



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.

War criminals at work

Kicking a freedom fighter (by the war criminals) is the reality of our present state of affairs. The sector commanders routinely protested the dastardly act. The politicians of pro-liberation gharana also lamented the incident. Students of Dhaka University paraded the streets of their campus. But our government, caretaker for two years, virtually ignored the matter.

FF bashing is nothing new in our country. The 4 party alliance government very carefully cleansed the administration, retiring all the Freedom Fighter officers under a dubious pension rule. They were retired without assigning any reason under the clause "in the interest of public service". Many of them even did not get their minimum pension benefits.

Now under the apparent neutral rule, some of these officers won court cases ordering reinstatement in service. But the ghosts of the Jamaat in the administration are fighting tooth and nail to block their reinstatement. This is also FF bashing.

Avictim
One-mail

'Novote'

The freedom of choice is a beauty of democracy. This freedom reflects two alternatives. Firstly, given a desirable option against an undesirable one, it is the authority to choose the former and reject the latter. Secondly, if undesirable options are forced upon, it is then the capacity to react.

Now, let's weigh how much freedom of choice we enjoy while selecting our political representatives. With the present electoral mechanism, that is, the

option for casting 'no' vote. As an avenue for creating democratic capacity, this move is welcome.

M Abdul Kabir
Dept of CSC
North South University

SSC results

We are very happy that our young learners have achieved good results. This year more than 52 thousand students have secured GPA-5, the highest grade point. The achievers, of course, deserve congratulations. I have, still, some questions. First, we should consider that only three or four years ago, a few students got such grading. But within three or four years there is a big change. It is said that in the grading system, teachers are liberal in examining answer scripts.

It is good to become liberal. But becoming over liberal can cause great harm. My second question is that if all students are given the same ranking, how can we choose the brightest?

I hope the education authorities will consider the matter.
Md Habibullah Howlader
Chittagong University

High level cheating

Cheating in public services by highly placed professionals is difficult to eradicate, as these officials control the field level staffs who monitor and implement the rules and regulations.

There is another side: the official documents could be tampered with. Take the case of the Civil service, and SOEs (state owned enterprises), including the public corporations and banks. That means prosecution at the peer

Road shows

The government has much enthusiasm for the road show. We are given the impression that road shows can contain corruption. When many people cannot manage their two meals, spending so much money on such a programme is simply useless. I do not find any difference between the road march that the political parties used to arrange before one-eleven and the so called road shows being organised these days.

The present CTG always says that it has no political motive, but isn't road show a political programme?
Mushfique Wadud
Department of English
Stanford University Bangladesh

Israel and the US

Israel, a rogue state, has grown very powerful. It is a bully and threat to the entire Middle East.

Zionist monopolisation of western exclusive support must come to an end. A massive propaganda campaign is needed. No violence is required. It is time to tell the West that defending crimes against humanity is also a crime. Falsehood and injustice never triumph. Americans are nice people. They abhor falsehood and could easily be freed from the Zionist evil spell!
Syed Yusuf Bakht
Senpara
Sylhet

Universities and power supply

Nowadays the private universities are not getting enough electricity during their stipulated time of research.

Share market investors

We find DSE website very busy during. Most of the companies have converted their share transaction system through BOI/electronic or computerized account. It makes life easier for the shareholders. You can see the market status through Internet or TV channel and you can decide whatever shares you want to buy or sell. This reduces lot of paperwork. This is one of the factors to eventually attract general people to this business. There are some common terms used for this case. IPO, primary share, stock, secondary share, bond, dividend, lot, face value, bonus share, EPS, spot sale, portfolio, A, B, Z, N, G category, etc. Presently, students, teachers, service holders, businessmen, retired personnel all are investing some of their money to learn and see the return.

But, in fact, it is very difficult to speculate the trend of market without

analysing financial status of the companies and related factors. So, in practice, even the investors who are doing this business since long have faced difficulties from time to time. There is a lot of risk for the small investors as well. We can say it's some kind of speculation-based business.

As we discussed with brokers, most of the people are investing their money on rumours. Especially, the new and small investors are investing their money and are caught in a trap due to their ignorance. This is really dangerous.

For example, one company's share was selling at Tk.900 at the beginning. Afterwards it reached to Tk.155 only. So, imagine, what a great loss for those who bought them at a higher price. But there are some people who are earning a lot from this business.

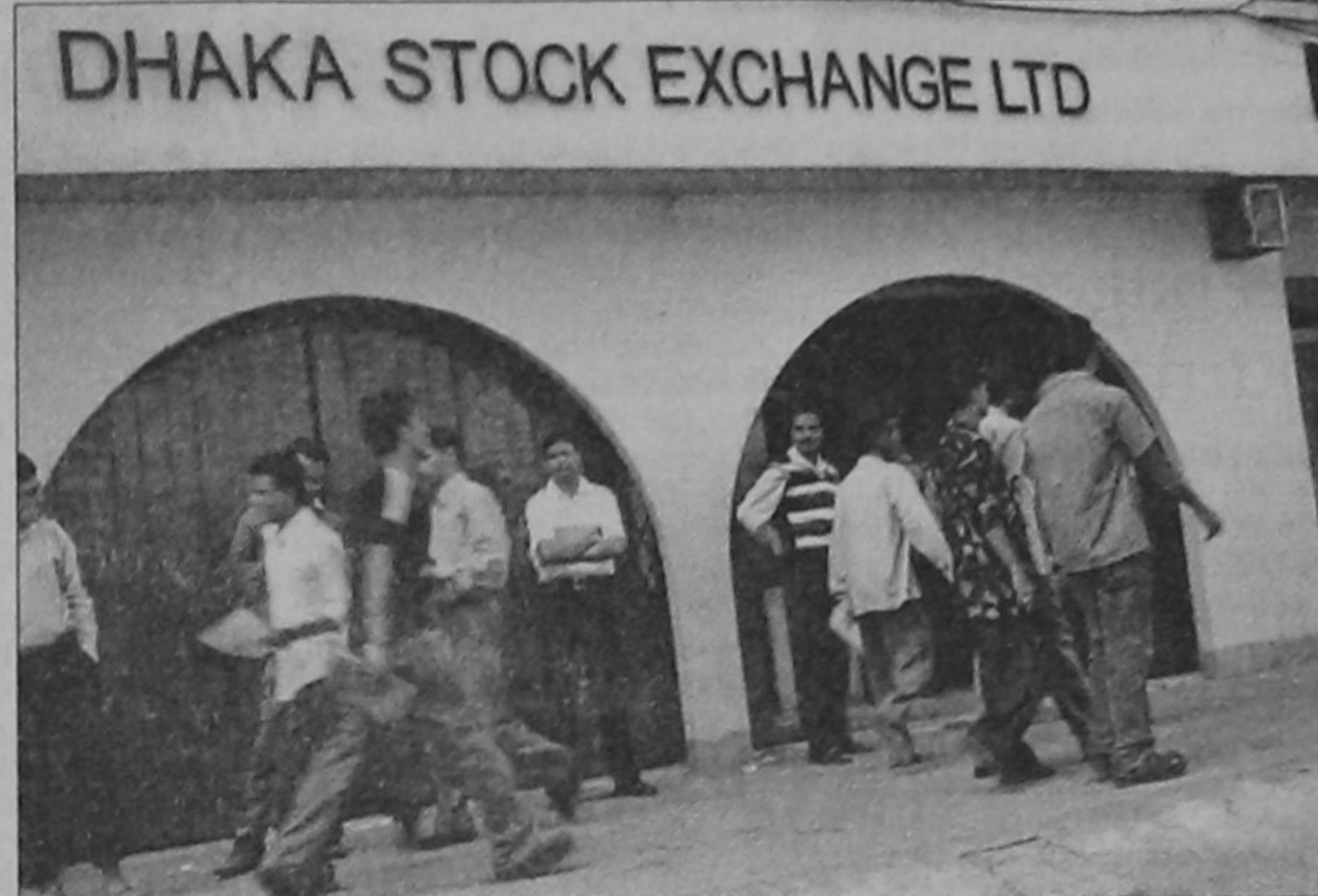
However, this business is too much risky for the low income people and

novices dependent on rumours.

Lastly, we would request SEC and DSE to take necessary measures to

save the beginners and low income people.

Engr. Zahir U. Hyder, One-mail



revolted again and again and fought back. I personally think it's a great time for Bangladesh to rebrand and shine. Lets rebuild Bangladesh and be proud of our country.

Areader
One-mail

Politicians

I was watching a famous film called Man of the Year, starring Robin Williams. It is a commentary on American politics.

The last line was a universal truism for democracy. In the interests of democracy I hope you will publish the line here:

"Politicians are like diapers, they both need to be changed frequently and for the same reason."
Ezajur Rahman
One-mail

Life in Dhaka

I am a university student studying History at Drexel University in the US. I am currently in Dhaka for the summer visiting relatives. I have been reading The Daily Star and feel it is both a comprehensive newspaper and a responsible one, admirably living up to its "without Fear or Favour" motto.

I feel what is plaguing Dhaka is lack of foreign investment in different areas. When people visit this country to conduct business, Dhaka needs to provide entertainment for our guests after business hours. While living in the Gulshan sector, I can see that there are numerous amounts of restaurants that are owned by non-Bangladeshi residents or at least serve non traditionally Bengali cuisine such as Chinese, Korean, Indian, American, and Thai. While this is a positive sign, I also feel that this city can do more to diversify life in the city.

While I understand that Bangladesh is a predominantly Muslim country, it should see the value of attracting non-Muslims to its country. After all, we have seen Dubai flourish into a wealthy metropolis.

Ryan Habibullah
Drexel University, Philadelphia PA USA

Monitor the market

Although it is said that the price of edible oil i.e. soyabean oil (per kg.) should be Tk 112 (source: The Daily Star & the daily Prothom Alo - 10th July 2008), it is seen that in many markets soyabean oil is sold at much higher price.

I think the prices of essential commodities should be monitored by the competent authorities.
Mohammad Rayhan Uddin
Law school
Premier University

Tigers subdued

The Asia Cup Cricket started nicely for Bangladesh, though the opposition was U.A.E. The poor batting display however continued and as predicted by many, Bangladesh would get only one win (against U.A.E) and that was it. In my previous letter (23.06.08) I predicted that Bangladesh would have 10% success in the near future. But looking at the just concluded Asia Cup, I just have a feeling that I have probably predicted a bit too much.

In the group match, looking at the scorecard on a placid pitch tells the tale; 300 runs was scored once and against a non Test playing country. Courtesy: Mohammed Ashraf's 2nd hundred of his carrier. Against Sri Lanka the poor batting was exposed once again (226).

In the 2nd round against India

Bangladesh scored 283, thanks to an unexpected hundred from Alok Kapali. Against Sri Lanka the poor batting was once again exposed -174, and keeping the continuity of the poor batting display the Tigers could manage only 115 against Pakistan. To my surprise, Tamim was the 2nd most consistent player scoring 157 runs at an average of 31.40, which certainly is appreciable and shows the determination of the "Once a Pinch Hitter" who is trying hard to overcome his shortcomings and is probably listening and following the advice of the coach. Centurion Ashraf was as usual scoring a total of 165 Runs with a 100 against U.A.E. (In the rest of the matches nothing to talk about). Kapali scoring 172 did indicate a good comeback. Raqibul's 195 at an average of 39 was certainly the best and he was the main man behind the Tiger's totals.

It is time that the Bangladesh cricket pundits sat down and thought seriously about Ashraf, Farhad Reza & Nazimuddin.

I believe Bangladesh would play better cricket without Ashraf as Shakib and Aftab both will be back in the team soon.

I just couldn't understand why Shahriar Nafis (averaging 33.76) was not in the playing eleven.

Sohel Ahmed
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

Mockery of humanity!

I was watching a news documentary on CNN the other day. It was a wonderful show of humanity on the part of the American authorities. They were taking an extreme care of a burnt out Iraqi boy the boy, named Yusuf, was severely burnt and wounded recently in an attack. Doctors were examining his physical and mental conditions, and treating him accordingly. It was a show that makes others think or believe that humanity still exists.

But, a shuddering thought struck my head as to the naked horror of killing and counter killing that took away the lives of thousands of innocent children along with other women and men as the country, unfortunately, fell an easy prey to Bush administration's Iraq intrusion on the pretext of a false accusation that Iraq had WMD (Weapons of mass destructions).

Now, however, coming back to the given context, the gesture of humanity that was being rendered to a Yusuf, a victim of barbarity in Iraq invariably raises some questions: one has got all the reasons to ask as to the message that the US was trying to spread through undertaking that massive scale treatment for a single Yusuf among a thousand ones. What have the other Yusefs done? What crimes have brought them their early exit from the earth? And, as to the CNN's recurrent presentations of such a single issue of humanity on a huge canvass, one might ask /question if this kind of media are not the mere tools of the ever burgeoning imperialism. Are not all these the imperialistic hoax? A mockery of human face? Democracy in disguise? Didn't the US intrude a sovereign country and then destroy it, or pave the way to a monumental human slaughter? If Saddam had done some grave mistake, why should the entire land be scaffold with deathbags falling incessantly? If the US had or still has the intent of doing good to the country and its citizens, then why are they still failing the suffering country in question? There can be thousands of questions like these or others, yet things remain the same --- the oppressors have got the upper hand, and the sup-

pressed have to remain the same. It's, to a greater extent, a mockery of Humanity at large.
Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

SAU's location

This refers to Prof. SAM's letter (DS, dt.14/07/2008) on the above subject which he has written in reply to my previous letter on the same issue (ref: DS, dt.11/07/2008).

Well, it appears that Prof. SAM is the only man who has suddenly started pursuing shifting of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) from its present location to a countryside location or merging SAU with another university/institution, of course, as he pleaded, in the greater interest of society or the nation, etcetera, etcetera. Once again I would like to inform that the issue of SAU's location on its present site is a settled one. Hence there is no scope for initiating any debate on this matter. Meanwhile it is not clear, why Prof. SAM is advocating merger of SAU with Bangabandhu Agricultural University in Gazipur? He stated in his letter that Bangabandhu Agri Varsity has only Master's and PhD level programmes. Perhaps Prof. SAM is unaware that Bangabandhu Agri

Varsity is running undergraduate level programmes too!

Finally, I would like to appreciate Prof. SAM's good intention that he has no objection if the university/college he is presently serving is shifted elsewhere or merged with another university. However, I would like to ask "Would his colleagues, students appreciate his suggestion and put no barricade on shifting/merging of his institution?" In my case, my colleagues and students would never appreciate such a move.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Chairman
Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka

Don't overlook...

I am writing to you to enquire about the state of coverage regarding RAB and the associated activities being carried out by them in Bangladesh. Specifically, the concern revolves around coverage of such deplorable activities by the government agencies and under-reporting or no reporting of context and content by large circulating newspapers in Bangladesh.

I urge you to keep in perspective

the consequence of such injustice and the moral consequence of not reporting such items in depth to the public. Please don't forget the atrocities in Chile in 1974, following which several thousand 'massacres' were committed in the name of the government by the defence forces and intelligence agencies.

"Journalism Without Fear or Favour" -- your motto -- may not hold much credibility to readers around the globe, unless of course your organisation has the courage to execute the printed quote. After all, it is much easier to speak and perhaps write, but a bit more difficult to do as you preach.
KAKhan
One-mail

US strategy

The Bush administration is going to execute its designs against Iran following three ways-- 1. Stimulating extremist movements in oil rich areas; 2. Provoking Iranians to adopt the oppressive way over the separatists; 3. pressurising other countries to avoid Iran in terms of trade and commerce and bilateral agreements.

Enamul
SM Hall
University of Dhaka

Government subsidy

It is baffling to castigate donor agencies for closure of our jute, sugar and steel mills of the country. The Adviser Finance had to swear a few months ago in a public seminar of his receiving no such advice from donor agencies. The distinguished academicians (especially Russian educated) continued their anger on those agencies without looking into ground realities in the industrial arena owned by the government. Mismanagement, corruption, nepotism went unchecked by the successive governments. All the officials engaged in those producing units and their controlling head offices had no accountability. Industrial management experts having both academic qualifications and practical experience had no place rather only politically and bureaucratically favoured people got the upper hand which led to closure of mills culminating in heavy losses.

Although all successive governments very cunningly avoided applying the brake but they never also cared to know which side one's bread was buttered on. The overall situation of state owned enterprises came to such a stage that even the privatisation commission was possibly out of their breath. But a distinction if made with the private sectors shall reveal that they are not only expanding producing units continuously creating huge employment opportunities but also regularly paying taxes

to the government in conformity with laws of the country.

The government subsidy cannot be continued to the state owned enterprises continuously jeopardizing important development works and therefore SOEs should be advised to meet their requirement by generating own revenue. Only our agriculture sector need all out government support, sincerely and continuously to grow more crops. The country during the last 38 years has produced enough experts and technocrats to run the railways, airlines, IWTAs, ports, tea gardens, heavy industries, banks, insurance etc. and therefore, right persons must be recruited to run those organisations and not the officers of the administration wing of the government who perfunctorily acted to make their own fortune and unfortunately created all the mess.

So, the ACC should immediately get to the bottom of all project functions of sector corporations, like they started with Biman, Titas Gas, ports etc. with a view to bringing all evildoers to book. After all, palatial high rise residential buildings in Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara were not built with only pay packages from the exchequer.

KC Rezaul Huq
Lalmatia, Dhaka



FIROZ GAZI / DRINKNEWS

Priority areas

We achieved our freedom sacrificing much in terms of lives. The first govt. of Bangladesh was supposed to rebuild the nation with a clear philosophy and motto. But unfortunately we lost the chance at the very beginning.

To develop the education sector, the govt.

should ensure quality teachers and quality education, irrespective of the location of schools.

We hope the present government will focus on education and health sectors along with social justice.

Sarwar Kamal, Cox's Bazar



MUNIRA MORSHED MUNNI / DRINKNEWS

Representation of the People's Order 1972, we have the authority to select and elect our desirable candidates. But we are totally helpless when placed in a situation where we have to choose from among candidates who are equally undesirable. Often, casting no vote at all has been a form of resistance for many against this sticky situation -- an undemocratic practice. Some wouldn't waste their valuable vote, however, and not thinking much about candidates, they would cast it, as the less wary usually did, for a party seemed worthy, which would build up the culture of party-based politics.

We have faced this for long. During the terms of the previous elected governments people asked for electoral reforms, in this regard, one much sought-after reform being the provision of 'no' vote in the ballot. Yet, the political parties didn't consider the appeal. Contrary to their assumptions, this provision wouldn't spoil their image; rather this would enable them to self-censor themselves. The practice of politics as a public service characterized by austerity, efficiency, honesty, and transparency would have been possible to cultivate.

On July 13, the council of advisers approved in principle the Representation of the People's Order (RPO) Ordinance 2008, bringing about electoral reforms that include mandatory registration of political parties and an

level.

The other example is the institutionalisation of corrupt practices that Bangladesh is passing through now. What is the overall corruption rating in the political parties, especially the political regimes? The ACC records made public are an indication. The political leaders avoid talking on corruption, and continuously make irrelevant demands on the government. No reforms are placed before the public. Why not reveal both sides of the coin? Lack of moral courage, or secretly goaded by a materialistic philosophy of life?

The top minority of the urban society is isolated from the rest, as black wealth rules both the sellers and the buyers (high-rise building for residential or shopping and business purposes).

The corrective steps have to start from the basic core level, controlled by powerful cartels. Our debating culture is at fault--the listener had already decided not to agree with the talker! Now Hillary Clinton is helping Obama with the party's election campaign--difficult to find similar examples in Dhaka.

Dhaka has to pass through many tests and hurdles to attain transparent government. It is up to the voters, but remember that 80 per cent of the population live in the villages; and 50 per cent are barely literate. It is tough to mount awareness campaigns on 100 topics!

AMawaz, Dhaka

We would request the electricity supply authorities to look into the matter, which has a direct bearing on education in the country.

Md. Ehsanul Karim
PS to Registrar
Southern University Bangladesh

'Rebranding Bangladesh

Thank you, Mr. Mamun Rashid, for a wonderful article on rebranding Bangladesh. I am an NRB and a regular reader of your newspaper. I have never seen such a positive article from a Bangladeshi newspaper. Being an NRB we all try in our own way to be the best ambassadors of our country, and honestly we the NRBs are also a valuable product of our country. But as you said, in the Western world, the name Bangladesh is always attached with poverty, natural disaster and poor government. But if you look at each and every bad thing that happens to Bangladesh, its people tried to overcome all the obstacles and shine.

1. Poverty-- we are a poor country, but we are the ones who invented Micro Credit to overcome poverty, for which we got Nobel Prize, you can't deny that.

2. Natural Disaster-- yes we are hit by the worst Natural Disasters, such as Sidr, but look at how humanly we all handled the situation, compared to the other disaster-stricken countries.

3. Poor government-- yes, this probably crippled our country, but if you look back, we as a nation