

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.

# Rights of women

In Bangladesh, women constitute half the total population and the majority of them live below poverty line. In our country, over the last few years, women have become visible as productive labour force, but they are deprived of their rights. Women generally work longer hours than men, but they are paid less than men. Undoubtedly, it is a heinous conspiracy to undervalue women's work and their contribution to society. In Bangladesh, female

domestic workers are treated badly too. This under-valuation not only reduces women's bargaining power, but also deprives them of the legal rights.

Thousands of girls fall victim to dowry. It is high time we recognized women as equal partners of men. Women should be made self-sufficient by providing them proper education and employment opportunities. Women have proved that they can go forward with men.

In our country, the prime minis-

ter and the leader of the opposition are women. And thousands of women are engaged in many important jobs, and they are carrying out their duties very well to make a prosperous Bangladesh. In fact, the contribution of women in every sphere of our life cannot be denied. It is important to understand that men and women, with all their differences, are equal.

**Tanha Kashfia Kate**  
Uttara Model Town  
Dhaka

electronic and print media has rather created a negative impact upon the minds of the people, majority of who lives below the poverty line.

Many allegations can be brought against late President Ziaur Rahman by his critics, but none can bring a single allegation of financial corruption against the late President. It is alleged that a number of money counting machines were in action at "Hawa Bhaban" while the BNP was in power. What a contrast between the late father and his two sons!

Perhaps people have not forgotten the day Khaleda Zia broke into tears at the death of her husband, being uncertain about her future and that of her sons, as the late President did not leave anything behind.

Today's revelation of Khaleda Zia's residence speaks of a different story. The Awami League is definitely playing a very good game. The revelation has presented the AL with an opportunity to make good use of the mythical broken suitcase, left behind by the late President, once again.

Let us refrain from disgracing the dead lest we meet the same fate.

**Saleh Ayub**  
One-mail



SHAFIQUL ISLAM KAJOL / DRINKNEWS

## Tipaimukh dam

The proposed Tipaimukh dam would be one of the rock-filled dams in the world. The main purpose of constructing this dam is to generate hydroelectric power. Bangladesh and its biodiversity will face serious consequences if this dam is constructed. The construction of the dam will destroy the livelihoods of mil-

lions of people. All political parties must put aside their differences and unite on this issue. We have seen the consequences of Farakka, and we do not want another Farakka.

**Md. Faruq Hossain**  
Political Science  
S.M.Hall, University of Dhaka



A.M. AHMAD / DRINKNEWS

## Arms factories in Bangladesh

An editorial, published in a local English daily on 10th November, dealt with the busting of an arms factory near Cox's Bazaar. This is just an example of current trend of violence and lawlessness that is fast spreading all over Bangladesh, which is rapidly creating market for illegal arms and ammunitions. Meanwhile, "eve-teasing", armed robbery, kidnapping, killing and extortion are matters of everyday affair, which was rare and scarce only a decade or so ago. Today, it has become a sad and ugly part of our daily news, with only a small part being reported!

Why has this happened? The answer lies in the various "Bahinies" as pointed out in the editorial; and which have now become gangs of "violence for hire", organised and managed by "god-fathers", and patronised by politicians and their activists. Today "all is fair in politics"; where all sorts of issues from 'gray to black' are decided, based on the widespread use of violence including even arson!

Containing these criminal manifestations, of which 'eve-teasing' is most ugly, rests with the politicians rather than the law enforcers, who in our current way of administration, are seriously dominated by political interferences that has

made them ineffective! This is the bitter reality today.

The perennial question remains, who will "bell the cat", since all want to join the fat cat "on the hot tin roof", basking in the bright sunshine of political power, so long that they rule the roost!

**Politics watcher**  
Dhaka

## Your editorials

I was disappointed with the editorials, "A legal battle takes to the street" and "BNP's hartal" published on November 14 and 15, 2010, respectively.

The two editorials seemed to me out of context. At one place, the editorial stated, "The BNP Chief should have long returned to the public a property that was given to her and her family during a very tragic moment in their lives when her husband was murdered and her two sons were under-aged." The editorial also stated, "Regrettably Begum Khaleda Zia started thinking of the gift as her right." Was there any condition that Begum Khaleda Zia would return the house when her sons came of age? And I never heard of gifts being returned.

About the hartal the editorial said, "We feel that calling hartal was even more deplorable given the fact that the reason for it had nothing to do with public interest, but

entirely related to a personal issue..." Given Begum Khaleda Zia's antecedents evicting Khaleda Zia from her house was a deplorable move by the government

It was a calculated act which backfired. The Awami League thought that BNP would definitely give a call for hartal and people would become very angry. Of course, people would become angry, but not with the BNP, but with the govt. People are no fools. I hope the editor is not unaware of the public feelings; they have become sympathetic to Begum Khaleda Zia. The govt's action has acted like a boomerang.

**Nur Jahan**  
Chittagong

## The clue is there

A report entitled "Trees dying in Dhaka" published in The Daily Star on 12th November 2010 says that experts are clueless behind the reasons of the death or decay of trees. The experts may be clueless but I, a layman, am not clueless about the reason. My office is in Uttara on Alaol Avenue. There is a road going out of the avenue. The police quarters stand on the road. The road is lined with green trees on both sides. I walk through that road at least twice a day. A few months back in the morning I found, to my astonishment, many trees on the road were scaled from top to bottom. It was done overnight, because the previous evening while I was passing through the road, I saw the trees ok.

A few days after I found some more trees on other roads scaled in the same way. I remember I saw a few very big and old trees on the road near Polo ground in Chittagong scaled from top to bottom.

There is no doubt that an organised criminal gang is involved in this act to cause

them to die. Their intention is to fell those trees in the future by showing them as dead. So, those who are involved in cutting down trees on the streets, with permission from the authorities concerned, may be questioned to find out who are behind the heinous act.

**Faruque Hasan**  
Uttara, Dhaka

## Khaleda Zia's eviction

This time, for sure, the Awami League has netted the ball. It was a very smart decision by the AL to evict Khaleda Zia from her residence, keeping in mind that invariably the BNP would go for hartal the following day on November 14, just two days ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, thereby making BNP more unpopular.

The exhibition of the household effects by both

## Women's cricket team's success

Finally, Bangladesh has earned a silver medal in the Asian Games, which is undoubtedly great news for the nation. We are feeling extremely proud to see our country's name in the list of the medal winners. We should now try to groom this cricket team.

It is the right time to show proper respect to the Bangladesh women's cricket team. We hope they would earn a gold medal in the next Asian Games.

**Badal Hasib**  
SIBT University  
Sylhet

## Call charges go abnormally high

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Ltd, BTCL has raised its overseas call charges, at least in case of the UK for sure, by as much as three and a half times the previous rate. Since mid August, 2010, they are charging at the rate of TK.24 per minute for a call to the UK

(land phone to land phone) irrespective of whether it is dialed through 012 or 00. It was (for dialing through 012) Tk. 7.50 per minute before. According to BTCL, their overseas call rates have been changed since mid August, 2010 as per instruction of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, BTRC. They have now done away with the economy ISD rate and made it same for both 00 and 012 dialing. Regrettably, this they have done with no prior notification.

Interestingly, their new rate for the USA, Canada and Japan is TK. 6.0 per minute now, but for the UK it is TK. 24.0 per minute. When enquired from the BTCL Trunk call division why it was so different and abnormal for the UK, compared to the other countries, they could not give a satisfactory reply except saying that they were doing it as per instruction of the BTRC.

According to BTRC website however, it is the same, that is TK.6.0 per minute for PSTN call charges to the UK. It is hard to believe that the telephone charges of BTCL for a country like the UK, where

hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshis are living, can be so different and abnormal.

May I, through this letter, draw attention of the authorities concerned and request for a thorough investigation of the matter so that the telephone subscribers, requiring to talk to their dear and near ones in the UK, do not have to pay unduly higher call charges.

**Hussain Imam**  
Paribag, Dhaka

## Hartal

The BNP has called another hartal on 30th November 2010. The funny thing is that they are calling this hartal not for establishing people's demands, not for fulfilling the rights of people, but for their leader who has been evicted from her residence.

I am sure if a survey is done right now, 99% of the population will not support this hartal. We simply are fed up with the activities of our so-called politicians. Hartal will hamper all the daily activities and it will definitely cripple our economy.

I wish BNP would realise this and call off the hartal.

**Minhaj Ahmed**  
Uttara, Dhaka

## Thanksgiving Day wish

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November (November 25 this year) in the United States of America. According to the historical link, earlier this day was celebrated to express gratitude and thanks to God for a bountiful harvest. It has also a religious connection to express thankfulness to God for everything He has given to us.

Thanksgiving Day is also celebrated in many other countries of the world including Canada.

Meanwhile it's exciting to receive some mails containing warm greetings on the eve of the Thanksgiving Day from my American friends. Since I sincerely support the noble mission of the Clinton Foundation, on this happy occasion of Thanksgiving, I sincerely wish every success of the Clinton Foundation's efforts towards ensuring human welfare around the globe.

**Professor M Zahidul Haque**  
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University  
Dhaka

# Fake birth certificates

At the time of enrolment in the school, most of the students submit fake birth certificates. As far as I know, there are many parents who change their children's date of birth while getting their kids admitted. According to the rules of the Directorate of Primary Education and the six education boards, a student must be above six years for enrolment in class 1 and 14+ for sitting for the SSC examination. How can it be possible for a student to sit for the SSC examination at the age of 14+, getting him/her admitted into class one at the age of 6? I think, everyone will agree with me that it is quite impossible for a student to pass SSC examination before the age of 16+.

The practice of using fake birth certificates must be stopped.

**Md Jalal Uddin**  
Assistant teacher  
Natore Govt. High School, Natore



TANVIR AHMED / DRINKNEWS

## Demolition of the tilted building

The news of demolition of the tilted building by Rajuk did not convince me (source: The Daily Star, 14-11-2010)! An under-construction seven-storey building in Kathalbaggan tilted a few days ago. Rajuk, rather than the owner himself, demolished the tilted building!

I do not understand what is the significance of mentioning the ID of the Rajuk official and the firm contracted by the owner? The owner had to get that building demolished, anyway. So, did not Rajuk play a supporting role?

The owner said that the building was being constructed under the "Building Construction Code". Was the approval examined? If not so, who approved that? Building construction has become a grand business of late. We are coming across such life threatening news frequently. As a conscious citizen, I doubt the legality of the earlier two queries. The matter should be examined and exemplary punishment should be given to the culprits. Only such action, not demolition alone, can prevent such accidents.

**A conscious citizen**  
Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR



## ONLINE VOICES

Readers' instant comments on The Daily Star Online reports. Log on to thedailystar.net to leave your comments.

### BNP expels Huda

*Deposed for recent comments (November 22, 2010)*

There is nothing wrong with what Mr. Huda has stated. This is what most of us think, anyway. We should be able to accept positive criticism to improve ourselves.

**An observer**

Dissenting voice should be respected. It is very sad that our politicians fail to respect dissenting voices.

**Zia**

This is called autocracy!  
**Md. Shafiqul I Bhuiyan**

Not many people would characterise Mr. Huda as a saint, nor do I know the motives behind his comments. His arguments seem to have face value though. When there is no interest for introspection and tolerance for fair criticism is absolutely nil in the major political parties, it is hard to expect anything positive from our political leadership.

**Dr.A.Ahmed**

This is another silly decision of the BNP. Don't worry, Mr. Huda. Kindly wait for six months or a year at most, you will be in the party again.

**Abdul Karim**

Though unexpected, it happened at last. The BNP leadership had no other alternative.

It may be true that Nazmul Huda's proposition was correct; but he was not supposed to express his views to the media. Some of our intellectual politicians always ignore the reality and resort to hypocrisy due to political allegiance. If this trend is not stopped, we will be lagging behind in our future endeavours.

**Jahangir Alam Mia**

The BNP has taken the right decision. Some members of the BNP have belittled the image of the party by thinking themselves indispensable to the party. They take the benefits, but ignore party norms and values.

**Nasarullah**

BNP has expelled Mr. Huda, the party may have legitimate reason to do so. If he has been expelled merely for expressing different opinion, then it is a slap on the face of democracy.

**Sohel**

Perhaps the ideal process would be to raise these issues at the party forum /convention and obtain consensus. Since neither the major parties tolerate any internal dissent, I do not know if there is any other option to express dissent against party's wrong policies/tactics.

**M.Faruque**

This is a threat to democracy.  
**Tarun**