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.

Students going abroad

At present it is a very common phenomenon educational expenses. So they do odd jobs. guess it if we see the long queues of students in front of foreign embassies. There is hardly anyone who can accomplish higher education in a foreign university because of high

that most of the talented students of our coun- These students are undoubtedly talented. In try are keen to go abroad for the sake of a my opinion, if they are determined to carry better living in the name of education. We can on their studies in their motherland, it will be possible to prosper here. Zahidul Islam Zibon Dept. Of English

HOME:



Shishu Park

The National Shishu Park, a major recreational centre not only for children but also for adults, has become a dull and dreary place. The park has remained unchanged since its inauguration in 1979. Very few new things have been added to it. Some of the rides might have also become rather risky, as no maintenance work is visible.

The authorities concerned should take note of what is going on at the park. Nazir Sabri Asian University

Female students

Uttara, Dhaka

It is a matter of great regret that our daughters do not find the universities a safe place. We are so unlucky. When two of our leaders, Hasina and Khaleda, were arrested the intellectuals continued to write so many articles in newspapers, but they have no time to write about girls and women in general.

A teacher facing the allegation of sexually harassing his own students loses the moral right to continue as a teacher. The so called inquiry committee is not enough. A far more discreet and determined effort is necessary to protect girls in our society.

Our façade of civility is creaking at many points! Dr. Sakina Khanam Kobe University Japan

Treatment abroad

Khaleda demands treatment abroad for her sons, arrested on massive corruption charges. Her sons are not like the ordinary people. Their mother was the prime minister for a long time. Her claim shows that she should be accountable for miserably failing to develop the country's healthcare facilities, if we have to travel abroad for treatment.

Khaleda claims to love her country and, therefore, she personally would not leave her poor people and travel abroad for treatment. How come she repeatedly travelled abroad for treatment in the past?

abroad? How long will the unscrupulous and corrupt leaders continue to cheat the innocent voters in the name of democracy? Khaleda, Delwar, Saifur have corrupt sons who can destroy Bangladesh in the name of Ziaur Rahman's BNP.

They must not be allowed to go abroad for treatment. Dr Mannan Mridha Stockholm

Role of a politician

Welcome thinking on the part of the political parties to reform their constitution. Hope they will evaluate the educational background of the people seeking nomination. Honest, sincere and successful professionals, lawyers, scientists, intellectuals and educationists should be invited to come forward and play a role in politics. MS Farazi

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

BBC's comedy serial

I am a long time fan of comedy serial "Keeping up appearances" one of the products of British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC. A brief analysis of the serial would reveal, among other things, it has been designed for depicting pertinent aspects of superiority and inferiority complexes associated with human personality against the backdrop of an English social setting.

Factors such as: the context of the serial; and the role, as well as performance of actors and actresses including that of Hyacinth (the actress's drama name) are, on an average sense, capable of making viewers not only to giggle but to create opportunities for retrospection and reformation, in varying degrees though, at individual, collective and other levels, especially when it comes to matters associated with say, intra and inter human interactions. In other words, the serial - via it's existing mode of transactions seem to encourage at least the willing viewers to re-discover aspects of human nature that are very personal to them or otherwise

How did her sons transfer wealth

Taxi cab

When taxi cab was first introduced in Dhaka city in the late 90s, people thought that the transportation problem would be solved to some extent. But due to lack of proper administration, taxi cab is now a problem to the people of Dhaka city. There are many allegations against the taxi

drivers. They refuse to go by the passengers' needs. But, despite a pile of allegations against the taxi drivers, it seems that no one is responsible for monitoring the situation. What will the passengers do then?

MushfiqueWadud Department of English Stamford University Bangladesh



and to use the serial as a mirror to see them through it for any followup action in areas of individual and collective improvements, per se.

The last word: the comedy serial keeping up appearances - represents inter alia - either directly or otherwise - light and hard realities of human life. It is a good effort on the part of BBC and the performers. Congratulations! It is expected BBC will arrange to show the serial in Bangladesh for its TV viewers in the foreseeable future. Dr.M.S. Haq

New York

Khaleda's demands

We are very much annoyed, angry and also amused by the recent demands or labdars of Khaleda Zia. Her two knee joints have been replaced in the USA and her favourite retreat KSA. Her other demand of sending Tarique Rahman and Koko abroad for treatment is far away from ground reality. The situation, circumstances and cases against Khaleda Zia are entirely different from that of Sheikh Hasina. Tarique Rahman with active connivance and consent of his mother inflicted the heaviest ever blow to our politics, economy, morality and society. Nothing moved without paying due percentage to 'Juboraj'.

Therefore we would urge upon the caretaker government not to give in to her illogical demands. SN Mamoon, One-mail

Half-yearly budget?

More than a week after the budget was announced through the media some members of civil society have suggested that it be made half-yearly, as the current caretaker government's tenure will end in December. Why are they so late to say so? Shouldn't have they floated the idea before the budget was announced?

Didn't they know how much effort went into the preparation of SaifTinku, One-mail

Eco-toilet & bio-fertiliser

I fully support the use of eco-toilet but I do not endorse the idea of converting human excreta collected from eco-toilets into biofertilizer. As far as my knowledge goes, some countries including Afghanistan use such manure. But the side or adverse effects of crops and vegetables grown by the manure on human health are yet to be known. In fact, not all the technologies are good for humans and it takes a long time after the use of a technology to figure out its adverse effects on human beings. For instance, tube-well has contributed to the creation of a serious health problem, i.e. Arsenicosis. Recently, researchers found that arsenic is being deposited in rice plants during nutrient uptake, thereby putting this hazardous element into the food chain. Again poultry litter also contains good amount of arsenic which is now widely used as fertilizer in our

country. I think, specific research should be conducted to ascertain the actual effects of these biofertilizers before recommending their use on large scale. Professor M Zahidul Haque

Chairman Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University Dhaka

Good sign!

It is a matter of hope that we are going to be a middle income country. Now the per capita income of our people is 599 dollars, which is eting of the prices of essential 12.5% higher than the previous years's (2006-07 fiscal year). To be a middle income country, a country should achieve the marginal level of 750\$ per capita income. The increase in GNP is good, because our country passed through some crises last year, like the devastating cyclone Sidr, two consecutive floods and economic instability. Most of the sectors performed poorly, yet the per capita income has gone up. Here remittances from abroad played the main role.

I believe we can do even better in the next few years. G.M. Musa

Executive, Stamford University

Imported paper

In the budget for the current year, the duty on imported paper has been reduced. But the paper mill owners have claimed that it will put in jeopardy an investment of around Tk 3,000. In the recent years, a huge amount of tax was sewage, industrial waste and a imposed on imported papers. And the local paper mills took advantage of the situation and increased the prices of papers. And students are the main victims.

The education sector has been the top priority sector for all governments. So the government should calculate how many people will be benefited if the tax is not reduced? May be the figure will not exceed 15,000. But what is the number of the beneficiaries of such tax reduction? It may be over eight crore! So now we are ready to witness who will get preference --15,000 or over 8 crore? Hasmat Ullah

Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

While appearing in the court on

Jahangirnagar University

Khaleda Zia and her sons

June 16, 2008 as an accused in Gatco case Begum Khaleda Zia claimed that her two sons Tarique and Koko are not "faltu loke" (insignificant persons) in our society. In a society where a "personal valet" is catapulted overnight into the position of a national VVIP, an alleged smuggler (now convicted for corruption) is made a minister, Tarique and Koko are certainly not "faltu loke". Begum Zia is very right to claim so. She ruled Bangladesh for ten years and has been ruling over her party BNP for the last twenty six years with the same perception. What makes the people of Bangladesh in general, and the admirers of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman in particular, sad is the way Begum Zia, after the assassination of her illustrious husband. groomed her two sons to their present shameful position. If even only 10% of the details of their activities as published in the media after 1/11 is true, it leaves no doubt in the minds of the ordinary people that Tarique and Koko did not grow up in the company of good friends and well wishers. As the sons of President Zia these two young men had no business to be friends of people like In the absence of their father, Begum Zia should have been more careful in grooming up Tarique and Koko.

In a democratic polity, no one is a "faltu loke" and no one is above the law. Sooner Begum Zia and our other political leaders realize this, the better.

Syed Ashrafuzzaman Mahakhali DOHS, Dhaka

Barack Obama

Former US Vice President and Presidential candidate Al Gore has endorsed Barack Obama. It is very significant as Al Gore is a personof great intellect, he opposed the war in Iraq, is concerned about global warming and climate change, he is anxious about the future of this planet and trying his best to do something.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize and the Oscar! How different the world would have been if he had become the president of the US, which was snatched away from

I congratulated Barack Obama for becoming the Democratic Presidential nominee but his speech at the AIPAC disappointed me very much. But I hope that as he is a person of great intelligence, he will act wisely if he becomes president of America.

The whole world is looking up to him to see the change he is advocating. We hope Obama will follow the footsteps of Al Gore, do everything to bring peace and stability to this world, try to bring back the good will towards America which has been lost during the last eight years, make friends not enemies all over the world by his foreign policy, so that again people will look up to America with reverence.

Nur Jahan Chittagong

Asuggestion

Salaried people are badly bruised by an unprecedented galloping double digit inflation and skyrockitems in the last one year. Considering the misery of this vast section of people, the CTG should seriously consider increasing the present tax free limit from Tk.150,000/- to Tk.300,000/. Tawfik Sattar New Eskaton

Water pollution

Dhaka

On an average a human being consumes about 2 litres of water every day. Water accounts for about 70% of the weight of a human body. About 80% of the earth surface is covered by water. Out of the estimated 1,011 million Km3 of the total water present on earth, only 33,400 m3 of water is available for drinking, agriculture, industrial and domestic consumption. Rest of the water is locked up in oceans and polar ice-caps and glaciers. Considerable part of this limited quantity of water is polluted by wide array of synthetic chemicals. Various types of water pollutants are responsible for the pollution of water such as, organic pollutants including- oxygen demanding waste, disease causing waste, synthetic organic compounds, sewage and agricultural runoff, oil; the inorganic pollutants including various metals and metallic compounds, suspended solids and sediments, radioactive materials etc. Water pollution is indicated by various water quality parameters such as- colour, odour, DO (Dissolve Oxygen), COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand), BOD (Biochemical Oxygen Demand), pH, temperature range, turbidity, acidity, alkalinity etc. There are many environmental effects due to water pollution.

The water-borne diseases are still a source of worry, particularly in under developed and developing countries. The quality as well as the quantity of clean water is of vital significance to the welfare of mankind.

Nusrat Jahan Tangail

Documents go

missing!! I was astonished to read the news report entitled "Original copy of independence proclamation missing" (June 18th DS). It is indeed a shocking revelation that the original copy of the April 10, 1971 proclamation of independence, through which the first government was formed and the March 26, 1971 declaration of independence was approved, is missing! It appears from your report that after the August 15, 1975, these documents were deliberately " lost, removed or destroyed", by the people who were

in power. Hence it appears that a nefarious approach had been taken by those people to meet their own individual goals. And what surprised me more was that successive governments have not taken any worthwhile steps at all to recover the original copy. Now that the original copy is no longer in government custody, yet, one hopes efforts can still be made to find out the original copy of the document, which acted as an interim constitution during our glorious Liberation War. We have seen the Liberation War history being distorted in the past.

We have to keep on fighting against these anti-liberation forces to ensure that the new-generation are kept well informed about our true history. WasifWahed

The law shall rule...

Old DOHS, Dhaka

"The people said to Gideon, rule over us, you and then your son and then your son's son ... but he said to them 'I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you"- The Old Testament.

An inbuilt human nature is to submit readily to an earthly power or authority. Stronger humans, and arrogant governments, exploit this weakness but exceptional leaders, philosophers of freedom, activists, and sacrificing individuals have always promoted a message to the people, that neither the strong nor the absolute, or the majority, will rule the people but simply laws that

Democracy never evolved easily. It took numerous sacrifices and hard work of individuals to motivate people against sovereigns and authoritative governments.

The Industrial Revolution in the 19th century created greater economic opportunity in Britain. As a result, a new class of entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and merchants had emerged who opposed the absolute power of the landed aristocracy and monarchy.

Queen Victoria in the 19th cen-

and games! tury did not willingly surrender her sovereign authority for greater good of the people, but people's

Overbridge

An overbridge for the pedestrians is essential in busy roads. The main objectives of constructing such overbridge are to enable the pedestrians to cross the road safely, ensuring that no mishap takes place, creating provision for smooth traffic system, no waiting for crossing, and last of all, making life easier etc. But the truth is that many of our pedestrians have forgotten the objectives. We cannot really afford to break

traffic rules on a regular basis. Hasnat, AIUB

KhilKhet, Dhaka



discontent led to a series of passages of Acts in Parliament diminishing her sovereign power, until a will not speed up economic prog- of rural areas if there is any lacking, modern system of constitutional ress unless the economy is broadly it is because of the absence of well monarchy emerged during her era liberalised. People must be free of trained teachers. But when there is

democratic rights. In the same way, Bangladesh people to claim theirs.

Presently, in Bangladesh's policriticise, or to differ, is never with- world. out the fear of physical injury or deadly threats. Political activists and prominent leaders dread to differ with their absolute bosses or even their offspring.

price is high and usually means an expulsion, physical terrorization, or both. Only independent but efficient courts, a well-paid police force free from political control, and an open media can guarantee the vital voice of dissent. Mere elections however widely participated, or accepted at home and abroad, will not create a secure environment where politicians and their organisations would be legally bound to tolerate dissent, or sufficiently punished when violating it.

Dr Kamal Hussain deserves praise for saying rightly, and bravely, that he refuses to worship any political leader even if the whole country were doing so. He is the first important politician to say it, and people would one day remember him and reject the idolization of the powerful. However, improvement in economic matters is necessary to trigger a process of change in people's intellect. Years ago, Dr. Hussain paid the price when the Awami League expelled him for differing with the party chief, Sheikh Hasina.

Political reforms, as attempted after 1/11, could succeed but a deteriorating economy has become a barrier though an opportunity if rightly undertaken.

The government's benevolence, faulty methods of teaching English or the largest budget in our history, control and excessive authority. negligence in the renowned Greater economic freedom and There must be individual ecoprogress permitted the common nomic and monetary freedom, blame? Let us take an example of English to assert their individual with security fully ensured by the teaching English in a very laws of the country. Speedy renowned school in Azimpur area, a better off economy will impel the liberalisation of the economy will Dhaka. Teaching writing skills to revolutionise every aspect of our the students of class eight is not an lives, as the Industrial Revolution easy job. What does a teacher do in tics and public life, the right to did for Britain and much of the such a class? He comes and takes

Price spiral is certainly controllable but not by conventional policies. Our theoreticians are firm believers in conventional economics. They ignore the 'informal' side For those who dare to speak, the of the economy that universities in the West, whom we follow, seldom teach, as their systems are adequately open not requiring thriving informal sectors to combat restrictive policies.

Global inflation, or the boom and bust phenomenon, will end but only when the US monetary system will collapse, or when they choose to reform it radically. Our self-doubting leaders and economists will surely wait for direction and then advocate change, not before.

It is possible to stabilise our market prices but we need to abandon the present monetary order, or allow parallel and competing monetary systems to operate liberally and freely. But, do we have the courage to do so, or our economists the understanding about what economic laws the people want, or the country needs. Nizam Ahmad

Teaching English Whenever the education policy is

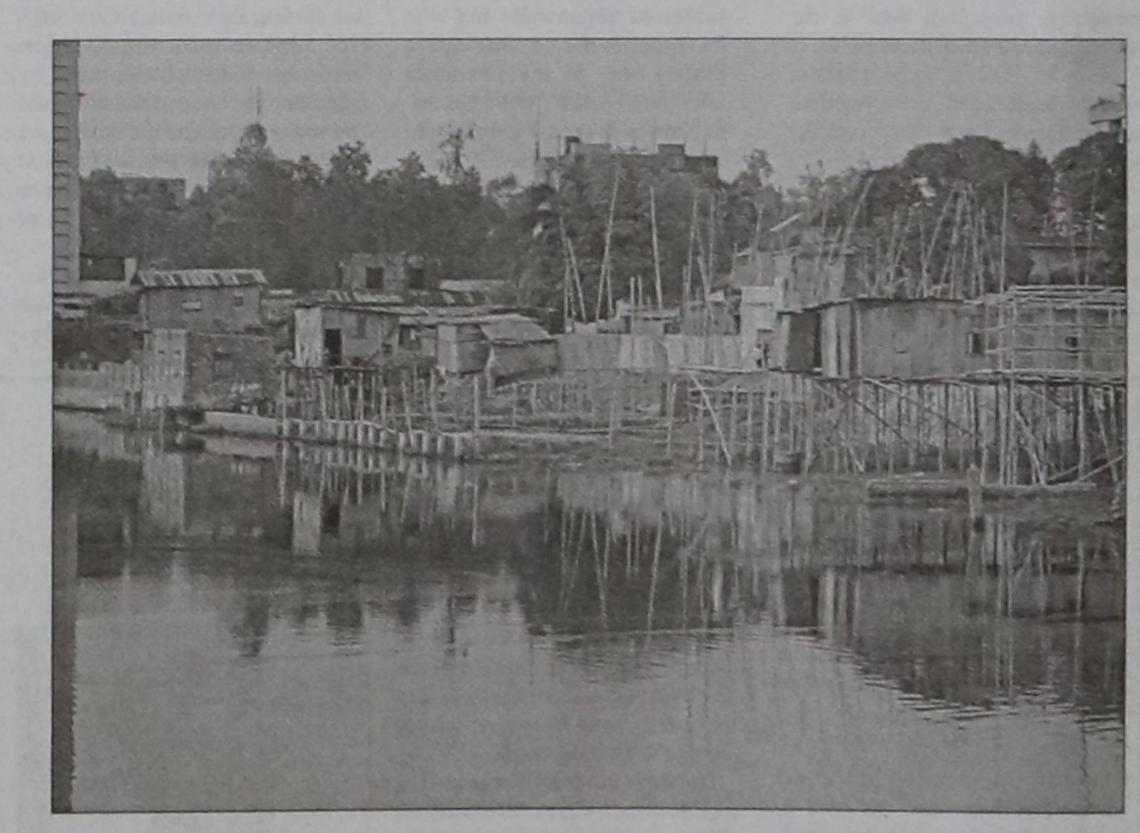
discussed, English is always given a priority. At the tertiary level English is given so much importance that in almost all the universities, there is a foundation course on English. But all talks, all seminars, conferences go in vain when I notice the

adopted in schools. In the schools schools of urban areas, who are to the syllabus asking students to know where they face problem in understanding grammar. He talks about grammatical rules insisting that such rules will not be found anywhere(it indicates his desire to draw the attention of the students to private tuition!). He takes a chalk and duster to talk about grammar. Hardly there is any session of practising what he teaches because it is a class of 45 minutes. Because of this poor perception the students have to approach their parents as well as private tutors for a better understanding. Many rush to coaching centres for help. Usually composition is a part of English second paper. So after discussing grammar in a half hearted manner, the teacher switches over to the writing course. Suddenly, he will say. " For tomorrow's class your writing assignment will be about a rickshaw-puller and a letter to your mother on hostel life." Hewill not give any guideline on how he/she should start writing. He can give the students some key words to write compositions. This needs a lesson plan and it also involves an innovative approach.

If necessary the English classes might continue for an hour and there may be an additional incentive for the teachers. This letter is not meant for hurting the teachers; it is an honest feeling of a guardian who sends his son/daughter to a Bangla medium school because he cannot afford sending him/her to an English medium school. Kamaluddin Ahmed

Green.Corner, Dhaka

Water pollution



I would like to salute The Daily Star for the June cially boal, using big fishing-spear. Once early It touched my heart and took me back to the uncles.

Being one of the thousands of inhabitants living in Nagari in Kaliganj thana under Gazipur district, I recall my childhood during which we saw and also used to catch fish from the rural canal connected with the river Balu! A hook and different types of small and big nets were our traditional common instruments for fishing! And there were tremendous joyous moments while we used to take a bath jumping into the canal water playing different tricks

At the beginning of rainy season, our uncles and neighbours used to catch big fish, espe-

15 news "River void of life forms" and the in the morning my mother called me up from Bangladesh University of Engineering and bed to see something. I was bewildered to see Technology for their study on water pollution. a very big fish. It was caught by one of my

Round the year, professional fishermen used to fish in the river and the canal. Different kinds of snails and cockles were found everywhere in the water body.

The fresh water was an absolute source of irrigation during boro season. Now finding a living being in the water is

difficult. Is not our government mightier than the

polluters? May we beg to them to take immediate steps to stop water pollution. Amio James Ascension

Monipuripara Tejgaon, Dhaka