

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 150 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

**Attention Readers**

We bring to your kind notice that most of the letters we receive still contain more than 150 words, which makes it difficult for us to edit and publish. We therefore remind you again to restrict your letters/opinions/comments to a maximum of 150 words. Your kind cooperation will be highly appreciated.  
 ....Editor

**Bring them home**

It is very unfortunate to find so many Bangladeshis stranded in Tunisia and Libya after having endured great sufferings while fleeing from a war-torn nation. While they suffer, the Bangladesh government makes no sincere and hurried efforts to get these citizens back home which is a matter of great disgrace. Even IOM is saying that the Govt. of Bangladesh is half-hearted in its efforts to take back the citizens. I urge upon all to raise their voice in support of these stranded fellow citizens and if need be, launch private efforts to raise money to get these people back home. Too bad, the nation can spend billions to showcase ICC - it can not spare dimes when it comes to looking after its stranded citizens.  
**Mohammad Haq**  
 USA



PHOTO: AFP

**Response to Mr Alamgir Khan's article**

We are writing in response to Mr Alamgir Khan's article "The other side of microfinance". In it he queried what the sources of our literature review on the impact of micro-finance were. We sourced our evidence from published research on micro-finance in Bangladesh, using material from researchers based in Bangladesh and those abroad. Since the list of references is too long to reproduce in a letter of this nature, we would like to point to two papers which provide the details of each of the points made in our article along with their exact citations. These two overview papers are Khandker, S. (2005). "Microfinance and Poverty: Evidence Using Panel Data from Bangladesh." World Bank Economic Review 19(2) and Zaman, H (2004) "The scaling up of micro-finance in Bangladesh: determinants, impact and lessons" World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3398. We hope readers find these papers helpful in assessing the impact of micro-credit on the poor.  
**Shahid Khandker and Hassan Zaman**  
 On e-mail

**A fabulous tournament!**



MAHABUB ALAM KHAN / DRINKNEWS

It's a matter of great delight for us that Bangladesh has successfully played its part in hosting the Cricket World Cup 2011. We have once again proved that despite being an impoverished nation, we have the capability of producing world-class outputs if given an opportunity. This magnificent event has also given this tiny nation a great deal of international exposures that we truly deserved.  
 Although many people still have

regrets regarding Bangladesh's failure to make it to the quarterfinals. However, it's undeniable that there were some very apparent signs of improvements and the way we won against England clearly validates the fact that our team has become highly competitive over the last few years. All in all, I think we have done an awesome job, both on and off the field.  
**Kh. Asef Safa Kabir**  
 Muhammadpur  
 Dhaka

**Whose fault is this?**

We need to listen to the Bangladesh Bank governor. As it is Bangladesh Bank who removed Prof Yunus from Grameen Bank, they should defend it, not the Finance Minister and the Attorney General.

Is there any such instance that an MD of a Bank can run his office without Bangladesh Bank's approval? As Prof Yunus could run his office for ten long years without Bangladesh Bank's approval, then what prompted our Finance Minister to 'remove' him to 'establish rule of law' suddenly? Whose fault is this and who is liable to be punished for letting Prof Yunus hold the position 'illegally' for so long?

**Kazi Ahmed**  
 Toronto, Canada

**Removal of Prof. Yunus**

We understand from various reports that majority of the general mass desire that Professor Yunus will be treated honourably. I have a proposal on how to bid farewell to Dr. Yunus as the outgoing Managing Director of Grameen Bank. It was published in the newspaper that the tenure of Chairmanship of the existing Chairman of Grameen Bank is going to expire in April 2011; (if I am not wrong) Dr. Yunus may be allowed to continue as the Managing Director of the Bank till expiry of the tenure of the Chairman of the Bank and after expiry of the service contract/appointment of the present chairman, he may be made the Chairman of the Grameen Bank if he accepts it at all.  
**Azizur Rahman, Ex: Sh. Bank Executive**

**Folly of decision makers.....**

Sir Ian Kershaw, a military historian, wrote 'Fateful Choices' about the decisions taken in the Second World War, contrasting those made in the democracies compared to those made by Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin.....

He commented, 'A despot's entourage of nervous sycophants is clearly the worst environment for good decision-making. The leaders of democracies are in less danger, but unless they have good intelligence and unless their subordinates are prepared to present facts that contradict their chief's mindset, they too can make terrible blunders. The worst folly of decision-makers is to believe their own propaganda.' I shuddered when I read 58 people condemning Blake's remarks on Professor Yunus as 'disgraceful' and illustrating 'a submissive relation with a foreign force'. If I listen to the opinion of someone who disagrees with me, am I 'being submissive'? If I don't, I am the one in danger!  
 Name and address withheld on request

**Road grabbers!**

In most of the residential areas of Dhaka, a portion of the road is grabbed by the unscrupulous house owners. And perhaps Mohammadpur is the worst affected. The house owners while building their houses grab a couple of feet from the government road. Unfortunately, none is there to see it and this unlawful activity hugely contributes to the traffic jam. But if government wants, they can bulldoze these illegal structures just by one week and get the roads back to the original size. This has been possible in Mirpur recently prior to the world cup and the scenario is totally different now. Let's free all illegally grabbed areas for a better Dhaka!  
**Khandaker Zia Hasan**  
 Teacher and Journalist  
 On e-mail

**Vandalism and our sufferings**

The rickshaw-pullers' revolt against the traffic policy of the government by vandalising hundreds of vehicles, causing sufferings to commuters, school children, sick and old has left the nation stunned. The general public of this country have had enough. The insufferable traffic jams cannot be addressed because the rickshaw-pullers don't want it. If governments, be it the AL, BNP, JP or Jamaat, are incapable of protecting the life and property of its citizens, then democracy has failed in this country and we should look for other alternatives.  
**Mahmoodul Haque**  
 Gulshan, Dhaka

**Abolition of capital punishment**

Amnesty International and other Human Rights organisations' observation that the country should move towards the abolition of capital punishment is a clear evidence of recognition in principle at the highest quarters that there can be no rational justification for that extreme penalty in a democratic state. Their views represent the current thinking across the world. Although Bangladesh's law prescribes death penalty for crimes such as murder, abetting mutiny by members of the armed forces, and waging war against the government, it is in cases perceived as particularly gruesome and politically sensitive that the extreme punishment is awarded. In our country, the justice system works in such a way that of the criminals caught, a very few get convicted. Though abolition of capital punishment is welcome, the government should not tie the hands of justice in dealing with heinous crimes.  
**Gopal Sengupta, Canada**

**Lack of professionalism**

I was saddened to learn of the passing away of veteran politician and BNP secretary general, Khandker Delwar Hossain, in Singapore. I rushed to see more detailed news. However, I was confused by the conflicting information on two popular websites, the websites of The Daily Star and BDNews24.com.  
 In the profile of late Delwar Hossain, The Daily Star states that he passed his BA and MA in Economics in 1952 and 1253 respectively from Dhaka University while BDNews24.com states that he graduated in Economics from DU in 1955. The Daily Star also states that he left behind four daughters and two sons while the BDNews24.com states he left behind one daughter and three sons. I hope The Daily Star will check its figure to reconfirm. I hope the others too will do the same and where mistake is found, be duly rectified.  
**Talha Ahmad, UK**

**Everything gone out of control!**

Remember what General Moeen U Ahmed said after taking over on 1/11, the train has fallen off the tracks meaning the country and it needs to be restored back on its tracks.  
 Only in the recent past it has been revealed in your esteemed daily that there plies 11 million rickshaws on the streets of Dhaka out of which 1 million is unauthorized or illegal. Then a couple of days back your esteemed daily also published highly alarming pictures of polluting the water bodies and the environment. People have become excessively violent which is demonstrated time and again on the streets of Dhaka. The situation has really gone out of control; all kinds of evil are thriving and are taking place every now and then. May be Bangladesh will be affected by nature's fury like that in Japan soon.  
**Saleh Ayub**  
 On e-mail



MUNEM WASIF / DRINKNEWS

**READERS respond**

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star report headlined "AL sees bad days ahead".

**Kamal, Singapore**  
 Government is wasting too much time in unproductive issues and lack of focus. About war criminals trial there is a very little progress. On the matter of Yunus - those will not bring prosperity for our people. Govt has lack of solid plan and I doubt if they have strategic thinkers in the team. Finance, commerce, power and foreign ministries are poor performers.

**Saleh Tanveer**  
 The issue is well highlighted to the government that they have been thus far sitting on a good foreign exchange reserves due to overseas remittances garment exports? This is really a bad time to strain the relations with the west over Yunus affair since it might affect our chances with getting MFN status. If the US congress were to leave out Bangladesh from an MFN status on garment, it will land us in competitive disadvantage and leave the country really struggling.

**Fg, USA**  
 The issue is well highlighted in the news. We want to see a serious concern by the government and discuss the issues in a bigger policy level to identify the problems with facts and figures and draw the strategy with time line to address the problems on priority basis. A few mega construction projects might be put to the second priority now.

**Manzoor Ashraf**  
 So in these trying times AL really should do its level best to sit with BNP. Together they may devise policies to bear down the inevitable crisis that are approaching our young nation. I would like to suggest that Bangladesh stops taxing imports of basic food items like edible oil, wheat, rice, sugar and pulses.

Secondly, it should handover the running of the ports and major highways to the army and reduces red tapes so that exporters do not face harassment. Thirdly reduce corporation tax. Fourthly make tax free all imports of raw materials and lastly allow tax-free imports of HFO so that private enterprises can run power plants to run their factories and sell access power to other users.

**Jalal**  
 The strategy will be to make another multi billion dollar fund for political rescue. Nothing more they can do for the economy.

**Anonymous in USA**  
 Awami League members discussed many factors that may lead to bad days for Bangladesh in the future. They mentioned the trouble in the Middle East, return of the expatriates, reduction in the amount of remittance, upward trend of the prices of essentials, and disaster in Japan. Those are potent reasons, no doubt. But they did not mention one very important factor: Dr Yunus and Grameen Bank issue. Since the formation of Friends of Grameen, many other countries supported Dr Yunus and criticised Bangladesh government for bad handling of the issue. The names of the countries supporting Dr Yunus are going up and up gradually, with Spain the latest. This issue will have serious impact on Bangladesh economy as these are the countries on which Bangladesh depends for aid and loan for its development projects.

**Abul Kashem**  
 There were many natural calamities in our country during the past regimes along with price-hike of essential commodities in international markets that resulted influence in our local markets too. Now, when there are natural calamities and crisis in international economy, none is found to criticize any certain syndicate. Conscious people may please take a note of this changed situation previous and present.

**Anonymous in USA**  
 Awami League has rightly seen that bad days are ahead for Bangladesh. To me the causes of bad days are the following: Non-implementation or slow implementation of development projects. Problems of prioritizing the needs- people-oriented projects are to be given priority, not the projects for satisfaction of some high ups. Problems in the Middle Eastern countries resulting in the return of Bangladeshi workers. Reduction in Expats remittance. Isolation of Bangladesh due to Dr Yunus and Grameen Bank episode.

**Obama disappoints!**

When Barack Obama was elected US president, I, like many others, thought he would help the Palestinians win their just rights. But he seems to be following the path of his predecessors by extending all sorts of support to Israel allowing them to do whatever they like from killing innocent unarmed Palestinians to stealing their land by building more and more Jewish settlements. This is really frustrating.

Lately the US administration has taken military action against an undemocratic government in the Middle East to protect civilians. So far so good. But why no action against Israel to protect Palestinian lives and their shrinking territories? The US is a superpower and we expect a superpower to promote peace and justice in the world through ensuring equal treatment for all.

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

**Let us build a better Bangladesh**

Bangladesh, though a poor country, yet it is characterized by a vibrant parliamentary democracy, independent judiciary and election commission and a free media. In addition, the people of the country exercise all fundamental human rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and the right to information. We hope our country will soon develop in all sectors.  
**Farad**  
 USA