



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.

### Public universities

Currently, Dr. Kamal Hossain is giving some sense of direction to the nation regarding socio-economic and political issues facing the country. His recent appearance in a round table discussion meeting and his comments on university education problem are very significant.

He raised the question whether the autonomy act 1973 of public universities steered by him as the then law minister was wrong. I think, he should not lament because the act is good and will remain good. The problem is not with the law, the problem is with the implementer of the law. Try to identify the wrong implementer of the law and think about him or her professional and administrative capabilities to implement the law. Here lies the real problem which should be addressed. Kindly look at the process of selecting the VCs of the public universities, and selection of chairman and members of the UGC. The inherent right of every citizen is to enjoy the freedom of choice including freedom of exercising the right to politics. Therefore, one should not recommend any ban on the political rights of the students and the teachers. I have no specific proposal, but I think the current practice of politics by the teachers needs to be addressed to make it acceptable to the teachers and the society at large. However, any move to curb student politics would not be a positive move for the nation.

The teachers are more responsible, responsive and enjoy due respect and confidence of our society. They should be able to come out with better and non party political options. The use of colours (white, blue and pink) can no longer hide a teacher's party-political identity. Therefore, this so long "avainab" idea should be discarded and discontinued by the teachers. The required election to various university forum should be

fought on individual basis, and not with any party-political affiliation. The political party reforms agenda might address this issue from the other end.

The government decision to reopen all public higher educational institutions is a good move. The success of the move will largely depend on the conciliatory move by all concerned, and non-partisan approach to the auxiliary issue by the public university and college authorities. Perhaps the need of the hour, to have a stable situation, is to initiate a dialogue between, the students, teachers and the government agencies concerned to remove any apprehension of overdoing (Hoarani) by the law enforcement authorities. The lead should come from the government. We feel sorry for such a bad idea of instituting cases against thousands of unknown people, especially students which, hopefully, have not divided the nation.

Finally, I have a question to the Honourable VC of Dhaka University. As we know from the press report that during the last unfortunate incident in his university he was not in the country. Did he keep himself informed about what was going on in his university? Did he ever think that he should discontinue his stay abroad and come back home and handle the situation personally?

**A reader**

One e-mail

### Bhuiyan and Saifur

I am appalled at the invitation (and the bad judgement) of Mannan Bhuiyan to Saifur Rahman to head the BNP. The former finance minister reportedly failed to pay his income tax when his personal taxes had become originally due.

Does Mr. Bhuiyan think that things are going to be the same as before after the lifting of the emergency? I sincerely hope not! When, if ever, are the politicians

going to learn?

**D A Islam**

Leesburg, USA

### University teachers

In the case of the recent turmoil in the universities, the government could have sat down with the Vice Chancellors, Syndicate Members and Honourable Teachers of the universities and chalk out a peaceful solution to bring back a congenial atmosphere to the campus. While the Chief Adviser's speech demonstrates a forward looking approach to matters that have been causing public concern, substantive actions should be initiated to bring back normalcy to the highest seats of learning.

Hope the government will trust the words of the General Secretary who claims to be speaking from the 'bottom of his heart' for such unavoidable circumstances at that very moment, and act accordingly.

**Gopal Sengupta**

Canada

### The sea

Science-fiction writer Jules Verne in his epic work "20,000 Leagues under the sea" focused on the untapped vastness of the two-third area of the mother earth comprising the sea, while the rest one-third being the land on which the possibility of changes of lifestyle and living could be achieved in the future.

In the mid 1960s, the Balaka cinema hall in Dhaka ran this movie for a golden jubilee period. Then and now the citizens around the world are coping with communication by sea, fishing in sea, cruising on sea, holidaying in nearby seashores, scuba diving across the seabed, eating a variety of seafoods etc. Starting from the early 1960s with the Chinese restaurant Choh Chin Chow owned by F. A. Dossani at the once Gulistan building at the then Jinnah Avenue, Dhaka, we can now find the pres-

ence of a Chinese restaurant up to the upazila level, serving the same dishes. In brief, the citizens of Bangladesh are also getting accustomed to living with the sea, consuming and utilising its healthy and useful resources.

From time to time, France had been carrying out nuclear detonations in the Oceania but the adverse effect on humanity, creatures in the sea and cracked ocean floor have put an end to it. In general, the ordinary world citizens are day by day coming closer to the sea and learning to utilise its resources but the national leaders, scientific advisers and environmental experts collectively are trailing behind with their contributions for the utilisation of the sea and its resources.

**Why will we be deprived of the opportunities?**

The government should keep in mind that the unemployed are extremely frustrated. Please announce the holding of the 28th BCS as soon as possible.

**Shakil Ahmed**

ICMAB

### Mobile re-registration

The BTRC has ordered the mobile phone operators to register all their subscribers. It's fine and we respect this consciousness, though it's coming a bit late. Mobile phone operators are encouraging their users by advertising the same. Users have to go to the service centres for registration with their photos, SIM card, photo identity and necessary papers. But there are some problems. If the user has to go to the service centre himself, then why should the user take the overhead of printing their photos again. One user may have several operators' SIM, almost everyone has. Then if one has 3 SIMs, each SIM needs 2 photos which takes Tk 8 each to print; then how much one has to pay only to print his/her photos? Is it the customers' responsibility only to get registered?

I think this is the easy way to bring the culprits to justice. Punish them by imposing a fine according to the damage done.

**K. M. Shamsuzzaman**

Moscow-Russia

### A proposal

We observed destruction of public property by our students. We don't want to see such kind of vandalism in future. So, some steps should be taken into consideration by the govt. and law enforcement agencies.

I would like to propose the following:

1. Use video camera on the spot to identify the subversive elements, as there are so many high tech devices available now at a reasonable cost.

2. Encourage the professional or amateur photographers to sell their sensitive snaps or video footage to the law enforcement agencies.

3. Open a call centre to receive public call without any charge from the caller.

I think this is the easy way to bring the culprits to justice. Punish them by imposing a fine according to the damage done.

**Shinjan**

Kalabagan, Dhaka

### Statement of assets

It is an addition of another page to the tragic as well as shameful chapter of the history of Bangladesh being written, a cause of no pride and joy to us, Bangladeshis, both native and expatriates. Those eminent teachers entrusted with the responsibility of shaping the minds of the future leaders of the nation are within their rights to show their indignation. But their choice of leaders, for whose cause they are taking a stand, cannot be condoned. Those two ladies have failed to serve the nation, an opinion that needs no explanation.

By any standard they (two ladies) are in a way qualified to lead a nation. Their claims to leadership, claims that they themselves have forfeited due to their abject lack of qualities as leaders, stem from their relations to past leaders. The present political situation in the country, intolerable as it is, is the product of the inaptitude and stubbornness of them. Those professors, instead of being the brain trusts of the nation, were themselves engaged in partisan politics influenced by political ideals.

**Mohammad A Meah MD**

Paramus, New Jersey, USA

### Leaders and teachers

It is an addition of another page to the tragic as well as shameful chapter of the history of Bangladesh being written, a cause of no pride and joy to us, Bangladeshis, both native and expatriates. Those eminent teachers entrusted with the responsibility of shaping the minds of the future leaders of the nation are within their rights to show their indignation. But their choice of leaders, for whose cause they are taking a stand, cannot be condoned. Those two ladies have failed to serve the nation, an opinion that needs no explanation.

It will be an important step towards ensuring transparency and accountability of the govt servants who actually constitute the permanent set-up of the govt in our system. In this matter the govt servants should include the employees of the corporations, autonomous bodies and the like. It was once incorporated in the government servants' conduct rules and was also given effect to in the early eighties. It continued for two years or so. But without any cogent ground the system was discontinued. Was it not the result of an unholy alliance among the people in authority?

Not only it should be reintroduced, but it should also be reintroduced with retrospective effect.

**S. M. Matir Rahaman**

Joint Secretary (retd) GoB

Mirpur, Dhaka

### Nuclear power plant

Recent newspaper reports indicate that Bangladesh may have asked Russia for help in setting up a Nuclear Power Plant! This (highly knowledgeable?) move is totally wrong and dangerous. We are approaching the only country who managed to have the LARGEST and most DANGEROUS nuclear reactor accident in the last half a century of nuclear reactor operations! The very idea is mind boggling!

The safest (proven accident proof), simplest and the most cost effective nuclear reactor is the "Pebble Bed" design, which is built in South Africa, and runs their nuclear power plants. A number of such power plants are running in South Africa for over a decade. It can be built in modular units, adding on capacity as the demand and resources justify.

One wonders why most members of our scientific community (including Dr. Majumder from Germany) who wrote in this column on Sept 10 are unaware of this fact.

The information is available only a "click" away in the Internet! One also wonders why our (wise?) government; even today has kept South Africa incommunicado; by not having any postal, fax or email link with the most prosperous and developed African nation!

Probably no noting has been put up by any of our (erstwhile "Charidik Samiti Paray" CSP) high flying bureaucrats, for the needed steps in opening up contact with South Africa; a country more technologically developed than many countries in Europe today!

The ambulance which carries a dying patient cannot reach the destination in time. It needs no telling that the fire brigade vehicles are also the worst sufferers.

The authorities concerned should address the issue immediately.

**Md. Ekram Hossain**

Dept. of English (4th batch)

Asian University of Bangladesh

### 28th BCS

As a developing country, Bangladesh is entering into the

vortex of globalisation. Bangladesh is changing very fast in all sectors. For ensuring an efficient civil administration, the PSC has contributed towards developing it but nowadays we see that the PSC is not concerned with those who are exceeding their age limit. As citizens of Bangladesh, we have the fundamental right to get the due opportunities in the country.

Why will we be deprived of the opportunities?

The government should keep in mind that the unemployed are extremely frustrated. Please announce the holding of the 28th BCS as soon as possible.

**Shakil Ahmed**

ICMAB

## FLOODS



PHOTO: AMIRUL RAJIV

other social, national & international groups/ agencies are contributing in many ways to mitigating the sufferings of the flood stricken people.

3. They should also place their cowsheds much above the flood level.

4. They should sink tube-wells.

5. Almost every school, madrasa and college should have small or big playgrounds. This ground should also be raised high above the flood level, so that affected people with their cattle can take shelter there.

6. I have seen beautifully constructed cyclone shelters in the coastal areas. Similar shelters should also be made in some places for seriously flood-affected people.

Meanwhile, the government should continue all long & short-term projects to contain the recurring floods in Bangladesh.

**MAALIM**

Ex. Banker

Indira Road, Dhaka

## APEC summit



PHOTO: AFP

Like G-8 nations, Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC/Apec) assumes importance for stability of world economy. These countries also are responsible for the negative effects of economic growth at a fast speed.

Twenty-one world leaders - including US President George W Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin were attending the APEC meeting for talks on climate change, regional security and free trade held at Sydney, Australia.

Several bilateral discussions took place on the sidelines of the APEC forum. Officials from the 21 countries attending the talks agreed to the scope that discussions would take on key issues at the APEC summit. Trade and foreign ministers would conduct further negotiations.

Bush was one of the first leaders to arrive in Australia for the forum, followed by Hu. Bush held a preliminary talk with Australia's John Howard.

Like issues of climate change and security, product safety was also expected to be on the agenda. He had already addressed the issue of the safety of Chinese-made products at his news conference with Howard. China took product safety "very seriously" and was willing to work with the international community to step up quality inspec-

tions and examinations, he said.

In recent months, Australia, Japan and the US have been strengthening security co-operation, in a move that has worried China. But Howard said there was no hidden agenda. "The trilateral dialogue between Australia, Japan and the US is not directed at anyone, any more than the strategic dialogue I have just announced between Australia and China is not directed at anyone," he said. The USA and Australia would use the APEC opportunity to impress upon China about the need to keep Asia-Pacific region tension free.

The recent G-8 summit ended inconclusively on certain core subjects, handing down disillusionments to the world. The USA remains the largest polluter of atmosphere, closely followed by China and India and unless these countries reduce carbon emissions, there is very little the world could do to save humanity from dangerous pollution owing to the wrong policies of these countries. One does not know if planned economic development helped countries like Russia to control enormous carbon emission to the atmosphere.

The US-led war on terror has angered the Australians and they were protesting against the war mongers at the APEC summit venue and elsewhere in the country. The Australian government spent

A\$169m (£68m, \$138m) on security for the event over six years, with media dubbing the barrier the "rabble-proof fence". The 5km (three-mile) barrier is intended to protect the 21 leaders attending the meeting from thousands of protesters expected at the summit. Fighter jets and police helicopters patrolled the skies above Sydney, while Australia's navy deployed ships, divers, water police and special forces in Sydney harbour.

The CAG's suggestion is very worthwhile.

**Aminul Islam**

Baiti Para road

Khulna

### Ambulance and fire brigade vehicles

Ambulance and fire brigade vehicles cannot move from one place to another quickly enough when other vehicles are not helpful to clear the road. The roads are always busy. Most of the drivers of our country are not well trained. They drive recklessly. The drivers are not willing to obey the traffic rules and they want to drive at their sweet will (whimsically). The number of traffic policemen is insufficient. The tendency of overtaking is also responsible for these problems. Most of these problems occur in the congested areas where the roads are very narrow.

The ambulance which carries a dying patient cannot reach the destination in time. It needs no telling that the fire brigade vehicles are also the worst sufferers.

The authorities concerned should address the issue immediately.

**Md. Ekram Hossain**

Dept. of English (4th batch)

Asian University of Bangladesh

### 28th BCS

As a developing country, Bangladesh is entering into the

Chowdhury's observation about police behaviour (Sept:10) is the bitter reality in Bangladesh; possibly inherited from their old Pakistan days tradition! The unfortunate fact is that most of us consider police