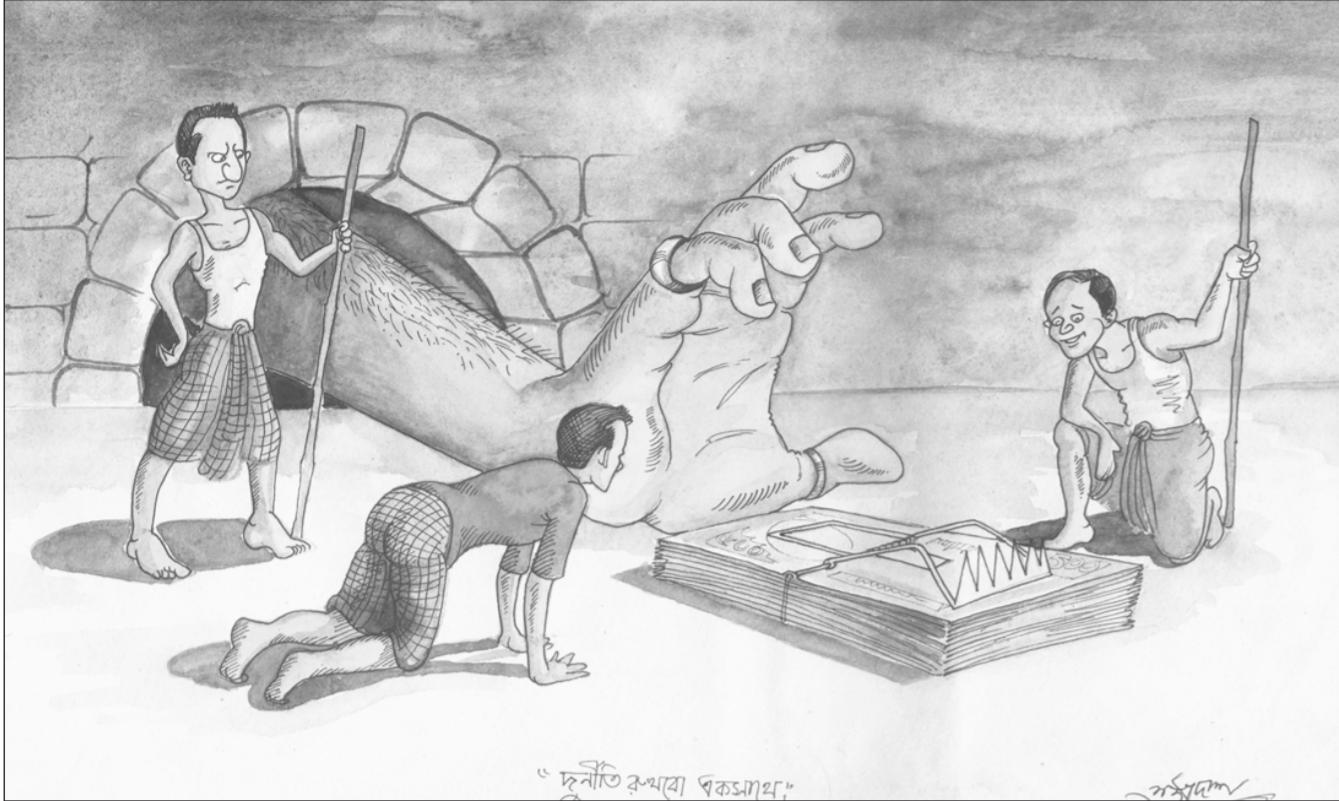


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

# Fighting corruption



Corruption is an age-old phenomenon which needs to be addressed in a practical way. During the Caliphate of Hazrat Umar (R) one tax collector brought two bags and placed them in front of him saying one is for the Baitul Mal (govt. treasury) and the other for him. When asked how he obtained the bags for himself, the tax collector replied that the people donated the money willingly. The Caliph dismissed the man and asked him to go to the people now for

donation (after losing the job) and deposited both the bags to the treasury. So corruption was there in every age in different forms and shape but it is the duty of the head of the govt. to see that his administration remains free of corrupt people.

It is sad that people who are placed very high in our government and in society are corrupt tax evaders. These people are also coming in front of camera, talking about the country, shedding

tears for the welfare of the people and what not! They are seen distributing relief materials among the flood victims. What a joke!

Writing volumes in the newspapers and inventing theories of corruption, and how to fight it, will not yield any results!

**Commodore AMA Alam (Retd.) BN**  
New DOHS, Dhaka

## Separation of judiciary

The separation of the judiciary is taking more than 12 years! The water level in the judicial dam is dropping precipitously.

Who can take steps now to address the problem or wait to be plunged into judicial darkness and a new form of "Justice load-shedding"?

**Gopal Sengupta**  
Canada

## Transparent governance

The chief adviser has finally disclosed the stance of his office regarding its commitment to holding the upcoming general election in the year 2008. But the burning question is how many and what are the options left to the nation to elect a good, corruption-free government which can shape the country's socio-economic structure well and gear up necessary activities to fulfill the long cherished dream of us to build a united, peaceful, hunger-free and pollution free Bangladesh. The striking scenario, and a bitter truth as well, is that time and again the common people of our country had to pay for keeping their faith on the political parties.

This is high time to observe the activities of election-seeking leaders for at least one year, before the national election, as monitoring those may enable us to elect the right persons.

**Md. Ali Haider**  
MS Student  
South Dakota State University  
USA

## DU incident

Forty eminent citizens on Sunday issued a statement regarding the recent incident at Dhaka University.

Below is a direct quote, as published in a Dhaka daily, from the statement:

"We demand immediate release of the arrested teachers and innocent students. At the same time, we convey our concern at the obstructions journalists are facing in discharging their professional duties and are calling for ensuring the freedom of mass media."

I find the eminent citizens' statement ridiculous. Demanding immediate release of the arrested innocent students and freedom of mass media is understandable, but demanding immediate release of the arrested teachers defies all norms of law and order of any civilised society. The 40 eminent citizens did not demand the government to act in accordance with the law and follow proper legal procedures in trying the teachers, but demanded their unconditional release. The 40 eminent citizens' statement clearly lacks evidence of their understanding the issue in question and points towards their relentless support for their friends.

The issue around the teachers' arrest is not if they are respected or hated academics, but if they have committed the alleged crimes the government is accusing them of. The mere fact that the arrested teachers are the members of the so called civil society does not and should not grant them immunity from the law of the land at a time when the law is trying to protect the general mass.

To any teachers of any institutions, I say this: It is O.K. to have political consciousness and opinions, but not O.K. to do active politics in your institution when the tax payers pay you for teaching their children, not to do politics. This is an age-old story and this way all the political parties have fooled the nation.

**Kazi Nasim Ahmed**  
Zigatola Notun Rasta  
Dhaka

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I am referring to the recent violence on DU campus. Isn't it time to correct ourselves, instead of asking the general people to calm down. These people have no clue as to why we are so poor and corrupt, why there is street agitation and so on. There is another reason to say this because I saw in the newspaper that some civil activists and eminent people asked the public to calm down. Why don't we ask the politicians, teachers and the powerful to calm

down and not to instigate the public in a non-civic way? If we do that I think a big portion of our nation's problem will be solved.

Don't blame the general people and make them scapegoats. We are just the general people. We follow the system (?) and order.

**Mahmudul Hasan**  
Engineer, Texas Instruments  
Dallas, Texas

## Students of DU

They look in retrospect to the tumultuous past of the country and say with pride that the students of DU led from the front in all the movements. The other day one prominent professor of Dhaka University told a television journalist that the DU does not teach students to become cowards. I get confused as to what for students go to DU, to pursue higher studies or to wield sticks? Are they taught how to set vehicles on fire, vandalise shops and destroy public property? Even if the whole issue is taken in right perspective, what do we find is a very minor violation, a moment of slackness on the part of a soldier and his superior. The superior should have better advised him not to transgress.

DU has been looking for an opportunity since long to humiliate the govt. And what could be more convenient than to use the students, looking at their belligerent past. So the army must be blamed for not being able to assess the situation correctly. They should also be blamed for not acting promptly to quell the anger of the students. What is more pathetic is to watch that none of the army men had been able to develop a rapport with some of their volatile counterparts, even after living there for six months.

It is very interesting to see that the same students remain nonchalant to hear of corruption of unimaginable magnitude, by some of our great leaders. They were never found to have come forward to organise a forum or so, to say no to corruption or demand exemplary punishment. They are never united against the student leaders, who are born to remain students and keep on doing the tender business. Neither they say anything against those teachers, who despite being in the payroll of the university, live abroad for personal reasons, sometimes for years.

They are not even bothered to know that the 'The Oxford of the East' these days doesn't even appear in the list of five hundred universities from all over Asia. So better watch out and if you are looking to take to the street in future, please shift your focus from the peripheral political issues, to more core issues.

**Manna Chow**

*On e-mail*

## Impression of our country!

I am writing this in response to the letter (A foreigner's experience) that was published in your daily on 22/08/2007.

I reside in Dubai and when people ask about my nationality

I'm proud to say that I'm a Bangladeshi from Chittagong, they are surprised to hear what I say!

Most people have the impression that Bengalis are cheats and don't know manners.

And ever since I have been asking myself the question as to why the people of our country are still in the dark about all such matters.

I mean we just cannot stay behind and keep on blaming others for a problem that is not their concern.

Nobody needs money to be well behaved and to speak properly.

It's only a matter of self-improvement.

And we Bengalis are never willing to do this on our own until someone points it out.

I hope we shall be able to change our ways in the near future.

**Asad**

*On e-mail*

## Political dialogue

Most of the non-resident Bangladeshis remain very much concerned about the rapidly shifting twists and turns in the political arena of the country. However, there is a consensus that the advisers in the current caretaker government and the team in the reconstituted Election Commission are quite well-meaning personalities, who have the background, commitment and foresight to steer the country out of the crisis.

The roadmap for elections, already declared, is certainly a welcome development; but as a way forward in the meantime it may be worthwhile to widen the proposed dialogue with the political parties in terms of both scope and space so that the core issues of electoral reforms as well as practical problems of governance may be addressed with an open mind. The suggestion in this regard from the acting Awami League president should be taken positively.

Meanwhile, the country's academia and the learners should be enabled to return to their campuses at the earliest, before it is too late and the regime's intention is misperceived nationally as well as internationally.

**Abul Kalam**

*On e-mail*

## Government's job

The following should be the government's priorities at the moment.

- To establish a national security council.
- To take all possible measures for ensuring honesty of the administration at all levels.
- To eliminate corruption from all the sectors, including education.
- To establish the rule of law.
- To alleviate poverty.
- To take the necessary actions against the corrupt business people.
- To ensure accountability and transparency in all respects.

**Dr. Noor Mohammad**  
Head of the Department of Law & Justice  
Metropolitan University, Sylhet

## Follow the rules

I do not know why the Dhaka University students were targeted. The students were caught and mercilessly beaten. This happened in Aziz Super Market, Shahbag, Shaheed Minar and in different stations and places. I am scared about everything. If anyone is found guilty he should face the due legal process.

I request all of you to stay with the truth. Let's work together for the development of the country. Whoever he is, if he goes the wrong way, he should be stopped.

**M. Karim**

*Ex-student of Dhaka University*

## ICL versus BCCI

The word of war between Indian Cricket League (ICL) and the Indian Cricket Board (BCCI) is getting intense. The recent interim order passed by the Delhi High Court on the suit filed by ICL boosted the latter's morale. The court has ordered both the Federal Government and BCCI to come up with their replies against the suit. BCCI has warned its players that any player found aligned with ICL will be barred from playing cricket for India. No doubt, this is a harsh order issued by BCCI to its players. The Delhi High Court, on the other hand, has delivered its observation that the BCCI has no right to issue such statement that a player may lose his job if he is found to be aligned with ICL. Meanwhile, BCCI has sacked Kapil Dev, the legendary Indian cricketer, from the honorary post of chairman of the National

Cricket Academy because of his joining ICL. Madan Lal, another veteran of Indian cricket, who is now holding the post of cricket coach of ICL termed the ruling as relief for ICL.

Bishen Singh Bedi has said that ICL is not giving guns and arms to the players! They are just asking them to play cricket! Why BCCI should lose sleep over it? (DS 28 August). I think competition is always good for a person to judge his/her worth.

In Bangladesh, we should also start something like ICL to judge and develop the capability of our cricketers in order to develop their skills.

**Humayun Hyder**

*Zigatola, Dhaka*

## Electricity from municipal wastes

Electric power generation from solid urban municipal wastes is a proven technology, already such power plants are operating in EU.

This available and easily exploitable fuel source is sufficiently present in our cities of Dhaka and Chittagong. The quantity of such waste is adequate in these two cities for utilisation as fuel for power generation. Some times back in '05 or '06, a private sector waste collecting and composting company gave a proposal to this effect to the Dhaka City Corporation, where the proposal possibly died its natural death, maybe for lack of sufficient incentive to the right place!

I would sincerely implore upon the CTG to take up this matter with urgency and immediately revive this innovative proposal. I believe that a French organisation which operates similar plants also showed its interest, but gave up facing the Bureaucratic Wall of Dhaka (our Berlin Wall).

Cost of fuel, the major operating cost component for power generation in this case, is the cost of collecting and sorting of solid municipal wastes.

It will also provide gainful employment to many unskilled people!

Whatever power that can be produced, should be welcome; as the fuel source is basically free; and the quantity of fuel available will go on increasing with the growth of urban population. This is just reverse of geological resources; which go on decreasing usually!

I would earnestly request our government to take up this matter



## Attention: Top Two

I would be appreciated if Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina could announce their retirement from politics.

They should follow the example of Nelson Mandela. Khaleda Zia can declare some respected person as BNP chairman (not from her family) and Sk. Hasina can make Mr. Zillur Rahman or Mrs. Motia Choudhury the chairman of the AL (nobody from her family). This will save their parties.

Most importantly, the people of Bangladesh and the economy will get relief from uncertainty and the democratic political culture will survive.

This will be a historical step in our politics.

**Dr. Majumder**  
Darmstadt  
Germany

with seriousness and determination, so that the proposal sees the light of the day and is set on track before December 2008. Even if the capital cost for the plant per KW may be higher, the operating cost is bound to be lower, and its economic benefit for the poor unemployed people coming into productive activity will create wealth generation at the appropriate level.

**S.A. Mansoor**  
Gulshan, Dhaka

## Stitch in time

Professor Amartya Sen, the Nobel laureate, reveals through his research work that the famines of 1943 and 1974 that struck the Bengal and Bangladesh respectively was due to the breakdown of the human efforts for supply of essentials and inaccessibility of the consumers to the products and services.

Thanks to the late president General Ziaur Rahman and former president General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, that altogether 18 cantonments each with

a helipad and extensive capacity for carrying out huge relief activities were commissioned.

In the late 1980s, the former US president George Bush and US secretary of State James Baker authorised the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, to avert the humanitarian crisis across the drought-prone areas of North Africa. Later, US president George W. Bush and former US Secretary of State General Colin Powell laid emphasis on the UN peacekeeping missions for rehabilitating and rebuilding the devastated African countries with the officers and troops mainly drawn from the Indian sub-continent.

If the donor countries and multilateral financial institutions arrange the procurement of relief goods in time, then our patriotic armed forces and the citizens at large can deliver their duty and service to avert any looming crisis and disaster in the country.

**Golam Ashraf**  
Gulshan, Dhaka

# ONLY A BLUFF?



It quite interesting, if not amazing, to note that the US and Iran engage themselves in a fierce verbal warfare nowadays. Iran has declared having achieved what it wanted in the nuclear field and the US can do nothing about that now. The US, on the other hand, says that the Pentagon is almost ready with a quick attack on Iranian vital sites, not only its economic arsenals and nuclear installations, but also the entire military is being targeted by the US and that Iran cannot escape the attack no matter how it tries. All this looks like film dialogues to which the international public is so familiar with. But the continuous war of words by these two countries has caused serious tension in the world. In fact the US and Iran are mentally ransacking the international community with their rhetoric for quite some time now and the world is at a loss as to what exactly has been happening between them.

Iran, for whatever reasons, has become over-confident that the US would not attack it now or anytime in future and the US-led war is almost over with the fall of Afghanistan that threatened the West with its aggressive Islamisation drive. One does not know if Iran already has some "nuclear understanding" with the Bush administration and agreed also to export energy resources free of cost to the US as an appeasement gift. If so well and good. After all, who wants war?

Unwritten rules and norms are common in international relations and the exact position of the US-led war agenda for Iran is thus not known to the world. And one cannot go by the foreign policy statements of the countries, more so of the US wanting to showcase its military power to the world at large.

**Dr. Abdul Ruff Colachal**

*Freelance writer, Delhi, India*

# Mannan Bhuiyan's expulsion



What a pity! Begum Khaleda Zia defended her son Tarique as an innocent man—Zia's son who cannot be corrupt. To her, it was all conspiracy (a common complaint she always had against her opposition). She has made a big mistake by expelling Mannan Bhuiyan.</