

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.

Global warming



With natural calamities around the globe, in different forms of extreme rainfalls, earthquakes, tsunami etc and with the global leaders going busy (lately enough though) to sort out measures to cope with them, the world seems, however, to have a little respite before conceding some unprecedented damage.

It is however to be mentioned here that the West, the USA (the developed countries) have been using industrial fuels (carbon) and thus emitting their indiscriminately right from the time of the Industrial Revolution. China, the Asian Giant, joined

them lately. Now the questions that are haunting us, when the whole globe is on the verge of a disaster are manifold: why didn't all these developed countries take the necessary measures to control the menace? If they had taken steps in this regard, then, at what proportion did they do it? Were they not aware of the future devastating effect of carbon emissions? And again, the more frightening point is that the developing countries, Bangladesh and some more, are going to be the worst victims of the calamity, where they had very little or no involvement whatsoever.

Under such circumstances, however, what the leading nations of the world should be doing, without any doubt or hesitation, is that without further delay they should wage a united war against this inevitable disaster.

It is interesting to note at this moment that the US president George W. Bush is going all out to stop it.

Finally, I urge all the leading nations to fight against this danger all united and quick. Nature, otherwise, might strike furiously.

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

Compliance officer

A new post has been created in the RMG sector. That is compliance officer. Nowadays it's a very challenging & sensitive post. The value of this post is increasing rapidly. But a compliance officer cannot perform his duties independently because some owners want to recruit compliance officers only to display before the buyers that they are complying with the set standards.

I think the best way to ensure compliance is to enhance the customers' confidence.
Md. Enamul Islam
Tejgaon, Dhaka

Reaz Rahman on Shehabuddin book

I am prompted to write this letter to tell some truths which Mr. Reaz Rahman in his letter published in The Daily Star on 24 September preferred to conceal. Rahman refers to his crossing over to Afghanistan when he was denied permission to join Bangladesh in 1971. The fact is that Rahman crossed into Afghanistan only in early 1973 with many thousands of other Bengalis who were following the same hazardous route of the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier and from there to Kabul and onward to New Delhi. These people after

crossing the frontier to Afghanistan would make their way to the Indian embassy in Kabul and the Indian embassy would in its turn arrange air tickets for them by Afghanistan's Aryana Airlines. The Bangladesh High Commission officials in New Delhi were receiving these Bengalis returning from Pakistan via Kabul at Delhi airport and arrange their onward journey to Calcutta and finally their home country.

I know these facts from my experience because I was then a first secretary at the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi. I was the official who received,

among many others, Reaz Rahman and his family at Delhi Airport on a winter afternoon in 1973. So Reaz Rahman's crossing over to Afghanistan one full year after the liberation of Bangladesh cannot be considered an instance of credit, much less of patriotism.

Reaz Rahman defends his decision to return to Pakistan in early October of 1971 as he could not trust either Pakistan or India because they had their own games to play. Well, this is the very same defence of the Jamaatis for their hostile role against our liberation war in 1971. The Jamaatis say that they could not trust India. The difference here is that Rahman has added Pakistan with India but then, lo and behold, even then he returns to Pakistan which was a country he could not trust!

More importantly, when the Shehabuddins and the Amjadul Haques were joining the Bangladesh liberation war in Delhi, Calcutta, London, Washington and in many other places, Reaz Rahman could not trust India which was then our biggest partner! The Bengali drivers of the Pakistan High Commission also were deeply moved in 1971 to join the liberation war and Pakistan's then Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta, Hossain Ali, took over the whole Deputy High Commission with his other 65 Bengali colleagues on 18 April 1971. In those days so many momentous and historical events were taking place every moment. But Reaz Rahman found nothing around him to encourage him to join the liberation war!

By not joining the most momentous event of our history, Reaz Rahman has not lost anything. He has been rather more than amply rewarded. He rose to the highest position in his foreign service career, the post of foreign secretary, and finally minister of state for foreign affairs. That is why he now has the 'courage' to defend his decision not to join the liberation war and maligns the historical role of K M Shehabuddin as the first diplomatic soldier in our liberation war.

Reaz Rahman refers to his father-in-law Hamidul Haque Chowdhury's non-involvement in his decision vis-a-vis 1971. But is it not a coincidence that none of the three sons-in-law of Chowdhury, all of them then in the Pakistan foreign service, opted to join the liberation war? And mind it, all three of them were serving in 1971 in Pakistani diplomatic missions in countries openly or quietly sympathetic to the Bangladesh cause.

Finally, I would request Reaz Rahman not to distort history and the facts of 1971, because it is not only Ambassador K M Shehabuddin who has exposed the role of Reaz Rahman in 1971 in his book 'There and Back Again'.

Mr. Rahman has been described in similar fashion in Major General Khalidur Rahman's book, 'Purbachal 1971: Pakistan Shena-Gohor Theke Dheka' (published by Shahjia Prakash in 2005). There is a chapter on him beginning at page 43 of the book.

I am sorry that this clarification has been rather long. But when someone deliberately decides to distort history, he definitely deserves a befitting reply.

Mohiuddin Ahmed
Former Principal, Bangladesh Foreign Service Academy

Problems of teenagers

Rahat, a teenager, has become a drug addict after the separation of his parents. He left his college and mixed with bad fellows and has started taking different types of intoxicants. Rahat's mother has become anxious about his condition but finds no way to take him out of this. Another boy from an aristocratic family has developed relationship with a woman who is older than him. This has become an acute problem in many families. The problem is worse in the aristocratic and lower class families, rather than in any middle class family. Teenage girls face the same kind of problems. The psychologists have noticed that the age between 13 to 22 is a very critical period in a person's life because most of the mental and physical changes occur during this period. The malicious attributes can easily influence them. Their parents pursue them to give up addiction and they fail to do that. Their fortunes are nipped in the bud. The factors behind the problems of the teenagers are: (1) Too much mental pressure and rules and regulations that have been imposed by the parents, (2) Mental and physical changes, (3) Negligence of the parents, (4) The confused and curious ideas about sex, (5) Lack of family bond and religious values, (6) Influence of Western culture and so on. Parents have to take the most important responsibility to save them from this kind of moral degradation.

They have to make their children aware about their future. Life is only one, so if a person has done anything wrong, there is no way to amend the fault by returning back to the past. So, the teenagers have to be cautious when they take a step. Parents must make their children's life more enjoyable and panic-free. They must be friendly and expressive and they must talk with their children openly about their problems. They must teach their children about moral and religious values and also about our culture.

It is a good effort, or we can say a good step of the government, that they have added a new subject in the education curriculum about this time in a youngster's life. Youths are our future. So, if we do not take care of them, they will get lost. Parents have to bring the examples of the great people in front of them as models.

Nigar Sultana
Student, IUUC

Rajuk plots in Purbachal

'You see a huge signboard here. Advertisements say plots are ready, but you see the land is still under 10 feet deep floodwater.' About a month back, the daily Prothom Alo ran a news report about private land developers taking full payment from buyers and they take 2-4 years to hand over the plots.

What about Rajuk? They received full payment from us some four years back for Purbachal plots. The officials of Purbachal Project said that plots would probably be handed over in 10-15 years' time. For the next generation! Where is the accountability of Rajuk, for that matter of the government? The caretaker government possibly can do something to expedite the completion of the project. Since Rajuk has received full payment for the plots and for all necessary works of the project, there should not be any reason for such inordinate delay.

May I draw the kind attention of the Honorable Adviser in charge to look into the matter.
Faria Hossain
Banani, Dhaka

SAU's relief effort

The damage caused by this year's devastating flood particularly to our agriculture and infrastructure is enormous. With a view to helping our farmers to recover from the loss, the teachers, officers, and staffs of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) in a recent meeting under Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. AM Farooque's chairmanship decided to donate their one day's salary to the Chief Adviser's Flood Relief Fund. A committee has also been formed to raise seedlings for distribution among the flood affected farmers. The students have also contributed to the relief fund formed by SAU.

We are confident that we will soon overcome the hardship under the fair and efficient management of the present caretaker government.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Chairman
Department of Language, SAU

Begum Zia's appeal

I was surprised by Begum Zia's request to the CTG to send her son Koko to Singapore or Bangkok for better treatment (your daily 27 September 2007). Why Madam? I recall your last speech to the nation on TV and radio before abdicating power last year. You gave a long list of developments and achievements made by your govt. Didn't you develop our hospitals well enough so that your son could be treated here in Bangladesh?

I feel very upset when I see people like you heading for Singapore or Saudi Arabia for treatment of even minor ailments.
Mustafizur Rahman
One-mail

Death of a teacher

Reading the first few lines of this letter will probably get you thinking that this is one of those same old boring write-ups trying to get a point out to the world, blah, blah, blah. I assure you this is nothing like that. It takes a lot of nerves to sit down right now and write. Let me tell you why. I just came back home from the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Not a place anyone would like to go to every day, but unfortunately some of us are unlucky to end up there somehow.

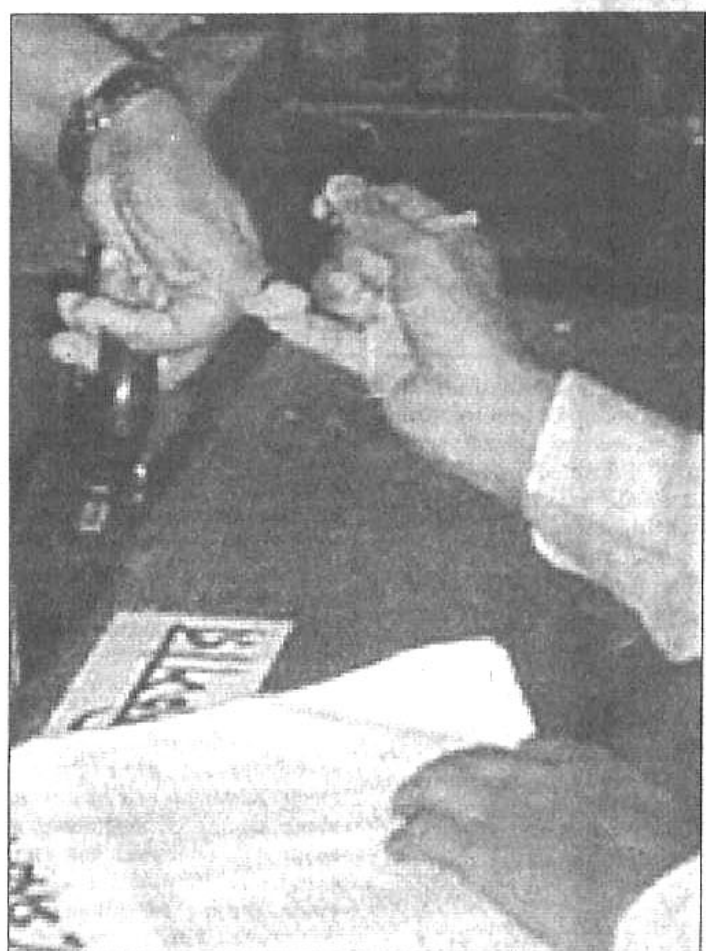
Since you already heard the word hospital you can guess this is not going to be pleasant. A couple of hours ago one of our respected teachers passed away. Everyone must go when their time comes, I'm not arguing about that. But how does it feel if that person is a young man in his early thirties? To

Election Commission

The spotlight is on the Election Commission again. The BBC 'Prottusha' programme aired a very significant and delicate issue analysed and presented by a distinguished member of the TIB, and by a very eloquent speaker and analyst of the department of history of Dhaka University. The principal task of the Election Commission is to arrange a credible, free and fair general election. The distinguished members of the Election Commission are oath-bound to accomplish this task.

It is very difficult to accept an idea which is contrary to democratic principle i.e. the acts and deeds of the EC are above any public scrutiny or criticism. Any violation would be tantamount to contempt of the court (Election Commission) and therefore be punishable by law to be stipulated by the same EC.

We think it is time for the EC to concentrate on the groundwork for the general election not later than December 2008. Instead of briefing on diverse issues, the EC should on each fortnight brief the nation on the progress of work for the general election, which is



the need of the hour and also committed by the government. The principal work in this case is the preparation of the voter list. We are still in dark about the progress of work, except some piecemeal information dished out by the EC so far. The EC can be independent from government control and directives, but it cannot be independent from the people.

The people will always retain their constitutional right to make judgment on the acts and deeds of any institution of the Republic.

Therefore, whatever is stipulated in the draft law, old or new, may be deleted to uphold the principle of democracy and the freedom of expression by the citizens of the Republic.
A reader
One-mail

make things worse, e had no physical complications. The reason why he has passed away today is because he was murdered. Yes!! I repeat HE WAS MURDERED. A simple man living his day to day life was returning home, but he was unlucky to become one of the victims of our well known muggers.

Do you know how people in distress are treated in Bangladesh? Let me help you if you don't. Mr. Dewan Rahat Karim was a lecturer of North South University. He used to teach us accounting and management. He was a fun loving person. He had lftar with our honorable Vice Chancellor and then took class from 7 till 8:20 pm. After the classes he doesn't roam about but rather goes straight back home. A couple of hours went by and his family members started to worry. His father-in-law went out to search for him. Tragedy struck when he found him at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The police said they found him near the army stadium, but there was no reason for him to go in that direction, he lived in Dhanamondi. When his relatives arrived at DMCH, they found him locked in a room with no doctors or even nurses to aid him. His brothers cried for help. They looked everywhere for a doctor but no one came. The doctors have already announced him dead.

His students ran and got oxygen for him. Some of them even said they could feel a pulse, but who cares? They tried to take him out to another hospital, they weren't allowed. Apparently it's the law? Funny, isn't it? We have a law to take a person all the way from Uttara to DMC regardless of whether that person could have survived if he received treatment a few minutes earlier.

Two hours went by and a doctor finally came. But it's no use he's already long gone. Are these people actually doctors? Who gave them their degree? If you haven't stopped reading yet I suggest you spend just 5 minutes of your life and read the rest of it. This is a humble appeal to everyone out there - men, women, children, it doesn't matter. Help us. Help us change the situation of this country.

What would you want to do if your brother, God forbid, passed away. Wouldn't you want to wash his body and make all preparations for his burial? Poor Mr. Dewan's family isn't that lucky tonight. They have to wait till the morning when someone performs an autopsy. Why can't they just do that now? Well there's no one to do it. Ridiculous isn't it? Why'd you keep the hospital then? There's no doctor to attend the patients, there is no one to perform an autopsy, there isn't someone to

get a freaking oxygen cylinder!!

As we stood there weeping, a police van came along. They brought three men in handcuffs. One screaming at the top of his lungs in pain. They were brought here for medical treatment. Now here's the interesting part. Let me take you through the procedures. The men stood there as the police officers shook hands with numerous people. Then they went and filled up some register books and then everyone just stood there. Twenty minutes already gone by. No one came to treat the men. Guess it was too much to ask for, or they're criminals, why should they be treated?

As for the people who did this to our beloved sir, I hope you're literate enough to read this. How could you be so cruel? How could you do something so inhuman? You want the cell phone? Take it. You want the wallet? Take it. Take everything, but why do you have to kill someone for it. Doesn't anyone ever think about the consequences? What will happen to his wife? They were married for just a couple of years. What will happen to his father? His mother? Will all her screams and tears bring her loved one back?

Asutend
NSU

Perils of leadership

The toughest leadership job in the world: captaincy of the Indian cricket team, according to an article in the Internet, reprinted in the Dhaka press (Sep 20). Dhoni was under the microscopic test, after R Dravid stepped out voluntarily, (earlier Tendulkar).

As a lifelong resident in hot-seat Dhaka, I offer other choices of risky leaderships: the mazy political governance of problematic Bangladesh -- note the wobbling images of the two Awami/Janata Begums, duly elected as reps of the misguided people (forced into non-transparent voting). Make hay while the sun shines is not good governance.

The masses can intuitively

Dhaka -- matching Ripley's book Believe It or Not.

One of the problems is the division of loyalty: public service or private gain. How long the latter could be hidden? Some of the camp followers would spill out and confess -- the have-not mentality is a bitter pill.

Captaining newly independent nations in the third world is tougher than imagined through book knowledge -- like IMF pre-conditioned prescriptions for economic emancipation. Closed mind citizens (majority illiterate and living below poverty line) are tough nuts to crack, and line up on your side. The other group of have-nots magnify

bonuses. The focus shifts from the central core issue/goal to peripheral adjustments all the time -- you have to be an expert on trimming exercises and non-transparent compromises. An empty or half-empty stomach has other priorities than chasing lofty principles -- the survival instinct.

In three decades, Bangladesh could not settle down to a routine implementation of the guiding principles of new nationhood. The situation in the other truncated state (now Pakistan) is no better. Why India is more stable, comparatively? The mass effect: too big and too diversified outside tiny New Delhi. Dhaka is different: you can't do business without



feel the strains of faulty leadership -- Bush is no exception. The history of dictatorships around the globe through the centuries confirmed the vicissitudes of the lonely life at the top. Being surrounded by sycophants is no protection in the future -- watch the way the CTG is removing the veils in

the glitter of money -- where is my share? Is this the background for forging national unity? A lone outsider trying to rob a beehive with 5,000 security guards?

In the South, the political environment for leadership is thorny and hostile; undisciplined; targeted on ad hoc

coming to Dhaka. Should we go for provinces, with provincial governments, and lessen the pressure on Dhaka, the national capital? One big reason is the high density of population in this deltaic region -- govern less people with more MPs.
Acitizen
One-mail

Myanmar



Next door in Myanmar, a military dictatorship has cracked down on citizens who are demonstrating for establishing their legitimate civil and political rights. The carnage is beyond belief.

Why isn't the government of Bangladesh joining the chorus of world opinion?

Robert A. Johnson
Gulshan, Dhaka