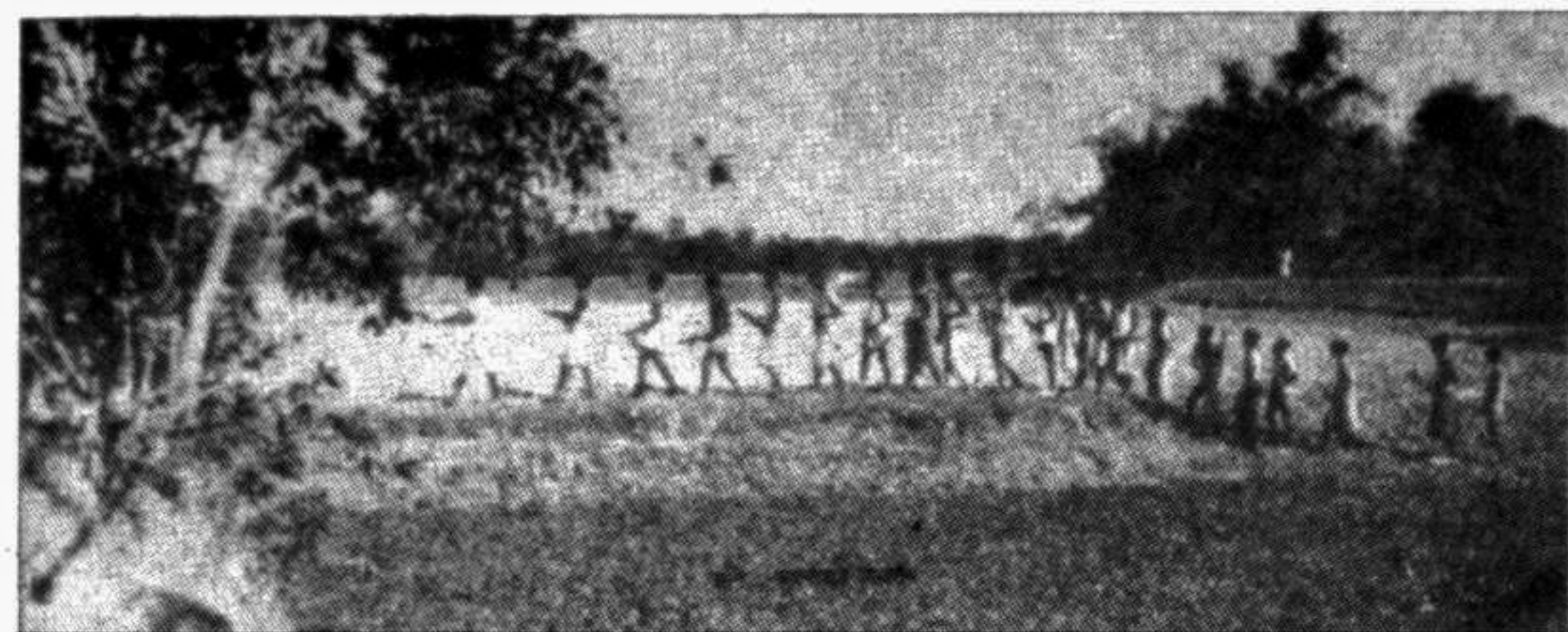




Dhaka Day by Day

Twentyone Years of Indifference

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



Their struggle did not end there.

— photo by Anwar Hossain

The Welfare Department of the Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust building in Motijheel, is a chaotic place. The dusty room is filled with people. One is startled at first to see so many men, most of them in their 30's or 40's huddling along with either a limb gone, or a leg paralysed or an eye that has gone blind. Old women and young men in their 20's sit dejectedly on the few chairs, while others run from one desk to another pleading with the officers for their papers to be processed. Who are these men and women with their vacant expressions and looks of despair? They are Muktijoddhas and the families of martyred Muktijoddhas who have survived, not only 1971 but twenty one years of national indifference.

All is a Muktijoddha who injured an eye and other parts of his body when pieces of mortar hit him. Ali was only 18 years old when he became a Freedom Fighter and remembers that day vividly. "It was on the 27th of Ramzan or November 6th at Chorkulia in Mallarhat and fighting went on from dawn to dusk. We were in Alimuddin Khaal (canal) and the enemy was on the other side of it. It was a full moon night and we saw them coming across. I was in a bunker when the mortar hit me." Ali was later operated on, in Dhaka Cantonment Hospital but his eye is still affected and may go totally blind. Lack of funds prevent him from another operation that would completely cure him. His only source of income is a small allowance from the Trust.

While Ali relates his story, a horde of people gather, each one with a story to tell. Sheikh Khosiqur Rahman, in his 50s, says he has bullet wounds in his hand and stomach from the same battle at Chorkulia. He claims, he has not received his allowance for the last 15 years. He is now a homeless destitute with the memory of his two daughters Lucky and Taru, who both died of tetanus only a few months ago. Rahman's eyes fill up with tears when he says, he did not have money to even feed them, let alone show them to a doctor. Repeated visits to the Trust Office have been in vain, he adds. It can be mentioned here that although Rahman's case may be authentic there are allegations that many people claim to be Muktijoddhas just to get the allowance.

Mohammad Shahidul Islam is the son of Shahid Muhammad. His allowance as the only surviving family member, has been stopped because he is 21 years old. Shahidul has no immediate family and no place to stay. He can barely support himself being a kuli. Is my father's martyrdom only worth 21 years? he asks bitterly.

This bitterness runs deep in the hearts of the Muktijoddhas. The allowances (called National Honorariums), that they get from the Trust are

ridiculously low. A war injured Muktijoddha who is unemployed gets 1,440 taka per month, while one who has work gets 975 taka a month, an amount that can hardly support one person, let alone a whole family. Medical expenses are included in this allowance and amount to only 500 taka per month. Although hospital costs are borne by the Trust, there is no provision for non-hospital costs.

Another legacy of the war that these men have to live with is constant unbearable physical pain. Even the strongest pain killers offer no relief. Many Muktijoddhas resort to extreme measures such as using hot irons or smoking pot to forget the agony for a few hours.

It is not the pain, physical or psychological, that they complain of. As men who have been alienated from their families and society, they just ask for their basic needs to be met. Apathy and corruption in the Trust have only added to their disillusionment. Over 700 to 750 Muktijoddhas are unemployed and totally dependent on Trust honorariums. Many have been terminated or transferred because they protested the irregularities of senior officers. Muhammad Jewel Pervez, a Masters degree holder and a Muktijoddha, was an administrative manager of Paruma Industries, a concern of the Trust. In 1978 he exposed his boss (a man much less qualified but with better connections) for stealing 3 lakh taka every month from the company. The culprit was withdrawn but Pervez's reward was a prompt transfer to a different department where he has no work and barely any status. Abdul Gafur, a Freedom Fighter with an artificial leg says, "you see, we love our organization and we cannot stand by and watch opportunists come and exploit it. Whenever we protest an injustice, we either get transferred or terminated". This practise is illegal since it violates the Trust's constitution, which says that under no condition can a Muktijoddha be terminated. So why not take them to court? "We simply cannot afford it", says Pervez flatly.

The 12 point demand of the Bangladesh Muktijoddha Shangsad include, increases in National Honorariums for war wounded Freedom Fighters, increases in allowances for education of children of Freedom Fighters, provision of housing for Muktijoddhas at rates favourable to them, re-employment of Muktijoddhas who have lost jobs, availability of interest free loans from government commercial banks, exemption from certain taxes and a separate ministry to deal with the affairs of the Muktijoddhas.

For the Muktijoddhas and the families of the martyred the problem is, basic survival. They do not have great expectations from a country they staked their lives for. They just want to live like human beings.



A sequence of dance of Natoraj Shilpi Goshti at Central Shaheed Minar yesterday organised by Shammilita Sangskritik Jote. — Star photo

Martyred Intellectuals Day observed Rallies call to resist fundamentalist forces

RAJSHAHI, Dec 15: Martyred Intellectuals Day was observed here in a befitting manner yesterday, reports BSS.

Various socio-cultural, political and educational institutions of the city observed the day through holding discussions highlighting the significance of the day. Sammilita Sangskritik Jote and Zila Ayeenjibi Samity brought out a procession early in the morning from Alupatti area and paraded the city streets. Later they placed floral wreaths at Shaheed Minar at Rajshahi Government College.

A big peace procession was also brought out by Awami League, Five-Party Alliance, Zila Ayeenjibi Samity and other organisations and appealed to the people to maintain communal harmony and resist the fundamentalist forces in the country.

Meanwhile fortytwo leaders of Hindu community of Word No-13 of the city in a joint statement strongly condemned the demolition of Babri Masjid by the Hindu extremists. They also demanded exemplary punishment to those who in a planned way demolished the mosque and demanded of the Indian government to rebuild the mosque.

They appealed to Bangladesh citizens to maintain communal harmony and resist the fundamentalist forces.

The signatories to the statement included Alok Das, Sadhan Das and Mondranath Mondal.

Another report from Khulna says: Martyred Intellectual Day was observed Monday by various socio-cultural, political and student organisations with due solemnity.

Milad mahfil, discussion meetings, rallies, musical soiree and painting exhibitions were held to mark the occasion. Prajanma, a cultural organisation unveiled a symbolic memorial for martyr intellectuals of Liberation War at Gallamari killing spot in Khulna. The unveiling ceremony was performed by shaheed mother Sakina Khatun.

Speakers at different discussion meetings paid homage to the intellectuals who were killed on the eve of independence of the country by the occupation forces along with

their local collaborators. Earlier the Khulna City Corporation Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman in a statement paid rich tribute to the memory of the intellectuals and recalled the great sacrifice made by them. He said that the present government would materialise the dreams of the shaheed intellectuals. The mayor expressed deep sympathy with the members of the shaheed intellectuals, families and prayed for the salvation of their souls.

BSS adds: Chittagong district chapter of Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum held a discussion in observance of the Martyred Intellectuals Day at the court building Monday. With forum Convenor Mohammad Kabir Chowdhury in the chair, the discussion was participated by forum advisor Advocate Abu Saleh Chowdhury and members Shahabuddin Foyez, K M Abu Jafar, Sheikh Jamaluddin, Tarik Ahmed and Fouzul Amin Chowdhury.

The discussants paid tributes to martyred intellectuals and called for materialising their ideals for building up a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

Obituary

Dr M Kabir, former Professor of Jagannath University College and Head of the Department of Physics, Bangladesh Agricultural University, died here Monday night. He was 67, reports BSS.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. He was buried at the Banani graveyard Tuesday. Earlier his namaj-e-janaza was held at the Gulshan mosque after Zohr prayers.

Qul khwani of Dr Kabir will be held tomorrow (Thursday) after Asr prayers at his Gulshan residence, House No 29/A Road No 36.

Prof Nurul Ula, former teacher of electrical and electronics department and presently part-time professor of computer science and engineering of BUET died of heart attack yesterday at the Suhrawardi Hospital here. He was 55, reports BSS.

Prof Nurul Ula left behind his wife, one son, two daughters and a host of friends, relatives and well wishers to mourn his death.

Jobs under international organizations

Some international organizations have invited applications for filling up certain vacancies at their disposal. Name of the organizations along with the post titles and last date of receiving applications by the head offices of concerned organizations are given below, says a PID handout.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU): Engineer (Head of the Data Treatment Section) (P-4) — January 21, 1993. Chief Publication Composition Service (P-3) — January 22, 1993.

World Health Organization (WHO): Technical Officer (P-3) — December 28, 1992. Scientist (Radiation Protection) (P-5) — December 31, 1992. Medical Officer (Non-Communicable Diseases and Cancer) (P-5) — December 31, 1992.

World Meteorological Organization: Chief World Climate Data and Monitoring Programme Division (P-5) — January 31, 1993. Senior Scientific Officer (P-5) — January 31, 1993.

Further details of those vacancies, duty stations and procedure of applications will be available with the Ministry of Establishment, other Ministries/Divisions, Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, District Labour and Manpower Offices and District Information Offices.

Lack of govt-NGOs coordination hinders welfare of disabled

Lack of coordination between the government and the NGOs, financial constraints, insufficient human resources and inadequate communications are hindering development of the disabled, reports UNB.

This was observed by Dr Mohammad Sharif, Chief of the UN Developmental Social Welfare and Special Groups Activities Branch, Vienna, while addressing a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.

Dr Sharif arrived yesterday from China as part of a tour to assess the progress of human development activities, especially the disability situation and the UN facilities, in the developing countries during the 'Decade for Disabled (1982-92)' — which concludes this month.

The UN executive said the government should play more effective role for promotion of welfare of the disabled who constitutes 10 per cent of the total population.

The government only should not provide assistance to the NGOs, but also coordinate and do something concrete for the disabled.

He underscored the role of media in promoting the causes of the disabled saying the press should play more effective role in creating awareness among the mass people.

"The role, the media should play was not played duly," he lamented and urged newsmen to project the causes and uphold the rights of the disabled people.

Tuhin & Chanchal
 Congratulations!
 Best wishes forever
 From : Dula Bhai, Apa, Bhaia, Bhabi, Mashkur, Moez and Salwa

Academic Feat

 Khondaker Mohammad Shariful Huda (Ripon) secured First Class First position in the M. Sc. (Thesis Group) examination of 1990 session held in 1992 of the Department of Geography, Jahangirnagar University.
 K M Shariful Huda (Ripon) is the son of Mrs. Nahar Huda, Vice President of Greater Dhaka Inner Wheel Club and Tea Planter, Rotarian Khondaker Mohammad Shamsul Huda, Immediate Past President of Greater Dhaka Rotary Club.

Tender Notice
UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA — Sealed tenders in Dhaka University form "Tender for works" are hereby invited from the 1st & 2nd class enlisted contractors (Electrical) of Dhaka University for the works of "Electrical installation in the underconstructed 10 flats attached to newly constructed 5-storied Staff Quarter for Class-III employees ag Nilkhet" and will be received by the undersigned up to 12 Noon on the 28th December, 1992 and opened on the same day at 12-15 Noon in presence of the contractors who may remain present. Contractors will have to deposit as earnest money a sum of Tk. 2,526/- only in Demand Draft or Pay Order from a schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of Executive Engineer (Electrical), Dhaka University. Tender form, schedule and other particulars may be had from the office of the undersigned up to 12 Noon on all working days except on the date fixed for submitting the tender on payment of Tk. 100/- only (Non-refundable) to the Janata Bank, Dhaka University Branch after obtaining permission from the undersigned. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason. The contractors are liable to abide by the decision of the authority.
 (Md. Mazir Hossain Khan)
 Executive Engineer (Electrical) (Incharge)
 University of Dhaka.
 D-686

Govt committed to accountable administration : Anwar

Commerce Minister MK Anwar yesterday said that the present government was committed to maintain an honest, responsible, clean and accountable administration in all financial institutions including the insurances in public and private sectors, reports BSS.

and pro-people industrial and trade policy of the government, ample opportunities had been created for setting up industries and trade organisations in private sector. He urged potential entrepreneurs to avail those opportunities and make the country self-reliant in all sectors.

15th meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on Commerce Ministry at the cabinet room of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The members of the committee Md Ansar Ali Siddiky, Quamruddin Ehiya Khan Majlish, Md Khademul Islam, Md Azizur Rahman Mia and Amir Khasru were present in the meeting.

The meeting discussed in details the special audit report of two private insurance companies — the Karnafuli and the Rupali Insurance Companies in which several irregularities and financial mismanagement had been identified.

The Commerce Minister said appropriate action would be taken against those two companies so that the people could keep confidence on the insurance companies.



- Wednesday Morning session**
 8.30: Life telecast of Children-Juvenile gathering from Number One National Stadium.
Evening session
 2.45: Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary
 3.20: Bengali Film: Choker Joley
 5.10: News in Bangla
 6.00: Special programme for children: Ujjal Ei Din
 6.50: Dance programme
 7.20: Poetry recitation: Bijoy Shabdabali
 8.00: News in Bangla
 8.30: Drama: Sandikkhany Amra
 10.00: News in English
 10.30: Songs programme: Alo-kito Ai Din
 11.30: Khabar/ The News
 11.40: Tomorrow's programme
 11.45: Closing

Tender Notice
UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA — Sealed tenders in Dhaka University form "Tender for works" are hereby invited from the 1st & 2nd class enlisted contractors (Electrical) of Dhaka University for the works of "Electrical installation of the underconstructed MLSS Quarter No. 57(1st, 2nd & 3rd floor-12 Units) at Shib Bari of Dhaka University" and will be received by the undersigned upto 12 Noon on the 24th December, 1992 and opened on the same day at 12-15 Noon in presence of the contractors who may remain present. Contractors will have to deposit as earnest money a sum of Tk. 2,817.00 only in Demand Draft or Pay Order from a schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of Executive Engineer (Electrical), Dhaka University. Tender form, schedule and other particulars may be had from the office of the undersigned upto 12 Noon on all working days except on the date fixed for submitting the tender on payment of Tk 100.00 only (Non-refundable) to the Janata Bank, Dhaka University Branch after obtaining permission from the undersigned. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason. The contractors are liable to abide by the decision of the authority.
 (Md. Mazir Hossain Khan)
 Executive Engineer (Electrical) (Incharge)
 University of Dhaka.
 D-687

Weather

No change in night temperature

By Staff Correspondent
 Weather is likely to remain dry with fair sky over the country during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Wednesday).

The Met office forecasts, night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country. The maximum temperature of 27.2 degree Celsius was reported from Bogra and Sathkira yesterday (Tuesday) and the minimum of 8.4 degree was reported from Srimangal.

The sun sets today at 5.14 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.35 am. The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity of some of the major cities and towns of the country yesterday were:

Cities/ Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	max	min
Dhaka	26.0	11.2
Chittagong	25.8	14.8
Rajshahi	25.5	8.8
Khulna	25.5	11.4
Cox's Bazar	25.5	16.0
Sylhet	26.7	13.0
Dinajpur	25.5	10.2
Barisal	25.6	11.2

অমৃত লাল দে মহাবিদ্যালয়
 দক্ষিণাঞ্চলে শিক্ষা প্রসারের ক্ষেত্রে আমরাও অগ্রণী ভূমিকা পালন করছি।
 হাসপাতাল রোড, বরিশাল
 ১৯৯২-৯৩ শিক্ষাবর্ষে
 বি এ, বি কম এবং বি এসসি ক্লাশে
ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তি চলছে
 পঠিত বিষয় সমূহ :
 কলা বিভাগে :
 অর্থনীতি, রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান, ইতিহাস, ইসলামের ইতিহাস, সমাজ কল্যাণ, সমাজ বিজ্ঞান, দর্শন, পার্থক্য অর্থনীতি, ইসলামী শিক্ষা, সংস্কৃত, ভূগোল।
 বানিজ্য বিভাগে : সকল বিষয়
 বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে : সকল বিষয়
 বিজয় কৃষ্ণ দে
 সেক্রেটারী
 অর্গানাইজিং কমিটি
 অমৃত লাল দে মহাবিদ্যালয়, বরিশাল।