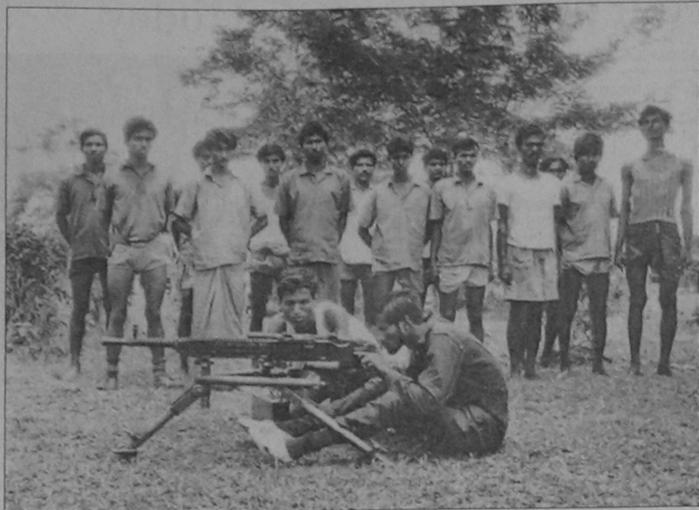


Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.



Our history

The history of our Liberation War has already been recorded. Bangabandhu and some other national leaders who contributed to the liberation war are now a past phenomena. These cannot be altered, made or changed or re-written by anyone. The Almighty Allah made it happen and gave us an independent state in 1971.

In the past, many of our politicians tried to establish something new. They failed. Now many controversies have cropped up. Some of our leaders are trying to justify the events according to their own needs. We heard many such comments in the past. These personal remarks on events divided the nation. Only

projection of the truths can unite the nation. Our liberation war did not begin suddenly. The Language Movement and the demand for equal rights for the people of East Pakistan initiated the process. It was a long, arduous process.

We honour all our leaders and freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifices to give us an independent state. Each and everyone should be honoured according to her/his contribution. Let our government, intellectuals, historians collectively try to find out individual contributions and give them their fair share of respect.

Shafiqul Islam, *One-mail*

in the court against the manipulators. Our learned High Court stopped the proceedings of the case for a period of ten years. The period is now over. The case must be revived to bring the manipulators to justice. A repetition of the incident (crash) must be averted.

Please do not relent in the struggle against the thugs and thieves who have looted our national exchequer. You have the support of the silent majority.

Md. Rofiqul Islam
Gulshan, Dhaka

Old cameras

Ghias's poignant article on Nurul Islam's historic century old pin-hole camera, brings back the memories of my photographic days in Dhaka in the 1950s, that started during my school days in Calcutta in 1945. In those days I was the helper to my uncle (Late) Prof. Kazem Ali of BUET. He was a photography bug, having a number of cameras, and his own darkroom in Calcutta. There he used to develop, print and enlarge still films. I was the keen willing helper, learning the fundamentals of the trade from him! It was a wonderful pastime for me which kept me in the house most of the time.

He gifted me my first camera in 1944 a Coronet Midget camera using 8 or 16mm films; the size I do not exactly remember. It was a typical fist sized mini camera. My uncle gave me films for it; printed and developed all my photographs; meanwhile explaining to me the scientific ideas about light's properties which I remember even today! It was an excellent science tutorial! Small wonder that I ended up as an engineer from Ahsanullah Engineering College!

After partition in 1946, I matriculated from Chittagong, and got my first regular camera, a Baby Brown, which used up all my pocket money in films, developing and printing; as my uncle was in UK then for postgraduate studies in engineering. Later, when I went to the Engineering College in Dhaka, and my uncle returned from abroad and joined there, he gave me an Agfa-Loxax 4.5 lens camera, which was with me till the late 1960s. In the late 1950s when I was in Dhaka, I still remember a number of professional photographers with pin-hole cameras working opposite the press club premises. Located there was Zaidi Photographers, a photo studio right opposite the secretariat gate; where I used to often develop and print my films.

I firmly believe that our museum authorities should arrange with Nurul Islam to purchase his camera as and when he retires and no longer uses his one hundred years old camera. The amount should be handsome, so that Nurul Islam can retire with some financial security at the end of his career.

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

ID card

The main objectives of making voter ID card are identifying the citizens of Bangladesh, evading rigging in the election, facilitating the institutional activities, making certain census of voter statistics and so on. But one objective has been neglected.

Basically, an ID card should contain the essential reformation regarding the individual carrying it. That means the basic purpose of ID card is to figure out a person as per the requirements. Now let's come to the main point: when an ID card is made without the religious identification like our voter ID card. Nowadays a person's name does not clearly convey her/his religious identity. For example, "Sumon Sarker" -- who can figure out this man's religion? So, would not it be convenient for everybody if the religious identity of a voter is included in the ID card?

Hasnat Khan
KhilKhet, Dhaka

Good news but

We are a nation of fickle minds. We remember things when it is better to forget and forget those when remembering is in order. So, perhaps we have already forgotten what happened in August 2007 centring around an altercation between the students and the law enforcers, while they were witnessing a football game in DU playground. The incident led to clamping of curfew in the capital and all divisional headquarters as the violence exceeded the limit and was not controllable with even Emergency Power Rules. It is heartening that the university teachers and students have been acquitted but the common people will like to know what really happened on those two days of August 2007, who were behind the scene and what motive.

Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque
Khalishpur, Khulna

British Foreign Secretary's trip

We all wholeheartedly welcomed the timely visit of the very articulate and smart Foreign Secretary of Britain. We hoped, back in London, he would take some lighter time to look back to his short visit to Bangladesh, and assimilate what he has seen, what he has heard and what he has said in public and private for our people, politicians and the government. We only hope that he had opportunities to appraise himself of the current economic and political situation obtaining in Bangladesh in his right perspective.

The roadmap. It is a highly used jargon in national and international conflict resolution. The success has been very limited so far. In our case the roadmap for democracy is a "wish list" drawn easily by the EC in computer. It is easier to draw a roadmap than to implement it. The implementation is fully dependent on the will and the capability of the roadmap planner and the government. This is where the nation needs to be assured by deeds and not by words or speech.

We have not heard anybody in Bangladesh expressing any negative view about the very utility of the roadmap. But the fundamental question remains about the credibility of those planning and implementing the roadmap.

Faqrul Quadir
One-mail

NRBs' conference

I highly appreciate the recent conference of Non-Resident Bangladeshis that was held at Sheraton Hotel. I am convinced that most of them came to their motherland to help their brothers.

Unfortunately, I found many people criticising the initiative. Misuse of freedom of expression is our nature which is a big hindrance to the progress of our nation.

Before criticising them for staying abroad and talking for the country, we must remember that without huge foreign remittances our economy would have been adversely affected. Moreover, we should show the NRBs how to use their expertise for the overall improvement of our country. I found someone telling NRBs to return to the country if they really have feelings for this land! I humbly disagree with them because if they return most of them will remain unemployed here!

Dr. Mahboob Hossain
Associate Professor
Department of Pharmacy
The University of Asia Pacific
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Bird flu and wake-up call

Thanks for taking up the bird flu epidemic which engulfed the country at a galloping speed leading to culling of innumerable poultry, ducks, pigeons, quails, geese etc. The farmers, traders, feed producers and those related to the poultry industries are in deep trouble. Your reference to the observation of Dr. Domenech, Chief Veterinary officer, FAO, may act as an impulse to the fatigued authority to wake up from the deep slumber. Since the first invasion of the virus into the country in March 2007, Avian Flu has left scars of onslaughts in as many as 26 districts. Although no human is yet to contract the disease, there is no reason to be complacent, for disaster may strike anytime.

Dr. Domenech in his press conference has explained the situation and expressed his views about the task to be undertaken in no time to combat the unbridled spreading of the deadly virus. His advice to consider the strategies adopted by the countries affected by Avian Influenza in overcoming the crisis is a sort of prescription. His worry about Bangladesh "the virus has become deeply entrenched despite major efforts" is to be testified by the authorities concerned adopting the measures specified by the OIE/FAO.

The poultry industry of Bangladesh has engaged more than 4 million people. The backyard poultry is an asset of the country which produces poultry meat and eggs and strengthens the rural economy along with nursing the nutritional status of the village people.

Will the authorities take care of this and help end the ordeal faced by the country?

Dr. R. Hassan
Lalmatia, Dhaka

28th BCS

Despite the fact that Bangladesh is beset with various environmental problems, the government of Bangladesh is not creating any

US presidential election

Did someone ever say America isn't still ready for a President who could either be a woman or a black? Yes, many do say. Well, this would make none other than John McCain the perfect individual for presidency. Nevertheless, many might speculate more; as we should be rather considering the real world facts. The American population is not made of one gender. But it's approximately half male and half female population, like everywhere around the globe. So if we want to believe males might not find Hillary as pretty as Cinderella, this theory would also support the fact that female voters would not

hesitate to vote for her.

However, does gender really matter? Probably in a much competitive hostile business world, the answer is 'no'. In religiously moderate countries like Bangladesh, India or Pakistan, female leadership was not only welcomed, but was supported and asked for. So, what's the problem with America?

Who wants a Republican to stay in Oval Office? Democrats are already in. Let's just see whether it's Obama or Hillary this time.

Tahsin Hyder
Dhaka



opening for the graduates with degree in Environmental Science. Every day we come across news and views on environmental issues of national as well as regional and international dimensions. The BAPA, Paribesh Bachao Andolon, various NGOs and universities organise conferences and awareness programmes to safeguard the environment. The Environment Directorate of the government has many full-fledged programmes to protect our environment. But unfortunately, the only cadre that asked for application for filling in the posts in the 28th BCS exams has been the Forest Department, and that stipulated the educational qualification as having graduation degrees in physics, chemistry, botany, zoology and 'soil, water and environment' - the last one being a department of Dhaka University. But it may be mentioned that Environmental Science/Studies is being offered as an academic discipline in nearly a dozen of public and private universities in Bangladesh. With the above mentioned degree in 'soil, water and environment' as set out by the PSC, the students of DU will get a kind of preferential treatment. It will deprive those having degrees specifically in Environmental Science/Studies from other universities.

In view of the above, while requesting the authorities concerned to revise the advertisement in order to incorporate graduates in Environmental Science/Studies, we urge the government to open a new cadre service of environment in the interest of developing a sustainable environmental administration at the district and upazila levels in Bangladesh.

Members of the Earth Forum
Dept. of Environmental Science
Stamford University Bangladesh
Dhaka

Corruption in Titas

I was a bit bewildered after reading the heading of a DS report published on 29 January, wherein it was stated that 126 highly corrupt officials from the Titas gas have vowed to return over Tk. 400 crore earned illegally to the government exchequer. This has been the outcome of the drill-down investigation by the Joint Taskforce aiming to curtail corruption as well as to identify the roots of corruption and the people involved. This is obviously a great achievement.

Allowing them to refund the money to the government exchequer should be followed by due legal action against the looters of public assets.

Nasar, *One-mail*

Justice prevails

The verdict by the High Court Division will remain as a milestone in the history of the judiciary of Bangladesh. This is a great victory for the AL and Sheikh Hasina.

Therefore, please don't get influenced by any vested quarters and don't do the so-called balancing job!

Afsana, *UK*

Returning officer or returning body

Roadmap for the election is rolling us to national polls to be held before the year ends. Many proposals are forthcoming to reform the election procedures. But one very important task-- selection of the returning/assistant returning officers-- needs serious review. In the past we saw election engineering/result tempering/media coup, where ROs and AROs played a vital role. In many cases, the returning and assistant returning officers (who have to work alone) could not

withstand the pressure mounted on them by powerful quarters. As an insider I have witnessed many a case of willing/unwilling surrender on the part of the officer concerned. Resistance to such pressure often brought unfavourable posting, punishment and even end of career. So I would suggest placing the responsibility on a body, instead of a person. In addition to the Deputy Commissioners, District Judge, Police Super, Senior Engineer, Civil Surgeon, Bar and press club presidents, NGO representatives and members of the civil society may be incorporated.

The structure of the body can be designed after discussion among the stakeholders.

M. Sanaul Haq
Uttara Model Town, Dhaka

Illinois shooting

Now another gunman went berserk in Northern University of Illinois and killed at least six students and injured more than a dozen before shooting himself.

What we gather from the news is that gunman Steven Kazmierczak had a mental problem and was on medication for sometime and was also receiving counselling; otherwise according to friends and teachers he seemed to be quite a good natured student and had no criminal records. Now the question that remains to be resolved is what prompted Kazmierczak to take such hostile actions? A similar incident happened in Virginia Tech a couple of months ago where student Seung-Hui Cho killed as many students during his shooting spree.

May we suggest that the authorities in the USA re-examine the gun control law and make it stricter so that guns don't fall in wrong hands.

Humayun Hyder
Zigatola, Dhaka

Gulshan-Banani lake

I am glad that, at last, the thinking behind the new Banani-Gulshan Bridge is being questioned on more or less every ground. For myself, I cannot bear thinking about an increase in the level of vehicular traffic in the narrow streets around my home and school on the Gulshan side.

The arguments for it being a rickshaw and pedestrian bridge only for good environmental, health and traffic reasons are becoming overwhelming. Those coming to work and school in Gulshan, and points east, could come along the Airport Road by bus and car to Road

11 and then go on, on foot or rickshaw or folding bike - thus completely avoiding Kamal Attaturk Avenue which could be left to those for whom leaving their cars for a moment is unthinkable...

It would then only need an agreement to make ONE place along Gulshan Avenue, a place where rickshaws can cross (which we need NOW, actually, preferably with traffic lights...) and we would surely start seeing the benefits.

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka



Bangladesh Agricultural University, a renowned public university, has a great impact on the economy of the country. Lots of graduates from this varsity are serving the country to make it self-dependent in agriculture. We are still committed to making a poverty free Bangladesh by strengthening its economy as well as agricultural economy. A graduate from BAU has been declared as one of the most talented young scientists in the world. The most noticeable thing to say about this university is that there is no sessions jam, while it is the most common phenomenon in other public universities. BAU has started the semester system of education (English medium) in every faculty and this system is running very smoothly. I would like to thank the administration as it has modernised the education system and I believe students are also playing an important role in efficiently running the semester system by cooperating

with the faculty members. The university authorities have already ensured residential facilities for every student. I think, very soon it will be a fully residential varsity.

However, the teachers of BAU are not following the right procedures while lecturing in the class. I mean teachers are using lots of Bengali words in their lectures (especially at the undergraduate level). The notes given by the teachers are written in English but when they explain it to their students, they use Bengali. Will it not be more beneficial for the students if they use English for at least 40 minutes in their classes? This is necessary for further education abroad and career development.

Jewel Rana
MS Student
Dept. of Biotechnology
Bangladesh Agricultural University
Mymensingh

