people could stoop so

low for money and other earthly possessions. Our ministers, politicians and people who were in important positions betrayed us, shocked us beyond imagination!  
There are many rich people in the world, who earn money in fair ways and spend huge amounts of it for humanitarian cause, we laud these actions but what we have seen in our country is just disgusting. We hope everyone has learned a lesson.  
**Nur Jahan**  
*Chittagong*  
**Better treatment**  
Somebody (often a politician) is going abroad for better treatment. This is very common news in our daily newspapers. Why don't they have any faith in our physicians and medical facilities?  
It should be made mandatory for all politicians to seek treatment in our government hospitals.  
**Tariqul Islam**  
*On e-mail*

# Hilsa export



The average price of hilsa in a Bangladeshi grocery store here in the USA is US \$4.50 per pound. Accordingly, a medium-size hilsa costs nine dollars. In Bangladesh taka it will be not more than 650. While watching news on ntv recently, I saw a fish trader at New Market in Dhaka asking for a much higher price of a hilsa fish of the same size.  
So, how is Bangladesh gaining out of hilsa export?  
First of all, we Bangladeshis living abroad do not have any right to have Bangladeshi fish when it is scarce and costly at home. When most of the people cannot afford it locally

because of export, this item should not be exported.  
The foreign currency gained by exporting fish is negligible as compared to spending foreign currency on healthcare. As a matter of fact, the implications of exporting nutritious fish are much more than can be described in a letter.  
The authorities should look into the matter and ban fish export to any country in the world, not only India.  
**Mamun Ahmed**  
*Las Vegas, NV, USA*

**Butenis' observations**  
I thank former US Ambassador Ms Butenis for her comment on the political situation in our country. She could read the hearts of people. She reminded the present caretaker government of their constitutional responsibility and expressed her disappointment about the government's "involvement" in the launching of a new political party.  
**Subasish Purkayastha**  
*Jaintiapur, Sylhet*

tools of exploitation by so-called religious leaders. We know how some Islamic party leaders brainwash our uneducated rural people through misleading lectures. Our army chief has put forward five conditions to fight corruption. Politics in the name of religion is also 'corruption'. He suggested that the next elected government bring amendments to the Constitution. I suggest that politics in the name of religion be banned forever.  
My second suggestion is a radical reform of our madrassah education. Our madrassahs teach only religion. The teachers of these madrassahs are not equipped with modern education. The students of these madrassahs know that they don't have any other opening except a job as imam in a mosque or a madrassah teacher. Naturally, they are impressed by the propaganda of the so-called Islamic

parties. I strongly feel that our madrassahs should have the same curricula as our schools, along with one compulsory subject called religion. This will help them get admission in different universities. They will not lag behind others.  
Militancy has grown in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Our government should keep a watchful eye on the situation. We Bangladeshis are religious but not biased Muslims.  
**Shafiqul Islam**  
*On e-mail*  
**Seven points**  
Undoubtedly, the present caretaker government has set several examples of combating corruption in the first six months. I, like the majority of the people in the country, appreciate the cooperation from the army chief to this CTG. All the seven points put forward by him

are important, and the seventh point "creating a moral high ground against corruption" is the most important to me for making the campaign sustainable.  
Reducing corruption to the minimum level requires cooperation from all sectors of society. But awareness should come first from the family where a child grows up and learns from his/her surroundings. Then it's the teachers who can play an extremely important role. Do we learn anything in any level of our education that teaches us to be an ethical person?  
Lord Wavell is generally considered the best Viceroy and Governor General of India (1941-1947). Not only he had done all his homework before he became the Viceroy but he is also considered one of those British personalities who touched Indian souls and understood them. He wrote a report to the British government on the field of education in India. "We have done the worst in the field of education of India. We have given them the education of letter but not of character," wrote Wavell. So, here is why this subcontinent can't get rid of corruption. How much effort has been given by the governments since 1947 to reform the education system?  
In 2003, a news item in "The Nation", a daily English newspaper in Thailand, attracted me. It was a list of the top 20 countries which had the best education systems at primary and secondary levels in the world. Among Asian countries, only South Korea and Japan were in the top 20. The other countries were from Europe, North America and Australia. If you compare this list of top 20 with the list of top 20 least corrupt countries (published by Transparency International) side by side, you will observe that education system has the greatest influence on the issue. We have been ranked the most corrupt country for five consecutive years. How could we be still far away from concentrating on this sector?  
I was listening to an interview of Prof. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal the other day. He pointed out very serious flaws in our education system. Our children can't study without private teacher at home or at the coaching centre. This is far from an ideal situation. Developing Lord Wavell's "education of character" should be the starting point to reduce corruption on a sustainable basis.  
**Faruk Ahmed**  
*Asian Institute of Technology Thailand*

**Uttara plots**  
The present interim government as part of the drive against corruption has cancelled over 900 plots allotted by the immediate past BNP government on the plea of massive corruption in the allocation process.  
The step was indeed praiseworthy and appropriate in order to curb the trend of corruption and mismanagement of the Rajuk authorities in allocating lands and plots.  
I am a sufferer. I work for the UN and don't have land or apartment in Dhaka. I had applied for Rajuk plots three times and all the three times my application was turned down on account of non payment of income tax, though I produced the official document that a UN staff does not require to pay tax as it has been exempted under the UN charter.  
I have retired after 30 years of service. I had applied for a 3 Katha plot in Uttara. I got a plot but the allotment was finally cancelled. Can't Rajuk review the cases like mine which have nothing to do with political influence or any such thing?  
**GKM Nasarullah**  
*Momtaz Mahal Airport Road, Jessore*

**A good friend**  
There are many friends around us who provide us company. But is there anyone among the friends who can give us company at the time of not only happiness but also distress? It seems to me that it is not easy to get someone who will be with us even in our bad days. I think most people will agree with me.  
**Rahat Ahmed Chowdhury**  
*Department of English Metropolitan University, Sylhet*

**Politicians**  
I want to address the politicians who are delivering lectures on a regular basis.  
Please trust people and they are much smarter than those old politicians. Don't tell us what people want, we the people know what we want.

# Test debacle



The dismal performance of Bangladesh cricket team in Sri Lanka is really heart-breaking. The feel-good factor during the Cricket World Cup now seems light years away. The pathetic performance in the Tests only added additional weapons to the arsenal of the critics who are skeptical about Bangladesh's future in Test cricket.  
Four consecutive innings defeats not only destroyed the morale of cricketers but also hurt the millions of fans. The capitulation in Sri Lanka revealed the truth that we are not worthy of Test cricket.

Test cricket puzzled us so much that we lost 29 matches by an innings margin out of 49.  
We could never stay 90 overs at the crease in the last 13 Test innings since the first innings of Fatullah Test in 2006 against Australia. Only one century in those 13 innings! No five-wicket haul for any bowler after Fatullah also indicates the decline in bowling standard.  
Nobody succeeds in any area without proper preparation. After a long World Cup our cricketers didn't prepare themselves for Test cricket against very tough opposition.

We totally ignored the importance of first class cricket. The national first class competition is a farce. It's my opinion that it's the easiest among the Test-playing nations to earn a first class cap here in Bangladesh. The cricket board should take the necessary steps to ensure competitiveness in first class cricket. Otherwise, the situation is not going to improve.  
As a follower of Bangladesh cricket, I feel distressed. It is the dream of millions that Bangladesh will play good cricket.  
**Solaiman Palash**  
*East Jurain, Dhaka*

**Income tax**  
We, the common people, are very much confused and concerned about the tax department's ultimatum of paying the tax on undeclared money by end July 2007.  
Most people do not know what amounts (percentage) are to be paid on the principal taxable amount. Many people had small deposits and now that amount could be taxable and if the amount

**GLOBALISATION**  
In the present world, globalisation has been introduced with a view to extending a border-less market. Through globalisation free flow of products as well as ideas is possible. Because of globalisation a country can be benefited in many ways including free access to market, hi-tech information, trade, commerce, cultural affairs, employment opportunities and so on. Mainly, the developed countries are highly-benefited by globalisation. On the other hand, the developing countries are affected adversely to some extent, because they lack modern technology, skilled manpower and necessary capital.  
So, the poor countries are becoming poorer. A more balanced view of globalisation is needed to introduce a just world order.  
**Shahnaz Karim**  
*Dept. of English IJU, Chittagong*

