

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 200 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

# The myth of Indo-Bangla friendship



"A friend in need is a friend indeed" --- India has proven the proverb in 1971 by extending their all-out support to our War of Liberation against the occupying Pakistani military junta and their collaborators--Rajakar, Al-badr and Al-shams. We are very grateful to India for its support to us in those days of our miseries. But what's happening today and what happened just after our Liberation War?

In the early years of our independence, when the whole nation was trying to rebuild the infrastructure and economy of a new-born country, which was totally destroyed by the Pakistani occupation forces, India inaugurated the world's most harmful "Farakka Barrage" on the common river Ganga to deprive Bangladesh of its legitimate share of water. As a result, the northern region of our country has almost become a desert. India is also withdrawing a huge quantity of water from the river Teesta by building a barrage at Gojoldoba point to gear-up the desertification

process of our fertile agricultural land. Now they are planning to build Tipaimukh dam on the river Barak ignoring all international laws of water sharing.

On the other hand, BSF, their border security forces, are randomly killing our innocent people at the border. Now our question is, how long will it continue? Bangladesh is not a province of India; it is an independent and sovereign state. India's brutality has already crossed every limit. We want to see an end of this injustice immediately.

**Nagen Saha (FF)**  
 Dhamrai, Dhaka

## Dr. Yunus as WB president!

It is very difficult to comprehend that if our PM can recommend Dr Yunus for the position of WB president, why did she then oppose when the question of selecting Dr. Yunus as Grammen Bank Chairman arose?

The PM should give Dr. Yunus a proper position at home first, and then ask others to follow. I think we would be better off to have him within us to serve the people of Bangladesh rather than as WB president.

**Md. Mynul Mamun**  
 East Goran, Dhaka

## Congratulating govt. and NGOs

I quote from The Daily Star report "The nutrition puzzle" dated February 22, 2012: "Bangladesh is half as rich as India and its income rose threefold while India's four-fold during 1990- 2010; its share of underweight children (remarkably) dropped by a third and is now below India's". I have been bashing all governments in my articles on their failures. Let me have the privilege now to congratulate the governments and NGOs on this success story. I am happy to note that we are moving towards real freedom.

# Toward a better environment



According to a news report published recently in the daily Arab News, the Saudi Ministry of Education has initiated a programme entitled "Toward a better environment" in different cities including Jeddah of the Kingdom. As part of the programme, twelve projects provided by groups of high school students called for the protection of environment through organised campaigns.

With a view to encouraging the participating school students in the programme, the Department of Education in Jeddah recently organised an event to honour the first four winners who were nominated out of 12 projects. The first award went to the project promoting the protection of public property. Project against air pollution in school won the second award while the third and fourth awards were given to projects on water pollution control and pesticides and their effects on creatures and environment respectively. Among other projects, there was a project on combating rats through cleaning leftovers at the beach.

I heartily congratulate the winning project and other project members. Often students at school, college and university levels undertake such types of projects and work voluntarily in our country. Recently, some members of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) Language Club including Club President Sk. Md. Mamur Rashid (Mahin), VP Rakibul Hasan, GS Motiur Rahan visited hill districts of Bangladesh. As part of their study and awareness increasing project on culture and environment, the team had organised some group meetings with the local people and informed them about the importance of conservation of environment and using of appropriate doses of fertilisers and pesticides for ensuring environment-friendly sustainable agriculture. They learned about the languages and culture of the hill people.

The reason behind relating the good works of the Saudi students and the students of our university (SAU) is to point out one fact that if they wish and are properly guided, students can contribute enormously in nation building process as well as toward creating a better environment.

**Professor M Zahidul Haque**  
 Chief Moderator  
 SAU Language Club

## Ban on corporal punishment in schools

I think many people in our country still take corporal punishment as an effective and fruitful method to teach children. I recall with horror... in my school days I used to be scared to attend a certain teacher's class because he was an ardent believer of corporal punishment. In past, it was treated as normal! I never complained about it and I think nobody would have given any importance if I had disclosed it.

I am very glad that finally corporal punishment has been banned in Bangladesh and a law has been enacted in this regard. It is indeed a good move to take.

Now it is the government's responsibility to ensure that the law is implemented fully. We are well aware that in our country many laws exist only on paper. This happens because of lack of awareness of the general people and also due to the negligence of the government.

I think the government should start a massive campaign to create awareness about the bad effects of corporal punishment in schools. The government should also declare a special day as "anti physical punishment day" which will be observed at national level.

Corporal punishment creates fear in the young minds and it can severely hamper children's mental and physical growth.

I remember a quote from the great South African Leader Nelson Mandela-- "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

**Mohammed Sohel Hara**  
 Adamjee EPZ  
 Narayanganj

## Of letters by Nur Jahan

It is nothing wrong that one will support one particular party and will dislike some other party and will naturally speak against the latter either in power or out of power. Nur Jahan from Chittagong writes regularly in the Letters page of the DS. She does not say a single word about the imperative of the opposition to go to parliament. AL-led government has done many wrongs and has earned bad names for its failures as well and the nation is well taking note of them.

Nur Jahan wants the next election to be held under CTG (letter of Feb 6), scrapped by the High Court, and blindly supports BNP's movement to oust the elected government.

In the previous week she wrote against AL under the heading "Cocoon of AL." The hard truth is that the movement for restoration of the CTG lies in accomplishing the hidden agenda of creating unrest and anarchy leading to toppling of the government and thus foil the trial of war criminals.

Even in her letter of 17th February while demanding "killers should be arrested" she did not miss the opportunity to take a swipe to take a swipe against AL as she wrote, "we have noticed that offenders who belong to the ruling party somehow get away without any punishment..." Were any BNP-led 4-party alliance cadre at whose hands were persecuted members of the minority community after their electoral victory in 2001 and who unleashed terror at the Rokeya Hall of DU at dead of night and evicted girls, brought to justice?

In her earlier letter, she had told the government not to obstruct BNP's road march. But BNP's street movements, avoiding the parliament, bore no fruits for the general public but sufferings. Nur Jahan favours Khaleda Zia's undemocratic role that aims at seizing power and whitewashing the nefarious acts committed during her time.

**Ahmed Niaz**  
 Shekhertak  
 Mohammadpur, Dhaka

## Foot overbridge needed at Nabisco point

It is now essential to construct a foot overbridge at Nabisco point, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka. A large number of people have to cross the road every day. This road has been used to link Gulshan Avenue, Mohakhali Inter-district Bus Terminal, Land Registration Office, ICDDR,B and Ahsanullah University. Besides, many factories are situated in this area. So, a large number of pedestrians from Nakhapara, Tejkuni para and Shaheenbag cross this road taking high risk. There is no traffic police to control the movement of pedestrians or vehicles at this point.

We hope the authorities will consider the case with great importance prior to occurrence of any fatal accident and take an urgent initiative for constructing a foot overbridge at Nabisco crossing point.

**Engr. Zahir U. Hyder**  
 Senior Engineer  
 South Asia India  
 SITA Global Services

## Water and war!

Historically, shortage of water and search for it had led to many wars and destruction. In today's world, international rivers that cross two or more countries lead to the same situation, though wars are avoided, usually by international pressure or intervention.

Usually, upstream countries unilaterally harvest and divert river waters for their own needs, without any care or consideration for the needs of the other downstream countries!

Your report in the front page of your March 2nd issue depicts this stark and cruel reality; with both China and India being guilty; drawing water from the Brahmaputra at their own whim; with Bangladesh the worst and only sufferer! In the decades, or even earlier, it will lead to major desertification of Bangladesh, with water, a gift of nature, becoming a scarce commodity. India is only worried about the upstream Brahmaputra water diversion or damming by China, while actually 'caring a fig' for the dire needs of water by Bangladesh! They are going on with damming and river linking projects all around Bangladesh, for which their budget now is Indian Rupee 500,000 crore, which is over US\$125 billion (at US\$1=I.Rs40 basis).

Our situation, it seems, does not allow us to question why, but only to die! So much for all the talks and acts of bilateral "friendship(?)" which is nothing but an eye wash! The 'fried' ship will run aground before it is launched, with no water to float on! That is the fact of life, for us.

**S. A. Mansoor**  
 Dhaka

## READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star news report headlined "All because of stalking"

### Tajul Islam, Beijing

We, the residents of Banani area, are highly disturbed by the activities of these so-called universities. The government should take immediate steps to close operation of these universities, all offices and garment factories in Banani and Gulshan areas. These areas are getting overcrowded and unliveable.

### Robin

Every university in Bangladesh should have insurance policies against vandalism by the students.

### Sheikh Din Mohammad

The two VCs should sit together, apprehend the alleged stalker and punish him accordingly. The students' anger is nothing but their frustration against our society where the goons are the social elite and nearly all gentlemen live on illicit money from bribes etc.

### Md. Mansur Rahman

Please make sure that stern actions are taken against those thugs (in the guise of students) by identifying them from the video footage. This will certainly go a long way to deter such activities in the future, as the message will be clear that no one will go unpunished.

### Faizal hafiz

Students these days are preoccupied with other stuffs rather than studies or friendly discussions with others. When do you get time to be violent in a university? It's because most of these students are outside on the road drinking tea/smoking cigarettes and killing valuable time. They should be inside a boundary minding their own business.

### Md. Bashir

As our schools don't give ethical education to the students, our students try their best to earn a degree to earn money. They are not taught good behaviour and social norms.

### Mh Uddin

Most of the private universities at Dhaka and Chittagong are located in the congested residential areas, which cost a lot during any incident like this. We need to think about their relocation.

### Anon

Bangalees are good at destroying, not at creating.

### Abul

It's a disgrace that students of Bangladesh behave in such wild manners in public. A few months back,, I had to intervene when some teenage students dragged out a poor bus conductor their age. They almost beat him unconscious near Shewrapara overbridge. As a senior citizen, I felt it my duty to step in. Had I not done so, the boy would have been beaten to death. We often see them brazenly dodging bus fare. Time has come for the saner section of society to think seriously and find ways to curb this menace.

Religion also may be a source of learning for them about morality and good behaviour.

### Ghalib Imtiaz

Some readers have talked about if the universities are appropriately located, but failed to realise the underlying problem. These students behave in such a way because they do not have the credentials to study at tertiary level but unfortunately private universities are enrolling them as long as they can pay their fees. Such deliberate easing of entry requirements have resulted in poor standards and the last thing we need is to have these profiteering private universities to produce a large number of unskilled graduates, who do better if they were trained in vocational institutes with a hands-on approach.

They may lack the talent and aptitude to truly deserve a degree in subjects they are studying now but they will be able to make useful contribution to our economy if they are trained in polytechnic institutes so that they can work to revive our dying manufacturing sector.