

The Daily Star 01.01.17

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Bangladesh moving forward

Bangladesh is now recognised as one of the next 11 emerging economies in the world. In 1971, I don't believe many people would have guessed that Bangladesh, 45 years later, would perform this well. Its per capita income is now USD 1,466 and its foreign investment is nearly USD 2.23 billion. Women's participation rate in our labour force is 41 percent, the school dropout rate has been reduced to 20.4 percent and the literacy rate is about 63 percent. The child mortality rate for those aged under 5 has also been reduced to 36 per thousand.

There are now 143 schemes of social safety net programmes and the poverty rate has dropped to 22.4 percent. In short, Bangladesh has, indeed, overcome a myriad of problems and has made substantial progress during the past four decades. Presently, Bangladesh is aiming to become a middle-income country by 2021.

Despite our growing economy, we have quite a few significant challenges ahead of us. The widening discrepancy between the rich and the poor within the country is striking. The political milieu over the last few decades has been covered in bitterness, animosity and violent behaviour of our mainstream political parties. Confrontational politics has been the hallmark of our politics.

To move forward successfully, the political situation of our country needs changing. We look forward to our economy flourishing in the near future. But the political running of the country must be improved for that to happen.

Rafik Alamgir
Chittagong