

The Daily Star Dialogue with Student Leaders
They Pledge to End Terrorism in Dhaka University

Campus violence is something which has worried us for quite sometime. The former government failed to eradicate it from the educational institutions. The new government appears to be facing the same odds, and there is so far no end to violence in view. To try and understand how the student leaders see the problem, and what they suggest should be done, we invited leaders of all important student organisations to The Daily Star office for a free and candid dialogue.

Yet, a lot can be learnt from the views expressed in these columns. They all identified "terrorism" as the number one problem in the Dhaka University campus, and pledged to work unitedly to stem it. We were heartened by their renewed commitment to uphold the 10-point accord between student parties. They demanded that the present government remain totally neutral regarding the student parties.

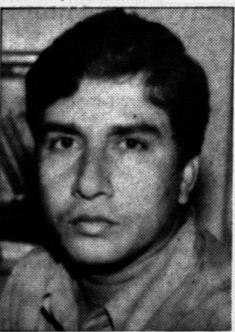
In holding this dialogue, The Daily Star wanted to establish direct communication between them and our readers, so that we can understand the minds of these leading actors in the University scene.

We hope our effort will contribute, however marginally, towards solving this most hateful problem that is destroying our educational institutions.

Ishaque Ali Khan Panna
General Secretary, BCL

Campus terrorism, lack of congenial academic atmosphere, and accommodation crisis in residential halls are the major problems faced by the students of Dhaka University. Some people want to relate the ongoing crisis to the change of government which is not correct.

There is no denying that the DU is the centre of country's student politics. National politics also has its impact on DU. Actually, what happened in DU in last few days was not hall capture, rather it was the outburst of accumulated resentment of past 21 years.



We, the student leaders, are trying our best with utmost sincerity to root out terrorism. The situation now is that student organisations do not have that much control over the armed terrorists. Police should act neutrally. Police know very well who are involved in terrorism and can arrest them anytime.

We have signed a peace agreement, we will not shelter terrorists and outsiders in our party anymore. Police should take stern action against the terrorists and must not reflect biases against those few identified.

We are sincere about bringing back the lost glory of the Dhaka University. If the government does not oppress us and we are not wronged, we would not launch any movement which could affect the stability of the university.

During the last 21 years we could not move freely, and carry on our political activities in most of the residential halls of the university. The people who could not express their political identity for so many years have just come forward to express their political ideology publicly. It is not true that the BCL workers had occupied halls with the help of the law enforcing agencies.

I would request the newspapers to publish articles urging the government to pursue vigorously its stated policy of arresting all terrorists from the campuses irrespective of party affiliation and at the same time request the opposition not to indulge in politics of opposition for opposition's sake.

We have agreed to work with other student parties to root out terrorism. We are serious and sincere. We want the government to act in a neutral and fair manner. We are committed to restoring peace on the campus.

Habib-Un-Nabi Shohel
General Secretary, JCD
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have no particular party. They change their party with change of the government. The general trend is to take shelter under the protection of the ruling party for safety.

Newspapers can play a vital role in curbing terrorism from the campus. Newspapers mostly cover the stories of violence. Newspapers should publish more positive news about the campus, and give more space and prominence to such news items.

Abdul Khaleq
Acting President, JCD

At present terrorism can be identified as the number one problem of the University. Now the most pertinent question is: who are involved in terrorism? The answer is, outsiders — who are not students. Since they do not belong to the university, they do not have any feeling for the prestige of the university.

The success of the attempt to root out terrorism from the campus depends on the attitude of the government. Side by side, the university authorities and the student organisations have a significant role to play in curbing terrorism on the campus.

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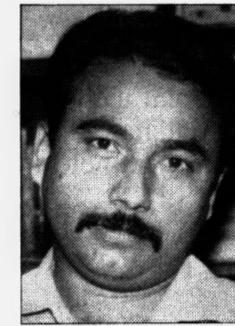
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Abdul Wahid Khokon
BCL DU Unit General Secretary

Outsiders, mostly patronised by the student fronts, hinder the normal academic atmosphere of the university. But the number of terrorists are very few.

In the past, if one particular party had a strong hold over a particular hall, other organisations were not allowed to enter that hall. But a positive trend has been started with the signing of the peace treaty. If all the parties concerned abide by the accord from their respective positions, it is quite possible for the university to return to its former position when it was called the 'Oxford of the East'.

At the same time student politics should be more student oriented than it is at present.

Undoubtedly the main problem is terrorism. Student politics has lost its direction, and is not on the right track. Unless and until student politics can be made student oriented, the ongoing crisis cannot be solved completely.

Behind terrorism, the main problem is financial. Finding no other alternative, students take illegal arms in their hands as a source of income. People who carry illegal arms have

link with underworld and their boss is always an influential figure in the national politics.

Right now terrorism is the main problem of the university and mostly the armed outsiders belonging to different student fronts are involved in the terrorism on the campus. Probably, the DU campus has become the safe haven for the terrorists. This trend should be stopped immediately.

Terrorism has some links with the accommodation problem in the residential halls of the university. A considerable number of seats are being occupied by the terrorists. Newly admitted students join with them simply for a seat. But once they get the taste of firearms they cannot give it up.

Now to solve this problem the government and opposition should act unitedly. Insincerity, lurking on the part of any side the goal can not be achieved.

Thus the first valiant lady martyr Pritilata Waddedar opened the first golden chapter of dedication in the history of the independence of subcontinent during the early period of the Movement. Her sacrifice had inspired all of us to take active part in the Liberation War of 1947 and 1971. Therefore, on her 64th death anniversary we pay our deep respect and gratitude to her for providing great inspiration to all of us for the liberation of our motherland.

Two days before the attack one pamphlet was published in red paper with a photo of Pritilata explaining the reason of attack signed by Masterda Surya Sen. These leaflets were distributed throughout the country. On the fixed day Pritilata and the other five members were clad in military dress with Gurkha Bhojali knife inside the shield at the back, hand bombs in their bags on shoulders and loaded pistols in hand. Pritilata had folded her long hair inside the turban on her head. At 10 pm they proceeded towards the club and suddenly attacked it with hand bombs and started to fire from pistols. Within a few minutes all the inmates who were merry-making in ball dance fled hither and thither in danger. The dancing-hall had been turned into a firing-squad hall with 53 dead and many more injured. Many other cried out in terror and ran away. Thus Pritilata avenged the murder of Titumir, Khududram, Mahal Sen, Ardhendu, Ramkrishna and many other valiant sons of the soil.

According to military rule Pritilata blew the whistle to leave the club and she herself was behind all of them. When they reached the northern gate of the railway factory an injured foreigner fired at her and she fell on the ground. Her dress became red with blood. According to the rule of the revolutionaries she killed herself by taking Potassium Cyanide which she was carrying in her pocket so that the enemy could not disclose any secret from her by torturing. Her body was left on the road for a long time. Then a doctor was called to examine her. She was declared dead. The dead-body was then taken for post-mortem where it had been found that the leader of the invading party was a lady and that was Pritilata Waddedar. After searching her body — one whistle, one map of the Club, one red pamphlet and one hand-written description of the plan and purpose of the attack signed by Pritilata were found.

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Birkanya Pritilata
Inspiration of Independence

by Prof Roushan Ara Hoque

TWENTY-THIRD of September '96 is the 64th death anniversary of Birkanya Pritilata Waddedar, the first lady martyr in the Liberation War of Bangladesh. Her tragic self-sacrifice was a glaring example of great patriotism which had inspired many to dedicate their lives in the Liberation War of 1971 and for the independence of their motherland.

This signboard was the source of great discontent among the people. Being once attacked for this signboard on a Good Friday night the club was shifted to Paharhtali Railway Club. The date of attack was fixed as 23rd September, 1932, under the leadership of Pritilata with Shanti Chakrabarty, Kalyani Dey, Prafulla Das and Sushil as her comrades. The leader was to be in a male dress.

Pritilata Waddedar, this great martyr was born at Dhalghat village in the district of Chittagong on 5th May, 1911. Her father Jagabandhu Waddedar was a clerk in the Chittagong Municipality office. Her mother Protuba Waddedar was a patriotic lady who had inspired her daughter to take part in the anti-British Movement. She obtained her BA from the Bethun College of Calcutta and joined in a Junior Girls' School of Chittagong as its Headmistress. She had read many revolutionary books and became highly inspired to join in secret revolutionary activities. Even as an IA student at Dhaka Eden College she formed a revolutionary group known as "Chakra" with Sarojini Pal, Kalpana Dutta, Kumudini Rikhihi and many others. They had organised the fund of "Chakra" by secretly selling ornaments of all its members.

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Pritilata and her group had secretly stolen 20 bomb-shell from the Armoury of Chittagong and handed them over to the Biplobi party. These shells were later on used in the Armoury raid, in the forceful occupation of the Telegraph & Telephone office, attacking the European Club and in many other secret attacks. Her belief was that dedication to the Liberation struggle of the motherland is the sacred duty of all. She used to write the same sentence everyday in her diary. I shall dedicate my life for the liberation of my country. She had firm conviction that without armed revolution freedom will never be possible. So she took training and prepared herself for armed attack on the enemy under the guidance of the Chairman of the party, Masterda Surya Sen. When police came to arrest the group she hid herself with them in a pond for the whole night. While coming out from that pond Apurba Sen was killed by the police. Nirmal Sen fired at the British Army Commander. Captain Cameron and killed him. He was also killed by the police. After that Pritilata went on hiding underground.

Thus the first valiant lady martyr Pritilata Waddedar opened the first golden chapter of dedication in the history of the independence of subcontinent during the early period of the Movement. Her sacrifice had inspired all of us to take active part in the Liberation War of 1947 and 1971. Therefore, on her 64th death anniversary we pay our deep respect and gratitude to her for providing great inspiration to all of us for the liberation of our motherland.

Pritilata joined the training camp of the revolutionary party. Their first plan was to take control of Chittagong by a military coup. They thought that their success in Chittagong would inspire the people to join in the full liberation war against the British and ultimately they would be successful in liberating the whole country. Their first programme was to attack the European Club of Dampara bearing a signboard on which it was written: "Be aware of the Indians and the

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The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Table with columns for Channel V, PTV, DD7, EL TV, STAR PLUS, STAR Sports, STAR MOVIES, ZEE TV, and other channels, listing various programs and their times.

Garfield comic strip by Jim Davis. Panels show Garfield sitting in a chair, talking to Jerry the mouse. Dialogue includes: 'IT'S TIME FOR THE WEATHER!', 'BUT, THERE WAS NO WEATHER TODAY!', 'HEY! THIS JOB IS EASY WHEN YOU DON'T GET OUT OF YOUR CHAIR', 'TELL ME ABOUT IT', 'WHAT ARE YOU KNITTING? WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S IT FOR?', 'WHY WON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT IT IS? WHAT ARE YOU GONNA USE THAT FOR?'.

Remington Steele on Star Plus at 3 pm today. Advertisement for the TV show featuring Remington Steele and his assistant.