

High-rise buildings

This may be a bad time to write a letter defending the high-rise buildings that are on the hit list of the Rajuk demolition team when the mood of destruction is in the air. Before taking out more high-rise buildings, please consider the following points.

1. The old airport is no longer used as a functional airport. In fact, if used as an airport so close to heavily populated areas it may be a public safety hazard itself. (Not to mention air and noise pollution). So rather than removing tall buildings, decommission the old airport and restrict its use as a helicopter pad and as an emergency runway.

2. The high-rise buildings on the hit list were apparently built "illegally". Sure. But that means many Rajuk officials who are not usually the best examples of honesty were complicit. So any retribution should be dealt with in an even-handed manner.

In a season of calamity anger is not the best option. Besides, if the government can allow the so-called black money to be whitened, why can't illegal buildings (as long as they are safe and pose no threat to public interest) be legalised?

Habibul Haque Khondker
One-mail



CTG's role

I would like to draw the attention of Dr. Fakhruddin to the followings:

I am sure, all the well wishers of Bangladesh at home and abroad are grateful to your military backed interim government for revealing the true character of our politicians, and preparing the roadmap for a free, fair, healthy and constructive democratic system to create Sonar Bangla.

Sir, people are happy that you are working to eliminate corruption and injustice, by punishing the corrupted people. We admire that you are determined to prove that none is above law in our country!

I am sure people appreciate that BNP leader Aminul Haque has been punished for defiance of the existing legal and administrative systems to establish his control over the region. Now, it is equally important to punish the others who cooperated with him, and conducted similar act in their region or in the country. Only then, the people will find faith and confidence in your objective attitude towards all!

And then I hope the professors of DU and RU will focus on research and teaching, instead of party politics!

Prof. Dr. Mannan Mridha
Stockholm, Sweden

Bush and Musharraf

The terrible US-led terror have taken their tolls in lives and materials. While President Bush has been on the receiving end both at home and outside, including its "backyard" Europe, Pakistan's President Musharraf for none of his faults is in great trouble for quite some time engulfing him in one or other crisis.

If Americans have died in Middle East it is because of the aggressive foreign policy of President Bush, for no fault of their own many Pakistanis have died as part of US-led war against the unknown "terror".

The politicians have been restless because they want to loot the nation in the name of serving it "better", while the media both in Pakistan and outside it including India give free counseling to Musharraf to shed his military uniform. The fact remains that his uniform cannot be a problem for Pakistan which always had an antagonistic relation with India.

By underplaying the human loss in Pakistan for US interests, the US politicians as well as government officials are launching scathing attack on Pakistan and have even threatened to invade that country, ostensibly to apprehend the so-called "terrorists". Musharraf is under greater duress justifying his actions in the country. Pakistan criticised the US presidential candidate and top Pakistani officials said Obama's comment was irresponsible and was made for political gains in the race for the Democratic nomination. One does not know what makes the US go too harsh against Pakistan of late.

Perhaps it has got something to do with the vague Indo-US nuclear deal, rather than the upcoming presidential poll.

Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal
Freelance writer



Political sycophants

It was irritating to hear the statement of a political leader that the government would be held responsible if "anything" happened to the husband of a detained political leader. How could the govt. be made responsible for "anything" happening to the relations of any politician? It is beyond anybody's guess. Perhaps the answer may not be available even to the person making such a funny remark. It was not even clarified what "anything" really meant. This reminds me of a famous Bengali proverb, "Pagoley Ki Na Boley". These are the characteristics of the politicians who, led by their two controversial leaders, made this country a mess and unlivable during the last twenty years or so. Their misdeeds, corruption and crime against the country and its people, if written properly, would make volumes. After all, these petty professional politicians were the co-sharers of undue benefits during their regime and therefore, as grateful disciples, came up with such kind of absurd utterances only to please their leaders.

The ideal advice for those two party leaders from the party comrades would have been to resign from politics and make room for the younger honest leaders and thus save the country from another turmoil and ruin.

The general public cannot be fooled any more.

on the street were arrested on charges of extortion. I do adhere to the philosophy that an accused is innocent until proven guilty and by no means have I come to the conclusion that she is guilty but looking at her track record - while she was in power and leader of the opposition for years - I am open to the possibility that her actions do deserve some scrutiny. After all, Bangladesh first acquired the dubious distinction of being the most corrupt country in the world during her tenure and retained the distinction for consecutive years thereafter.

Reading the editorials in the various newspapers I am dumbfounded as to what the people of Bangladesh really want. For years, I have read that people cry for justice and equality. I have read about their outrage over the justice system's double standards when it comes to prosecuting politicians. I am perplexed to hear the sentiment that a political figure of Hasina's calibre, the "daughter of the Father of the Nation", could ever be jailed. Is she a saint that she was untouched by the corruption bug that so many of her party have been afflicted with? In a nation that is fighting to establish equality and justice for all of its citizens, why must certain political figures be treated like royalty?

What I find even more perplexing is how the people can entertain the idea of voting to power political figures who have already failed so miserably. Why not channel some of the outrage towards the political parties so that they may offer the people new leadership?

Having said all this, I do realise that the longer the caretaker government is in power, the more power they are looking to garner. It brings to mind a quote from a leader of the not so distant past: "The government is not a solution to our problem, government is the problem."

I am convinced that if Bangladesh had no government since its inception, its people would have been better off today!

O. Uddin
New York City, US

Well sitting over here in Singapore, I was guessing what is going on in Bangladesh. Of course the government's actions against corruption is being hailed, but the question is where do we stand now. As a nation we have gone through ups and downs since our independence, but its time now that we really think about moving forward. For most of the times we fight against each other, one political party against the other, and our attention is concentrated on politics not on national development. If we keep on fighting against each other like this we can never develop our nation and therefore it is time that we start thinking beyond vested political interest.

I think it is high time the government proves itself to be neutral and play its part in national development by withering away all the clouds of doubt. But the point to ponder is, how it should try to attain that goal.

Habiba Sultana
One-mail

Deep seaport

The recent decision by the communication adviser is shocking and undesirable to the citizens of Bangladesh who long for economic prosperity. The deep seaport is an incremental approach and there are lots of support to construct this valuable money making port in our country. Even the multinational institutions have shown interest in this great idea. The World Bank, Japan and IDB and others have also shown interest to finance this initiative. It is said that if the port is completed even partially, it will help augment our GDP by 1 to 2 percent a year which will be a great development to our country.

So, I would appeal to the communications adviser to go forward with construction of the seaport in the greater interest of the country.

Choudhury Hasan
Virginia, USA

Black badge

Ridiculous! I have nothing to say when I see DU teachers wearing black badge in support of corrupt and sub-standard political leaders. Instead, if they wore black badge when Bangladesh became the number one in corruption, people would have been impressed!

Hossain M. Motarab
Jossain

Accommodation problem in Australia

A lot of Bangladeshi students come every year to Australia for higher studies. But their number is much less than the students coming from India.

I want to focus on some problems

that our students are facing here. Students who are planning to come to Australia should make sure that their accommodation is already there. It may turn out to be a serious problem. It is not possible to stay with others for a long time. In Australia, if anybody wants to rent a house/flat, he has to apply to the agency office, has to show the financial source, mention the number of people, references and many other things.

So, be sure of where you are going to stay before coming to Australia.

Sharif
University of Ballarat Melbourne, Australia

"Teaching the teachers"

As an ordinary citizen of this country (I am not a member of any political party), I strongly oppose the article "Teaching the teachers" (Cross Talk, The Daily Star dt. 27-7-07) because of its contents. It has almost become fashionable these days to castigate the popular political leaders. Again, doing so against such a leader as Sheikh Hasina (who is already behind the bars) is not only deplorable but also unethical, because we still do not know as to whether she had committed any crime or corruption at all.

People of Bangladesh never go by any Chinese philosophy, for they have their own philosophy and they are committed to that. We should remember that individuals may commit mistakes, the nation never does. There is not a single country which established true democracy by fiat or by regulations dictated by any authority which itself is not democratic.

It is the people who are the ultimate judge as to who or which party was right and which one was wrong.

Hafeezul Alam
A former member of Bangladesh Civil Service-Admin

Individuals and system

Again we are giving importance to the person, not the system. Why did our two women leaders (i.e., Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina) fail to achieve a solution? They were greatly divided on who would be the Chief Adviser, Election Commissioner, etc. They did not try to understand that if a system could not be developed by closing all the loopholes, it was immaterial who would be occupying the driving seat, as the system keeps a person upright. When the present govt. took oath, we saw light of hope as there were steps to reform the Election Commission, Public Service Commission, Anti Corruption Commission, Court, Police Administration etc.

If these institutions become vibrant and meaningful, our political leaders will also act rightly. In the developed countries, corruption and crime do exist, but these are controlled to a great extent by the powerful constitutional institutions. However, now there is reason to think that the primary initiative and spirit of our govt. has lost way in the shadow of the past. The govt. now seems to spend all its forces in implementing the so-called "minus two" theory. It will be a great mistake to expect positive change by ruling



Our cricketers

We welcome our cricketing heroes home. Though we do not find the tiniest way to render our gratitude, salute or any garlands to you, for you have been all white washed by the hosts Sri Lanka in your recent tour. We well understand that this is all part of the game: no matter if you lose all your Test matches by an innings margin and that too in three days! We cannot but welcome, despite your shameful performance. You are ambassadors of hope and the bearer of our proud flag; but

we, this time around very humbly inform you that we'll no more be doing injustice to the royal creature, our national pride The Royal Bengal Tiger, by robbing it of its deserved title for you.

As for your improvement or the lesson that you've learnt, if at all, the helpless spectacle that you made yourselves to the million awe-struck eyes at their stadiums is none but your business. You can either mend them, correct your wrongs or just go on doing it again and again, of course if it is enter-

tained any more.

Why on earth you should forget that your identity is Cricketer? A good cricketer does not necessarily have to be a smart tiger with a good dose of English accent---- you remain what you are. There are, in the sports arena, many successful sportsmen & women who are internationally esteemed; but do not bother about a title or a command over a second language yet they are great!

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

public thanks, and more importantly; appreciation for his superiors and the department, the sooner the better. He has shown rare initiative in eradicating a heinous crime that ruins our youth; potentially creating more drug related criminals in the society.

We hope and wish that police officials follow such noble examples. This can whitewash the negative image of the police in the community that by and large prevails today.

Now the people in Kushtia, the NGOs and other social-welfare minded organisations should take steps to ensure that these reformed criminals are gainfully employed and earn an honest livelihood. That will be a small price to pay for this salutary effort and an example to all of us. Once again, congratulations to this noble police officer, may be the CTG should recognise and reward him for his unique endeavour.

S.A. Mansoor
Gulshan, Dhaka

Excellent job

BNP chairperson Begum Khaled Zia is strongly condemning the arrest of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and demanding her immediate release. She is criticising the govern-

ment for this action. But people are deceived by her benevolent attitude; they know she is protesting not out of sympathy for Sheikh Hasina but from fear that she might have to share the same fate. So her words seem meaningless.

We think the caretaker government has done what should be done; we have full faith in them.

When everything was falling apart, we were feeling like onboard a ship in a stormy sea, which might sink any moment. At that critical time, the caretaker government held the helm firmly and steered us safely to the shore. The country was reeling under unimaginable turmoil, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed and the advisers took charge, the corrupt people were brought to book and the hunt is still going on. We are stunned by the magnitude of corruption-- many ministers, MPs, politicians, government officials, businessmen are among those who betrayed us!

We do not understand why DU teachers and students are protesting Hasina's arrest, there must be ample reason behind their action!

Nur Jahan
S.S. Khaled Road Chittagong

Transport system



Among all the various alternatives that are being proposed and considered to provide an affordable and convenient transport system for the metropolitan city, an overhead light rail transit system should be considered with top priority. This will be a much cheaper system than an underground metro system, which not only is more capital-intensive with a higher level of security risk but also is more expensive to maintain & operate properly.

During the fag end of the last Awami League government's tenure, there was a news item in the national dailies about some foreign entrepreneurs who were interested to set up such a system for the city at their own cost. They also reportedly were ready to establish the power plants necessary for ensuring an uninterrupted supply of electricity for the whole system. The GoB was supposed to provide the lands for the system.

Prima facie, the proposal seemed to be very attractive but before anything could be done, there was change in the political "musical chair" and the new mandarins in state power in their infinite wisdom (or, due to an ossified mentality to belittle anything and everything done by their predecessors in state power) thought it expedient to bury the project. Nothing has since been heard of the project.

The present government is taking many pro-people projects with long-term benefits to the city dwellers. We would request the government to explore the said project and if found feasible economically and otherwise go for implementing the same. One request would be not to associate any (so called development) partner with it. Another request would be to use state-of-the-art equipments from manufacturers of international repute.

Abu Abdullah
Karwan Bazar, Dhaka