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KANSAT tragedy

What has happened at Kansat is unprecedented violation of human rights and totally unacceptable bloodletting. It has laid bare the real face of our democracy and civility. Withdrawal of police from Kansat is not enough. The culprits have to be brought to book.

MAH Nazim
University of Dhaka

We saw how our sons of the soil stood against the corrupt authorities and raised their voice for supply of electricity. And some of them were killed. Their fault was they wanted electricity, and instead of it they got bullets. However, that incident could not make any impression on our deaf and blind administration. That is why Kansat had to witness the same kind of barbaric police action once more.

Here, again, we have found our government dumb. They remained silent as before. And what a price people paid for the gross mishandling of the situation by

the government.
Kazi Abubakar Siddique
Lalmatia, Dhaka

Their only "crime" was demanding what was due to them. The agents of the government were terrorising women and children. This is shameful.

They have failed the nation and disgraced all Bangladeshis.
A reader, On e-mail

It is difficult to believe that our government machinery is engaged in killing our own innocent and poor people, instead of protecting them.

The government is handling the genuine grievances of people in colonial style. The fact that the ordinary village people have risen in rebellion indicates total failure of the government administration.

What is happening to our country? We were proud to be secular. We wanted to leave religion in private arena. We were

proud to be Bengalee. But now we cannot express our opinion freely without fear of getting harmed. We cannot even celebrate Bangla New Year properly for fear of bomb attacks. We seem to be going through much worse times than the British or Pakistani colonial days!

Syed Noor Hossain
Former Ambassador
Uttara, Dhaka

It is really shocking that so many lives were snuffed out under such unfortunate circumstances at Kansat. However, the ruling party failed to control the situation and proved that they are alienated from the people. On the other hand, the opposition parties are always criticising the government.

The whole thing is a disgrace to the nation.

Sushanta Kumar Sarker
University of Dhaka



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Fate of farmers



PHOTO: AFP

Recently, several reports on the crisis that the farmers in the North Bengal are facing have been published. The government has failed to do anything; so who will compensate the farmers?

What will be the way of compensation? Will it ever reach the farmers? Farmers are passing through a critical period due to shortage of power, non-availability of fertilisers, and the price-hike. The government should handle the issue on the basis of a clear-cut plan.

Md. Mehedi Hassan, Ibrahimpur, Dhaka

Student politics

Once upon a time student politics was the backbone of any political party. Because student bodies could easily spread political ideology they have the ability to think deeply about any important issue. They can do the right thing also. But nowadays even general students are bored with politics. Because student politics is no longer in the students' hands. Like other wings of a political party it has become a heaven for the frauds, terrorists and non-students. I'm very happy to know that Bangladesh Chhatra League's new committee is formed with students only. I strongly believe that other political parties should follow suit.

It is a milestone in the history of our student politics. But I was surprised that the JCD president wanted to know how the new committee would work without any experience. I want to say they can do their job if they get full support from the leaders. But the behaviour of the old student politicians on the council day was shocking.

A. A. M. Mostofa Saikh Chowdhury
North South University, Dhaka

'Boishaki' feeling

I was sleeping when the sunlight was entering my room and falling on my face through the window. After feeling something sweet that was reflecting on my face, I opened my eyes and came to realise that it was the first sunlight of Bangla New Year—Pahela Baishakh. I made up my mind to receive the first sunlight of Pahela Baishakh but failed due to my sleep.

But the people of our country are not sleeping rather they are observing and trying to understand what is happening here. Because over the last four years many dreadful incidents have taken place, especially the emergence of militants is one of the remarkable phenomena, and recently "Kansat massacre" has created a new sensational issue.

Police has killed a total of 20 innocent people during the last four months.

Pahela Baishakh celebrations were a welcome change.
Md. Nobilul Islam
University of Chittagong

Business negotiations

I read with keen interest the article on the captioned subject by Mr. Nizam Ahmad and published in the 10th April 2006 issue of your daily. I agree with most of what the author has to say. The world of

Business has become highly complex and complicated and our skill at negotiation is almost nil. It is not the job of our bureaucrats who occasionally become member of a negotiating team and are no match for the professions they have to face sitting on the other side of the table representing the MNCs. Our negotiation with Tata regarding gas price is no different to what I have just said.

I believe that it will save everyone lot of headaches and botheration if Tata and Unocal negotiate directly with each other about sale of Gas to Tata from the Bibiana gas field.

I would urge our energy advisor to give some thought on my suggestion, if

required this could be modified to suit the interests of the country.
Salahuddin Ayubi
On e-mail

Why call him Bangla Bhai?

The name Bangla Bhai has become so familiar to all of us. Even a school going student can fling some words to the name with great contempt. The real name of Bangla Bhai is Siddikul Islam. He was a teacher of Bangla and people used to call him Bangla Bhai.

It is surprising to me that we are calling him by the name Bangla Bhai. A man like him does not deserve to be designated Bangla Bhai. Have we ever thought that by

calling him by the name Bangla Bhai, we are showing disrespect to our mother tongue? So we should not call a quibling by the name Bangla Bhai. Doing so would be nothing but disregard to our mother tongue.

Md. Muzakir Hossain
Sylhet

Justice taking its course

My attention is drawn to a news item in your April 12, 2006 issue that a ruling party MP was convicted and sentenced to six months in prison for contempt of court, for a relatively lighter offence. I could learn that at least the law is taking its own course. Most importantly, it seems that the judiciary is independent and functioning without fear or favour.

The present government is making it happen. In a country like Bangladesh where everything is now judged in terms of political lines, it is something unthinkable that a ruling party MP has been punished for his offences. There was a general notion in this country that, if some one does the politics of the party in power, the person or persons are above the law. The present government has at least proved it wrong. This is not the only case in which a ruling party man was punished, many supporters, workers, leaders of the ruling party are being convicted for their misdeeds in the recent past—a scenario which was simply unthinkable during the regime of the immediate past government. We have not seen a single supporter, worker or leader of the Awami League being caught, put on trial or convicted for their more serious crimes. The incident of journalist Tipu is still very vivid in our memories. The godfathers who created a reign of terror in the country with the direct patronage from the top leaders were rather rewarded.

Now these so-called leaders are again talking rubbish. They are criticising the government right and

left, black and white. I would like to ask and remind them, before making sweeping comments about the government actions and programmes, "please look at your own face in the mirror". The style of your governance is still very fresh in our memories. If you are so good, then well, wait for a few more months and test your popularity in the next general election. Until then do not call any more hartal and refrain from destructive politics.

Please do not beat your own drums, let the people of this country judge who is better of the two. The general people are by and large happy and they least bother about the reforms to the Election Commission or electorate process. If the present system is so bad, then why didn't they reform it during their long five years in office?

The biggest terrorists are now talking about human rights, democracy and rule of law. What an irony!
Nasir
Canada

PR agency in US

Usually, I am a strong critic of the present government - that is my democratic right. But, I actually support the move to retain a public relations agency in the US. We must not be naive about the importance of having a favourable impression of our country in Washington and beyond, where it influences aid, trade contracts, and tourism. I am sure India must have employed PR agencies to get its front page coverage in successive magazines and newspapers; and you see the result, India is now talked of as a success story in the eyes of Americans, when only 6 years ago there were sanctions imposed on them. Israel is another country known for spending hundreds of millions of dollars on its image in America; what we are spending is a fraction compared to that. I would rather spend the money on the PR firm than subsidise the lavish lifestyle of some of our overseas diplo-

rats. Of course, we have to have substance to justify the positive image if we want that portrayed.

My only concern is, the PR agency should be for the country and not the government or a particular political party. That should be clear. We should make sure this is not an attempt to manipulate the election which is a matter for Bangladeshis only to decide.

Sanjoy Kumar Nath
Sundarkhali, Chittagong

Some suggestions

I am a reader of The Daily Star for the last one year. I think I have improved my knowledge of English to some extent by going through this daily regularly. I have three suggestions to make.

1. In the sports page, football particularly the international football news is being overemphasised, whereas cricket deserves (even) more attention and space.

2. A small section on 'learning basic English' and 'basic computing' may be considered. This will attract more young readers. I would like to mention here that weekly technology page in The Daily Star is not very well managed and its contents are also not very pertinent to the common people.

3. Some basic information on business (share market, banking, budget, corporate governance) may be incorporated on a regular basis in the business page.
Bulu Ahmed
On e-mail

Lagging behind

We are Bangladeshis, but do we feel proud to claim so ubiquitously? No. It's most unfortunate for my country. I am abroad for a few years in the UK for academic reasons. Bangladeshis own here in the UK almost ninety five percent of the Indian restaurants. But UK people know it as Indian restaurant! Even some of the owners give their identity as Indians! Is it not a shame for our nation or the person himself?

Perhaps they want to impress their customers by concealing their identity. But why do they behave like that?

If we look back to our country, everybody is trying to migrate to other developed countries. If I look towards my batch mates such as doctors, engineers, university graduates—many of them have already left Bangladesh for better life and security. It's a great shame for our nation that we can't provide the creams of our society the basic requirements for a dignified life. Think about a scene—a senior doctor /engineer/university professor is waiting on a very hot summer day in a crowded bus station to grab a bus to reach his humble work for the humanity while so called illiterate political or local muscle men are riding luxury cars. Is it the reward for his education and honesty?

We need to keep our best students in our country at any cost by giving them all facilities.
MS Hussain, UK

Solar energy

Solar panel kits for rural houses and cottage industries appear to be a viable development activity.

The government may encourage joint collaboration/investment together with projects for biogas energy. The local business infrastructure can handle such projects. The mini hydal projects are not making headlines. Why?

Busy with pre-election monomania! Is it enough?

Abu Abd
Dhaka

We are proud of them

Congrats young Tigers, you have made us proud. I wonder were we really playing against the world champions? This progress in our cricket has given us a hope once again for the future of Bangladesh cricket. I am pretty much sure when these young boys mature with time and experience, they can be devastating to any team, including the Australians.

Nurul Abrar
University of Miami, Florida

In life, you win some and you lose some; that is the norm. However, one's character is decided by one's spirit and desire to fight, and not giving in. Shabash Bengalees, Bengal Tigers! (the national cricket team). You showed the world that nobody should write us off. Today or tomorrow we will overcome all obstacles. Well done boys, there is always next time as long as you want to compete. We are all proud of your efforts.

B. Sarkar
Los Angeles

Bangladeshi cricketers have shown a new sign of fresh and renewed hope in their encounter with the mighty Australians in the first Test at Fatullah. All the players were roaring in triumph in almost every department of the game and maintained suprem-

acy over the world champions for almost four days of the match. A thrilling maiden century by Nafees, a sizzling 76 from the captain and a near seventy from a cool customer of the game, Razin Saleh, contributed to the big total of 427 and a similarly flamboyant performance by the bowlers pushed the mighty Australians to the wall.

Whatever is the result of the match it is indeed a fabulous performance by our boys and it proved that we are now a much better team. It is a point for jubilation it will boost our faith in us and will gear the morale of the boys in rearing them up higher and higher.

This is the end of our collective inhibition an obsession!

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

For many Bangladeshis living in Australia, yesterday for sure was an unusual day in their workplace; as everyone more or less had the similar experience mixed with compliments from their workmates, colleagues or friends for the stunning performance of Bangladesh cricket team against Australia at Fatullah. Living here, at least we know how proud the whole Australia feels about their mighty cricket team!! Here

in my university, where most of the happenings in the world can't turn their concentration from research and study, they too have noticed the broad headlines in all the news, and many possibly related that with their few known Bangladeshi faces like us. So our morning tea session in the common room was not an as usual one, like conversations on the progress of research, cold weather etc; even the plan for the Easter break didn't get prominence ...all of the discussion was about the miracle and might shown by Bangladesh cricket team. Well done and thanks to Habibul for making us feel proud in Australia!

The day before, web based score card by cricinfo was unable to hold my excitement when Bangladesh was reaching its second 400 hundred in a Test match especially when it's none but against the world's best. The ecstasy and joy compelled me to leave my desk in search of a Fox TV around, which was showing the live telecast. Shared joy is double joy, so I knocked other Bangladeshis' rooms nearby. Tapan Sarker who was pinned down in his thesis, but jumped up from his cubicle after hearing the score! Such moments of truth are rare for our motherland, especially for us in foreign land when the streams of bad news



PHOTO: AFP

are more common These accomplishments are nonetheless an opportunity to celebrate, to regain the spirit of nationalism.

Anyway, we managed to get a Fox TV in the bridge room of sports and recreation centre. The big TV was switched off at that moment, although some people were watching it in the cardio room while cycling and running in treadmill. I put the volume a bit louder and gradually a group of people gathered and, stopped for a while; some were really taken aback looking at the astonishing score. The way people were surrounding by and glared on to TV screen, it seemed like a breaking news of a big disaster. No doubt it was a big disaster and a blow to Aussie pride, as one the headlines called it "PATHETIC." Nonetheless, we not only enjoyed the refreshing performances by our valiant Tigers but also the scowl and

the reaction of proud Aussies as well.

"Australia is facing embarrassment in Bangladesh! I don't know what's going on there. May be some mystery" - the radio talk show/news put these questions time and again in the air. "Against Bangladesh?" although sounds a bit awkward in the ear, but for many it was one of the most unexpected saga of the day. Yes, to some extent it's hard to believe, but many possibly didn't notice that the young Tigers were striving hard too in the last few months, specially after a series of bashing from the critics. Many also didn't value the indication by Coach David Whatmore, considering it to be as usual bullying of the typical Bangladeshi coaches in press briefing!!

If wining in Cardiff was an inspiration, then the 1st Test in Fatullah can be named as building confidence for Bangladesh, as a secured Test-playing nation. Consecutively,

two days of good performance proves it was just not an accident this time. With this, may be the long carried fuss about the Test status of Bangladesh will come to an end.

When I came back to my office to wind up for the day, received an e-mail from a long lost boyhood friend in the US who was watching the game and having big time there. This also triggered his memory about our good old days and the cricket back home, when we often used to give a miss to tutors without the knowledge of parents and spent the time in fields just for cricket. At that point never it crossed our mind that someday this cricket would uphold our national prestige in international arena...!

Ahmed Imran
Canberra, Australia