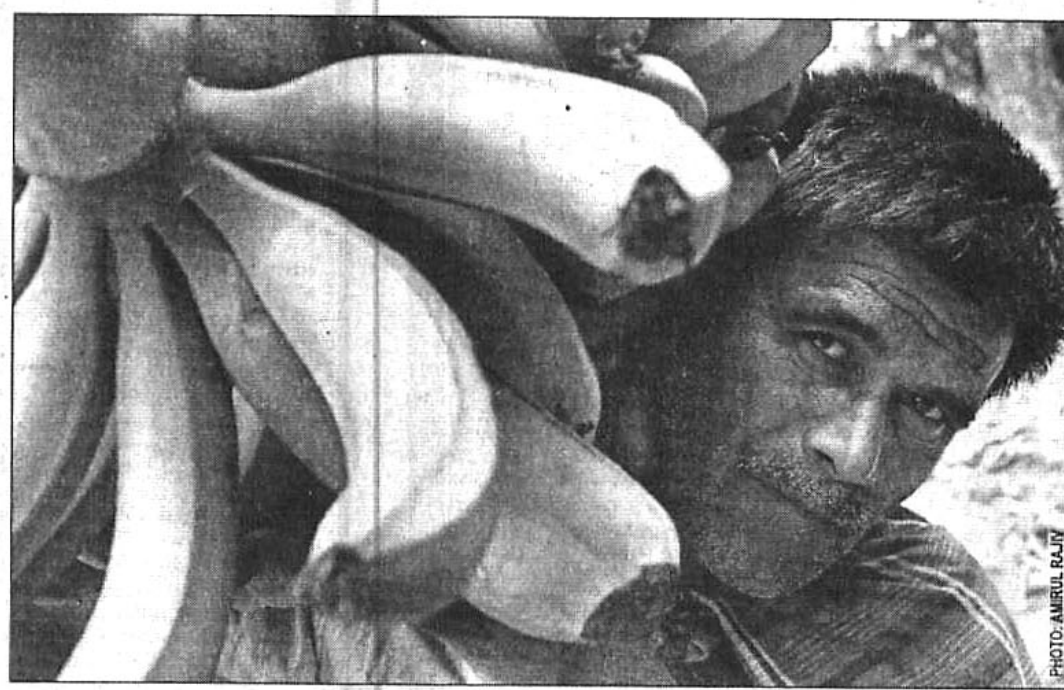
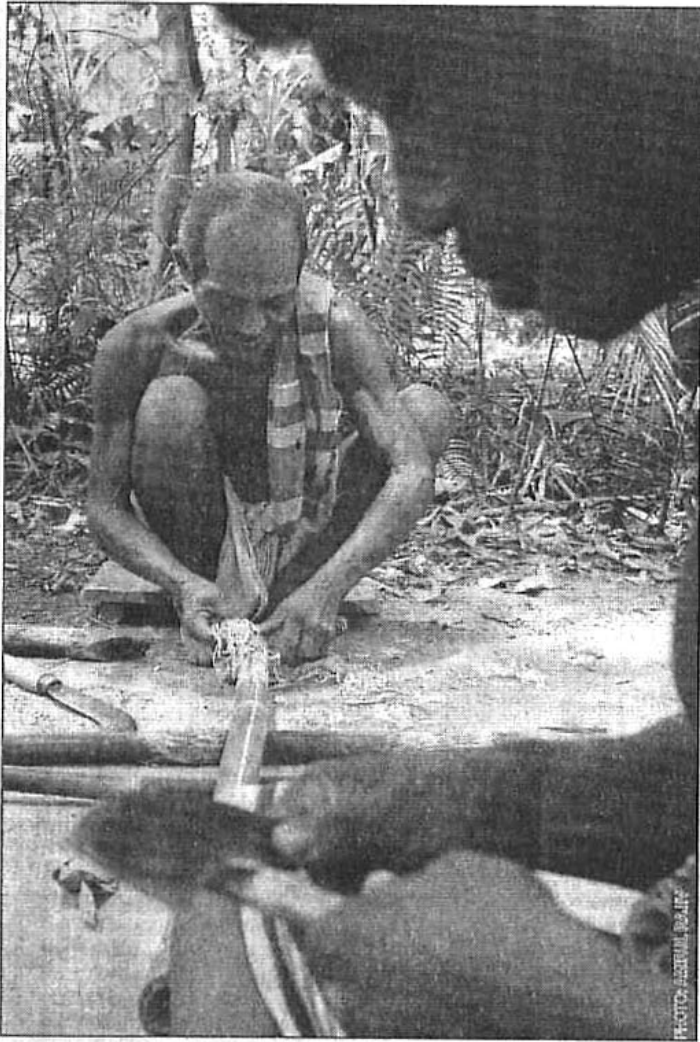


Adivasis in trouble



Twenty thousand Garo Adivasi people of Modhupur Gahr under Tangail District in Bangladesh are living there for more than 600 years. Their life and culture are very close to the nature, earth, and the forests. The beauty of the area is now being destroyed by the Forest Department. The Forest Department with the help of

the law enforcers is destroying their crops, paddy fields, houses, banana plantations and pineapple orchards in the name of biodiversity and environment preservation. The Forest Department has destroyed 330 acres of banana plantations. Indigenous People love forests and their culture is dependent on

nature and forest but the so-called development now endangers their very existence.

The government should immediately look into the matter and save the indigenous people.
Nisharon Nokrek
On e-mail

Violence in Bangladesh

It was a sad day for me as I felt ashamed of what happened on DU campus (August 20, 2007). I was ashamed because it's been 35 years we are in control of our destiny and we are still fighting each other. Those who were involved in the incident are part of our body and soul and whom should we blame?

I spent 12 years in a university in Bangladesh 7 years as a student and 5 years as a faculty. Those 7

armed forces are our own people and still we have a big gap between us. Why do we have to arrange seminars on improvement of civilian-military relationship after 35 years of independence? This is an irony.

I face questions on every occasion (abroad) by others who did not see Ershad rule why did we topple Ershad when so-called politicians are doing even worse. The question does not have an easy answer.

I was very optimistic when the

Bangladesh too. Why can't we do it? Why can't we attract investors? Why and how does, even war-torn Vietnam passes Bangladesh? In order to achieve a goal we must have a vision first and it never occurred to me that we had one in the last 35 years.

The biggest disappointment to me is the role of university teachers. They behaved like submissive people and I know they are becoming corrupt too. Because of the widespread financial and moral corruption, they cannot talk

interpret this as a planned attempt to curb their independence. This culminated in mindless violence.

Without creating turbulence, students should master the art of peaceful demonstration. They seem to take it for granted that vandalism is the only way to achieve their goals. Most importantly, the police must be blamed for exacerbating the predicament by firing teargas shells, charging and beating up the students. How exactly was that supposed to bring the situation under control? The ramification was that students throughout the country engaged in protest in unison against the state of emergency.

The repercussions are delaying of exams, suspension of classes, strikes etc.

Ananya Das
East Basaboo, Dhaka

When I was a student of the then Ahsanullah Engineering College, we had the proud privilege of operating the first independent voice transmitter--broadcasting in Bangla!

Students by nature are volatile; more so in the playing field and that too in their home ground! Trying to be tough and haughty is nothing but a recipe for trouble and conflict. Unfortunately, responsible people ignored the maxim "As you sow, so you reap". To add insult to injury, the police was let loose to teach the students a lesson. The caretakers have failed to take care; when it was most needed.

Counter attack is no solution to cover up misdeeds.
Asenior citizen
Dhaka

Calm down

The students of the many universities who joined the recent violence should calm down and behave responsibly. Their actions are a shame to the nation and to the educational institutions they represent.

The main losers in the last 6 months of caretaker government have been the corrupt and the power hungry. In the last 36 years, this is the first time that the corrupt are facing the consequences of

their actions.

So who are the students fighting for? To bring back the corrupt in the name of democracy? Our state university students have become unruly. A degree that should take 4 years, takes 6 years in these universities. There is a minority of students who play politics and ruin the education system. These are the bullies who have no respect for education or for teachers. But what is disgraceful is that the so called democratic parties like the AL and the BNP use innocent students to play their dirty political games.

It is time the students started thinking about the country, instead of the AL or the BNP.
M. Raheem
New York City, US

Vat on education

Believe it or not the government has imposed 4.5% VAT on English medium education. No such tax on Bengali, Arabic or even Sanskrit medium education, just English medium. Isn't it funny?

Won't it create a sense of frustration amongst the parents who want their children to be educated via English language which is the most widely accepted language in the world?

Fayaz Khan
One e-mail

Ship accidents

Of late lighter age vessels are sinking out in the bay harming the economy and endangering our shipping lanes. All those lighter age ships sinking are either too old or otherwise not authorised to ply in the bay. The M series vessels are not legally authorised to ply out of inland waters if not permitted by the authorities to cross the bay. Such permissions are given to relatively bigger, stronger and properly maintained vessels. But due to negligence of enforcing agencies, most unworthy vessels cross the channel and sometimes meet with accidents causing loss of life and property.

The government should immediately stop plying of vessels beyond their authorised routes.
M.S. Huq
Uttara Model Town
Dhaka

CTG

Lately, I am hearing a couple of things about the CTG, mostly that this government is on the wrong track. Why and why people want to see the CTG failing? Let's try to analyse the situation.

First of all, from the very beginning to the present day the Indian subcontinent is renowned for conspiracy and dual identity. From the times of Tipu Sultan, who was betrayed by native kings, to the present day Bangladesh there are varied people with varied self interests which tend to move the country towards their own goal of selfishness and corrupt interests. Bangladesh from time to time has been betrayed by its own leaders. Even though we are proud that our country achieved a lot in the last couple of years including the highest GDP growth, it is still far away from the desired industrialisation and economic emancipation.

Finally, this caretaker government came to salvage the country from misrule and corruption. It is our foremost duty to support this initiative.

I think the government is doing the right things.
Choudhury Hasan
Virginia, USA

DU and government

Since the very inception of the Dhaka University, it has been playing an important role in all democratic movements of which we feel proud. In this context, Dhaka University should be considered not only as an educational institution but also as a democratic institution. The university is fully autonomous by its structural-functional approach since its very inception. Furthermore, the teachers of the university are also supposed to enjoy full freedom of speech, movement etc.

Now, the government should hold discussions with the university authorities for resolving any problem, instead of harassing the students and teachers in any manner.

Sazzad Siddiqui
DU student (apolitical)
Salimullah Hall

Education and job market

In the absence of a specific education policy, many boys and girls obtaining BSC or MSC in physics or chemistry or in any other subject are entering the banking profession or other occupations but they cannot have jobs related to their subjects as the governments failed to create such jobs for them. So, what is the use of studying those subjects? And it is known to us that when a man does not get a job according to his qualification, it is a wastage of his talent.

So, necessary steps should be taken immediately to address the issue. Above all, real education is a must to develop the country in all aspects.

Md. Abdus Salam
Assistant Teacher (English)
Joypara Pilot High School
Joypara, Dohar, Dhaka

Injured photo journalist

It is really shocking that one of your photo journalists, Showkat Jamil, had met with a tragic accident while on his professional duty.

I pray for his early recovery.

Meanwhile, I appreciate the government move to ensure better treatment for him.
Professor M Zahidul Haque
Chairman
Department of Language
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka

Sino-Russian military exercise

Joint-military exercises have become quite a common feature in

several parts of the world, but the recent Russo-China exercise in Russia acquires importance as it is considered to be a strategic maneuver. Russian and Chinese military forces started joint war-games on 17 August 2007, using a joint land and air assault on a mock town held by "terrorists" as a showcase for their military prowess. Fighter jets swooped overhead, commandos jumped from helicopters onto rooftops and the boom of artillery shells shook the firing range in central Russia as Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao looked on smiling. The presidents, who control two of the largest armies in the world, were joined by leaders and military forces from the four other Central Asian members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a regional security and economic grouping. General Vladimir Moltenski, the Russian commander in charge of the exercise, said the war games involving 7,500 troops from the SCO members would help the grouping fight "international" and "internal terrorists." The "exercise" area is close to Chelyabinsk, nicknamed "Tankograd" after Josef Stalin moved tank and other arms production there during World War-II to escape the invading Nazis. Russia has waged two wars against Muslim Chechen freedom fighters since 1994, China says it has been combating Uighur Muslim rebels in its most westerly province.

Putin considers the exercises as

another step towards strengthening the relations between the countries, a step towards strengthening international peace and security, and first and foremost, the security of Asia-Pacific. Hu also praised the exercises and said: "I am convinced that the current exercise will definitely serve to stimulate the SCO to play a bigger role in the struggle against terrorism in the region." The SCO on 16 August sent NATO a thinly coded warning at its summit, saying the world must let the region resolve its own security. The West has been jockeying with regional powers Russia and China for influence over the energy-rich area.

Russia said that the aim of the operation is freeing of the territory controlled by the terrorists and the destruction of the illegal group of terrorists if they fail to surrender. One fact is glaringly revealed in this joint-exercise by these UNSC-5 members: Russia is fully awakened to reassert its superpower status and once again sends cold warning to US-led NATO about its missile placement in East Europe. Since the collective security system by the CIS nations led by Russia is a weak agency to counter NATO effectively, Russia has decided to use SCO.

President Putin has been critical of aggressive external policies of the US. And the latest global patrolling by Russian fighters over Atlantic and Pacific oceans throws enough light on an emerging confrontational scenario.

Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal
JNU, Delhi

Crusade against corruption



As we all know we are now facing a hazardous situation due to floods. However, I am writing to you to address a current topic--our war against corruption. A few days ago, I watched a live telecast on ATN Bangla where ACC Chairman Hasan Mashud Choudhury was the chief guest. He talked about his plans & said that he didn't have the resources to handle every sector to determine whether there is corruption or not. I agree with him. But my point is most of the middle class people are corrupt too. You are arresting the big ones, but still their followers are doing their jobs. Suppose you may have documents for a tender & you can decide from that if it was allotted illegally. But what about the passport office? The verification officer is taking money from each of the applicants. What about the banks?

Palash Sanyal
Department of civil Engineering, BUET

MOTHER TERESA



scorching realities of life: groans of pains of lepers, blank expressions of orphans etc.

We respect our parents and at times frown upon their words too; that does not mean we ever jettisoned an ounce of our respect. We revere God and might also wonder why and how HE could afford to remain silent at human miseries; that does not disqualify us from praying at our mosques. Our conjecture on the mystic silence of God at human tribulations is out of our unflinching faith in HIS kindness to humanity the way we wrinkle our brows in wonder why and how our mothers could be so rude to her beloved sons.

It is now clear that Mother Teresa was tormented when she failed to reconcile God's generosity with humanity's vulnerability. In one of her letters written in 1956 a few words and phrases like 'such deep longing for God'.....'empty'.....'no faith'....'no love'.....'no zeal' speak volumes for her begging tones to the Providence seeking HIS relief. Many more such begging prayers of Mother Teresa to God we will come to know from the book "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light" due out on September 04 next.

"I don't believe in your existence, God", if Teresa wrote in any of her letters, should be interpreted as "You can't compel me to believe me in your existence, God, if you don't extend your hand just now to salvage this child from the clutch of death. You have to forgive my audacity because you know how deeply I rely on you when my heart bleeds and how affectionately you have always loved me."

Maswood Alam Khan
General Manager
Bangladesh Krishi Bank

years were spent under the rule of Ershad and happily I joined BUET in the department of EEE in the so-called democratic and free atmosphere. I participated in the anti-Ershad movement actively and was very happy to see him gone as his rule was based on lies and deceptions.

I am always curious to know the cause and effect of any incident. The incident that happened on the soccer field was not an isolated one, rather it shows the cross-sectional views on the current situation in Bangladesh.

I would prefer to have some self-criticism by all of us I had friends from the army and the navy while I was a student and had numerous army/navy students while I was a teacher. I strictly do not allow any differential treatment based on race, gender, culture or occupation and I believe in professional neutrality and treated my students as such. It hurts when I see differential treatment by different groups in Bangladesh. I faced the situation many times. The officers in the

present CTG took over on January 11 this year. I was traveling to Bangladesh to take my mother to India for her treatment. I started on January 10 and was supposed to take a flight to India on January 14. I did not have a clue how I would be able to take my mother to the airport as blockades were declared on those days. When I arrived in Dhaka on January 12, I found about the change and felt extremely happy. I was hoping for all sorts of good things for Bangladesh as its people deserve that very much.

The people deserve to know the truth the governance should be based on truth and freedom. I would suggest to people in power now to apply law equally, not selectively. Unrest and movement boils up when people feel justice is not done and laws are different for different people.

I am a keen observer of Bangladesh political, economic, social and other aspects. I see Chinese made ordinary goods in my everyday life and every time I see them I think this can be made in

straight any more. There are still good teachers with exceptionally high morality but they are becoming a minority.

However, I am an optimistic man and would do anything good for Bangladesh in my capacity, whatever it takes.
Dr. Ashikur Rahman Bhuiya
Calgary, Canada

The recent confrontation between the students of Dhaka University and the law enforcers manifests how a trivial situation erupted into a mayhem. For two days, the students protested on streets, torched vehicles and faced the police. But why did it occur? For some time, students demanded withdrawal of the army camp from the campus gymnasium. There was tension among the students. The tension was translated into action when some army personnel harassed students during a varsity game, ordering them to remove their umbrella as it obstructed their vision. Students lost no second to

Relief work



When we were students of ninth grade we came across a story, entitled Relief Work, in our Bengali textbook. As the story goes, Hamid, the protagonist of the story, joins relief work out of his love for the suffering masses. Interestingly, all his enthusiasm and devotion for the salvage operation melt into thin air when he discovers, to his shock, the ugly faces of those so-called relief workers. He finds that they are more interested in helping themselves with the relief materials, instead of serving the people in distress. This apathy on the part of

those workers forces some of those poor people to steal relief stuff at night. Once some of these people are caught in the act of stealing and are handed over to the law enforcers and branded as rogues.

As the country is reeling under the rushing flow of floodwater, relief work has become a buzzword. But we are not aware of the ground realities of the said relief operation. We can only hope that this time around the relief workers will remain true to their calling.

Zabed Wali
Pahartali, Chittagong