

HAUNTING MEMORIES

Quazi Zaman

WE lost our daughter at a very high class clinic situated in one of the most sophisticated localities with TV sets fitted in every ward and cabin. My wife was not in any of those two places when she delivered the baby—a beautiful and healthy one. When I was allowed inside the lady doctor's room she was not there because she had left my wife alone under the care of two inexperienced 'ayas' to attend to some other duties some place. She could not be teased nor her whereabouts known as she left without leaving any kind of message to the clinic authority. When I was permitted to enter it was more than an hour since my wife had delivered the baby girl. I was shocked to notice the baby's skin had for some reason been rubbed off from one of her arms. I touched the baby, she was still warm even after more than an hour had passed since her clinical demise. I hoped she would start breathing and crying. Nothing happened. I looked at my wife. She was not the woman I knew. I shuddered to think she too was dead!

I went near my wife. I thought someone entered the doctor's chamber. I looked around and there she was!! A lady I did not know.

Dr. and who could give the baby oxygen. Something was said after a while by the lying doctor and I knew she claimed she was present when the baby came. Only I knew and the other patients and their attendants and the staff. And of course, the doctor knew the truth too.

The baby's mouth was open. 'Did she try to breathe?' I asked myself silently. I heard the cynical voice of the lady doctor who was supposed to belong to the clinic. The other doctor, who checked my wife for several months and had left her during 'labour pains' under the care of the two 'ayas', announced the baby was born 'dead'.

"How do you know?" I objected. "You were not even there when the baby came!" She told me not to worry and that everything would be taken care of. I failed to understand what she meant by that. She could on no account return the baby girl we just lost. I remembered how she on her entering the room with a nurse had asked if the injection was given or not. Then

late at night a male doctor asked her what she was going to do with the dead baby! A woman who had been looking forward to seeing her baby soon, in the late hour of the night was informed that her baby was dead! And that she should take away her dead baby someplace although she was lying helpless in her bed at that hour.

Then there was this nurse who claimed to be a doctor who told me to throw the baby in a 'dust-bin'. The Managing Director told me to bury the child some place about the premises of my dwelling house. I said a lot of things to both of them and in quite harsh language but it seemed I was talking to zombies or to two beings without souls.

We returned home empty handed after having gone through a lot of arguments over the 'overcharges' the clinic authority had made, specially on the medicine my wife was given and the 'delivery room' charge although the baby was not delivered there. The shocking part of it all was that I was not even given any documentary proof that my wife was admitted in their clinic and that the

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she wondered how the 'delivery' took place. I presumed the injection was given to delay the coming of our daughter. But, alas, she would not wait and came too soon as far as medical science was concerned. I, only I knew, she came right on time just to meet her end because, we the worldly people, cared little and did not believe in performing our duties accordingly.

On the prescription it was clearly written 'baby in fact' (the spelling of intact was wrong) 'labour pain -- contraction etc. and some other, like my wife', 'blood pressure'. In other words nothing was wrong with the baby or the mother. Both were in good health when the doctor had left.

Outside the chamber the doctor told me the baby died because it was too weak. I asked her how could the baby die when she was born dead. She quickly corrected herself and told me she would try and see when she can move my wife to a ward from her chamber. She also informed me there would be no 'delivery charges' and that at the ward it would cost me 120 taka each day and there would be also the charges for medicine. My wife was removed to the ward in a very miserable condition. In her semi-conscious mind she could not know what actually had taken place. I wanted to keep everything to myself till she felt strong enough. But

"Who are you?" I asked in dismay.

"I am the doctor," she said. "But you are not Dr." I said.

"No," she said. "I'm doctor...." "Where were you during the delivery?"

"With the patient," she lied. "It's not true!" I yelled. "It's true," she declared with authority. "Were is Dr.?" I demanded to know. "She is on her way." "So, you got her at last!" I was by then almost breathless and my head spun. I thought I might faint. I could hardly believe I would have to face a lying lady doctor in my life. That too, when she had killed by baby ... our baby!!!

"Why is not my wife moving?" "She is too weak," said she. "She can talk, can't she?" I asked feeling foolish.

I looked at my wife, a bloodless female figure impossible to recognize. I asked her how she was feeling. She said nothing. I felt she was trying to see something, someone, and that she did not know the truth. That her baby could not breathe and was no more alive. That our baby had to die or meet her death due to negligence, carelessness and inhuman behaviour. She did not also know that there was no doctor, no nurses nor someone who knew enough about child delivery!

I went to the 'tray' where our baby lay -- still and unmoving. She looked so pretty! I heard someone say: "The doctor has come." I also heard a female voice say: "Why didn't you give oxygen?"

Then there was complete silence. There had to be. Because there was no one called



How the Tabloids Went to Town Again

The Gulf war has brought the British tabloids out in their full colours again. Jingoism is back. One paper published a full-page Union Jack with an appeal to readers to put it in their windows. Another invoked Shakespeare's great patriotic play Henry V. War, it might be concluded, puts the British in their element. There are other reasons, however, for the tabloid behaviour. One, reports Gemini News Service, is an effort to increase circulation and secure the loyalty of readers. by Derek Ingram

THE British, it is said, love going to war. Most of them would dispute that, but the country's school history books are still largely dominated by fighting. From the medieval wars with France to the campaigns of World War Two, they are about victory. The Bengal Lancers, the Desert Rats and The Few of the Battle of Britain are the folk heroes.

Perhaps that is why the British tabloid newspapers are among the most noisy and crudely patriotic in the world. It might be thought that in a contracting world with talk of less sovereignty and more regional unity the language of gung-ho would begin to disappear. Not a bit of it.

The Gulf War brought it all back. The pages of the tabloid newspapers stank of the glories of going to war. As usual, The Sun led the pack. On day one its front page consisted of a soldier's face in the middle of a Union Jack with the words "Support our boys and put this flag in your window".

Inside were headlines like "If we die, we die," and "Time to put the mad dog down." The Daily Star, a comparatively new paper which tries to outdo The Sun, ordered on its front page: "GO GET HIM BOYS" and inside said "The saints go zapping in." A day later when the bombing had begun it coined a single word

on the front page "Bangdad". Today carried a front page picture of a sailor with the heading "YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS HIM," a reference to a famous recruiting poster of World War One featuring General Lord Kitchener. More than one paper even published the Kitchener poster.

The next day it invoked the speech before the Battle of Agincourt in Shakespeare's Henry V: "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers/ For he today that sheds his blood with me/ Shall be my brother."

The tradition was being maintained. When the British went to war in the Falklands in 1982 and sank the Argentinean cruiser Belgrano The Sun splashed across its front page the word "GOTCHA". The headline passed into British newspaper legend, although for many journalists it was a matter of shame that an incident that cost more than 350 lives could be treated in such cavalier and callous style.

This periodic resurgence of Victorian jingoism is partly a legacy of Empire, and an apparent need for the British - or a certain, probably quite small, section of the community - to comfort themselves that they still count in the world and that they really are the same people who produced Nelson and Churchill and won the Battle of Trafalgar and trounced Hitler.

THE POOR LIFE

DESPISE millions of dollars spent on aid, about 500 million people go to bed hungry every night, and some 40 million die each year through starvation. Statistics like these are difficult to grasp. Few of us have any idea of what poverty entails. A new book from Earthscan called Doting Development sets out to describe some of the realities of subsistence living, and to highlight some of the obstacles faced by organisations that aim to help the poor in Asia. Often, our efforts to help succeed only in reinforcing the problem. For example, if you think that you are not getting a bargain from your bank, the description of Siro Malik's experiences shows what a poor farmer in India has to put up with.

Before farmers could obtain loans from rural development banks, farmers like Malik were at the mercy of the money-lenders. In order to pay for his daughter's wedding, his father's funeral, his own medical expenses and repairs to his roof Malik had progressively mortgaged his entire farm to a local landlord and a drink salesman. Under the extraordinary biased terms of the deals, he lost the right to farm his land, or even pick the fruit from trees, for 10 to 25 years. Malik's impoverishment deepened with each crisis, and any hope of redeeming his farm receded further.

Fortunately, together with the farmers in the area, and with the help of a local NGO (Non Governmental Organisation), Malik and other victims of the money lenders were able to get their land back. To increase the productivity on the farm, Malik decided to apply for a subsidy, financed by

Doing Development: Government, NGOs and the Rural Poor in Asia. Edited by Richard Holloway. Earthscan, pages 233, Price £6.95.

A Review by PETER DE GEOR.

the World Bank, to enable him to buy a couple of bullocks and a cart. The story of how Siro Malik traipsed around from official to official, each one demanding a fee (for which he had to get further loans) is heart-breaking. It took Malik 48 days to get the authorisation, only to learn that a special purchasing committee had to buy the bullocks for him.

BOOKS

The prices of the bullocks rose as traders saw the committee coming. Malik also has to pay the committee's "expenses" in the end he was handed an inferior but overpriced pair of animals costing 1200 rupees. Malik's total expenses for this venture came to 1134 rupees. He decided not to bother with the cart.

This story is one graphic illustration of just how aid all too often fails to reach the poor for whom it was presumably intended, and finds its way into the pockets of the relatively well off. There are other useful insights into how development works, or fails to work, dotted throughout the book. The friction, for example, that often exists between government and NGO, can result in official obstruction of,

or even violence towards aid workers. Or the way that an NGO helps farmers to work collectively to gain a fair price for their harvest.

However, I found the book frustrating. The narrative suffered too often from a lack of illustrative detail, or failed to give sufficient background to enable the reader not familiar with a particular political and social setting to grasp the full relevance of a contributor's point. For example, some NGOs have changed government policies successfully to the benefit of the poor; the book offers the policy on drugs in Bangladesh as an example. But for the details you need to refer to a publication from Penang, Malaysia. The cartoons accompanying each chapter rarely add anything to the text, and the pictorial chapter reprinted from a training course for government planners seems quite out of place. Twelve of the articles are credited as having first appeared in other publications, which may help to explain the somewhat bumpy read, and a tendency to repetition. Finally, the editor could have used his red pen more liberally on the passages of development jargon: people are very prone to facilitating catalytic interventions, for example.

My overall impression was a rather disjointed collection from a committee of contributors to produce a camel of a book. I was left in no doubt that the experiences and thoughts of the writers are valuable and interesting, and could serve as useful lessons. Having read the book I would like to sit down with them in a quiet corner somewhere and learn more on what doing development really is all about for the Siro Malik of this world.

TV Friday

- MORNING TRANSMISSION**
- 8.00 Opening and recitations from the Holy Quran.
 - 8.10 News in Bengali.
 - 8.15 Cartoon Film: Adventures of the Galaxy Rangers.
 - 8.40 Nutun Kurri: Children's programme.
 - 9.10 Film: Mork & Mindy. Comedy series.
 - 9.40 Probaha: Current affairs.
 - 10.00 News.
 - 10.05 Educational film: The Ascent of Man.
 - 11.15 Moner Mukurey: Rerecast of selected drama.
 - 12.30 Closing.
- EVENING TRANSMISSION**
- 3.00 Opening and recitation from Quran.
 - 3.15 Alore Dishari: Children's programme on Islamic teachings.
 - 3.40 Movie of the Week: Bengali film.
 - 5.50 Sports programme.
 - 6.45 Janamat: Programme on population.
 - 6.55 News in Bengali.
 - 7.05 Modhu Chhanda: Modern songs.
 - 8.00 News in Bengali.
 - 8.30 Film: Just Our Luck.
 - 9.00 Biswa Natok: World drama.
 - 10.00 News in English.
 - 10.30 Film: Matlock.
 - 11.30 News in Bengali.
 - 11.40 Closing.

'Sanglap' Opens Tomorrow

A new TV programme entitled 'Sanglap' introduced in the new quarter replacing 'Aapni Ki Bhabchen' goes on the air tomorrow. Produced by Alimuzzaman, its current affairs programme will be planned and conducted by Mhammad Jahangir who enjoys the credit of successfully conducting 'Aapni Ki Bhabchen' over a long stretch of time.

The theme of the maiden programme of 'Sanglap' to be telecast at 9 pm tomorrow, is 'What Role are You Playing to Ensure a Free Election?' Students, cultural workers, businessmen and women will participate in the discussion.

LOS ANGELES: Rapper M.C. Hammer dominated the 18th annual American Music Awards on Monday with five trophies while Janet Jackson picked up three awards in a ceremony marked by tributes to the armed forces overseas, reports AP.

"I'd like to dedicate this award to the troops in the Persian Gulf," Hammer said as he picked up his soul-rhythm and blues album award for "Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em."

Hammer, who had a leading seven nominations, also won best single for "U can't Touch This" and favourite male artist in the soul-rhythm and blues category, and favourite artist and album in the rap category. It was the second-best showing by an artist in the history of the awards. Michael Jackson remains the all-time leader after winning seven competitive trophies and the Award of Merit in 1984.

Hammer lost only to Phil Collins in the male pop-rock artist and album categories.

Miss Jackson, who entered with five nominations, won favourite female artist in the categories of pop-rock, soul-rhythm and blues, and dance-music. She faced strong competition from the likes of Paula Abdul, Mariah Carey, Madonna, Sinead O' Connor and Regina Belle.

Quadruple-nominee Madonna won only once, taking the dance-music single trophy for 'Vogue'.

Longtime rockers Aerosmith beat newcomers Bell Biv DeVoe and New Kids on the Block for favourite pop-rock group. Aerosmith also was named favourite artist in the heavy metal-hard rock category.

Hammer Dominates US Music Awards

Bell Biv DeVoe, which specialises in a hip-hop R&B sound, were named best new artist in the soul-R&B and dance-music categories.

"Tony, Toni, Tone" was named favourite soul-rhythm and blues group.

Reba McEntire won the country album trophy for 'Reba Live' and was named top female country artist. Clint Black was the top country male artist, over Garth Brooks and George Strait.

Brooks' "If Tomorrow Never Comes" won the country single honour, while perennial favourite Alabama won its ninth consecutive award for country group.

Country artist Merle Haggard got the Award of Merit, an overall noncompetitive award.

Jon Bon Jovi won pop-rock single for "Blaze of Glory" from the "Young Guns II" soundtrack, which also earned him a Golden Globe trophy Jan. 19.

Bon Jovi said backstage the war against Iraq has stirred his emotions.

"I've never prayed so much in my life," Bon Jovi said. "I wish this thing was over, because it's scaring the hell out of me." In the heavy metal category, Slaughter was named top new artist and Motley's "Dr. Feelgood" won favourite album.

one nominee stayed away, citing the conflict.

American Music Award nominees were compiled from year-end sales charts of the music industry magazine Cash Box. The show's producers, Dick Clark Productions Inc., sent ballots via a polling firm to a nationwide sampling of 20,000 record buyers to select the winners.

Here are the winners of the

- 18th annual American Music Awards presented Monday at the Shrine Auditorium:
- POP-ROCK**
Male artist: Phil Collins.
Female artist: Janet Jackson.
Band, duo or group: Aerosmith.
Single: "Blaze of Glory." Jon Bon Jovi.
Album: "...But Seriously." Phil Collins.
New Artist: Vanilla Ice.
- SOUL-RHYTHM & BLUES**

- Male artist:** M.C. Hammer.
- Female artist:** Janet Jackson.
- Band, duo or group:** Tony Toni T Tone!
- Single:** "U Can't Touch This." M.C. Hammer.
- New artist:** Bell Biv DeVoe.
- COUNTRY**
Male artist: Clint Black.
Female artist: Reba McEntire.
Band, duo or group: Alabama.
Single: "If Tomorrow Never Comes." Garth Brooks.
- HEAVY METAL**
Artist: Aerosmith.
Album: "Dr. Feelgood." Motley.
- CRUC**
New artist: Slaughter.
- RAP**
Artist: M.C. Hammer.
Album: "Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em'."
- DANCE MUSIC**
Artist: Janet Jackson.
Single: "Vogue." Madonna.
New artist: Bell Biv DeVoe.

THE VIDEO SCENE

The Gulf war has had no telling effect on the video market in Bangladesh. A video shop owner commented: "People want to escape from the harsh realities of life and video movie help them to forget at least for a few moments. They take refuge in the world of fantasy".

Five new movies were released last week: Tinnu Anand's new romantic film Jeena Teri Galimein, Khilaf with Chankey Pandey, Madhuri Dixit and Anupam Kher in the lead, Kanoon Ka Zanjeer with Dharmendra and Jaya Prada in the leading role, Aik Din Achanak and The Bengali Night. The famous Bengali Director Mrinal Sen is back in business with another hit in a making. His latest attraction is

The English movie list consists of different types of films. Home Alone - is a very entertaining movie which will be enjoyed by both children and elders.

Aik Din Achanak is a serious social film which is jaded with stars like Shabana Azmi, Aparna Sen, Rupa Ganguly and Arjun Chakravarty. The Bengali Night directed by a German, is a story based on Calcutta and it is also dubbed in Hindi and will be liked by the art movie lovers.

The ten Hindi movie chart shows that the romantic films are still dominating the list.

- Top Ten (Hindi):**
Sanam Bewafa (romantic movie) Starring: Salman Khan, Chandni (new heroine). (2) Pyar Ka Devta (romantic action movie): Mithun, Madhuri Dixit, Kader Khan. (3) Khilaf (romantic movie). (Chankey Pandey, Madhuri Dixit. (4) Kanoon Ka Zanjeer (thriller): Dharmendra, Jaya Prada. (5) Lehren volume-17 (video magazine) (6) Baghi (romantic movie): Salman Khan, Nagma (new heroine). (7) Shiva (student politics). Ajla, Nagarjuna. (8) Thaneedar (romantic comedy): Sanjay

Dutt, Jeetendra, Madhuri Dixit, Jaya Prada. (9) Tinnu Anand's Jeena Teri Galimein. (10) Bahar Aane Tak (social drama) Sumeet Saigal, Rupa Ganguly, Munmun Sen and Tarrj Shah.

- Top Ten (Bengali):**
1. Ahankar: Stg. Prasrjeet. Debashree, Utpal Dutta, Ranjit Mallick.
2. Mahajan: Stg. Tapas Pal, Ranjit Mallick, Sandhya Roy, Utpal Dutta.
3. Abhimannu: Stg. Biplob Shatabdi Roy.
4. Aakanha: Stg. Arjun Chakravarty, Shukhen Das, Natna Das.
5. Khona Bhora: Stg. Uttam Kumar, Sandhya Roy.
6. Aaro Atikon: Stg. Uttam Kumar, Sumitra.
7. Teen Purush: Stg. Prasrjeet, Debashree.
8. Jawar Bhata: Stg. Chiranjit, Shatabdi, Sumitra.
9. Ashrita: Stg. Manjali Das, Karwaljeet.
10. Ek Din Pakhi Uray Jabe (songs of Kishore Kumar)

- Top Ten (English):**
1. Home Alone (children movie).
2. Three Men and a Little Lady (comedy). Stg. Tom Sellock, Ted Danson.
3. Tresspassers (thriller). Stg. Lou Diamond Phillips.
4. Pacific Heights (drama) Stg. Michael Keaton, Mellory Griffith.
5. Price of the Bride (thriller) (by) Fredrick Forsythe) Stg. Mike Farrell.
6. The Rhinemann Exchange Robert Ludlum (thriller) drama based on second World War. Stg. Larry Hagman, Stephen Collins.
7. Tie Me Up Tie Me Down (adult comedy).
8. Hitler's Daughter (thriller) Stg. Patric Cassidy, Melody Anderson.
9. Bullseye (comedy thriller) Stg. Michael Caine, Roger Moore, Sally Kirkland.
10. 1900 (Part 1 & 2): Historical drama. Stg. Robert Deniro, Donald Sutherland. Sources: Film Fair, Dhanmondi.