

Calcutta Book Fair and West Bengali Intellectual Elite

by M Rashiduzzaman

The historical reality that Bangladesh is now a separate and sovereign state, through the momentous develop-ments of both 1971 and earlier in 1947, deserves a genuine recognition and mutual respect before a lasting and friendly understanding between West Bengal and Bangladesh can work.

THERE is a fracas over the evidently discourteous treatment that the Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recently received at the Calcutta Book Fair, an Indian national and indeed a bigger regional event on its own right. The organizers of the book exhibition deeply disappointed the visiting Bangladeshis when their Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was formally introduced in the gathering as the Mukhya Mantri (chief minister) of Bangladesh, a designation reserved for the Indian provincial head of the government. Even her name was incorrectly cited! Such an episode could be ignored as a goof (PM Hasina later told reporters that the organizers of the book exhibition had personally apologized to her but that was not the last of the insensitive to that significant occurrence. On the same fair-organizers said that the "two Bengals" were bound by inseparable bonds without qualifying that Bangladesh was not just another Bengal, but a separate, independent and sovereign nation.

In his opening speech at the Book Fair, poet Shamsur Rahman is known to have modified the organizer-speaker by adding that despite many similarities, the "two Bengals" were different, which, however, should not deter the mutual co-operation and friendship. But the Calcutta press did not publish that qualifying part of his speech, according to one observer.

Those two episodes and repeated patronizing manifestations display a strange drift, a combination of neglect, arrogance, disrespect and a communal undercurrent that has swept the West Bengali political and intellectual elite. But this is only the tip of the iceberg that is yet to thaw, it's also a legacy from the past that is dying hard in West Bengal! At the heart of the Calcutta-based influential community's disparaging attitude to Bangladesh, there are seemingly irreconcilable paradoxes. They are less than enthusiastic to show the deserving recognition for Bangladesh as an independent and a separate nation-state, but they should also know that Bangladesh is since separated from Pakistan, has not demonstrated any desire to join West Bengal, and becoming a part of India.

In the eyes of the mainstream West Bengali intelligentsia, Bangladesh, a Muslim majority nation, was little more than a continuation of East Pakistan with a different nomenclature, and much of their anger is attributed to the earlier 1947 division of Bengal, deeply embedded in their mindset! For them, today's Bangladesh, backed by Muslim separatism, was

planted in history much earlier than 1971! For those Hindus who fled the country in fear and under very exceptional circumstances, after the partition, Bangladesh is still remembered as an exotic land, full of trees, golden paddy fields, meandering rivers, abundant fruits and vegetables, and pristine ponds and lakes brimming with fish. So many non-fiction books, novels, essays, short stories and poems conjured the "Golden Bengal" and decried the partition of Bengal, and lamented the "ethnic cleansing" that they allegedly suffered since then.

The emotion-filled narratives, the free floating accusations, hidden assumptions and sometimes the appalling indifference towards Bangladesh have littered the intellectual landscape of West Bengal since 1947. They have also shaped the political twist and needless inattention that is under review here. Partly driven by the literary conjuring, a segment of the West Bengali writers occasionally fanatized to unravel the Bangladesh sovereignty. Indeed, one such anti-partition imagination expressed in a poem (Teler Shishi Bangla Bale...) by Annada Shankar Roy came under fire recently. The poet himself reportedly recited it at a Calcutta poetry conference of the poets from the "two Bengals" in 1998 December. One of the participants at that meeting wrote that the poet dismissed the political barriers between Bangladesh and India as an artificial separation. Mr. Roy's poem was by no means a literary feast to the Bangladeshis, and his alleged comment, if true, betrayed an intellectual arrogance and the worst form of political insensitivity. More importantly, this was not a voice from the "literate fringe" but he represented the literary gems of West Bengal.

The Bangladesh international borders since 1971 are the same as that came out of the 1947 partition, hence the poet's public recitation of that poem or his presumed personal observation became an aspersion on Bangladesh territorial sovereignty that deserved a diplomatic protest which, according to available reports, was not made. Sometimes, the West Bengali intelligentsia unloads its rage deliberately or through the lens of ignorance, intransigence or insensitivity as they recently did in Calcutta, but such feeling is infused more

defly through the prolific literary surge for which there is an audience both in West Bengal and Bangladesh.

Bengal's political history, a fascination of many Calcutta writers, features amply in numerous fictional narratives. I like reading Sunil Gangopadhyaya's historical fictions, but, unless I am mistaken, I cannot help detecting a subtle accusatory tone when he narrates the united Bengal's history, although I don't perceive him as a rabidly anti-Muslim storyteller. For example, when he writes about the Communal Award in his Purbia Paschim, Vol. 1, he conveys an unexamined presupposition that it unfairly benefited the Muslims over the Hindus, which resulted in Muslim majority in the former Bengal legislature after the 1937 elections. To him, it was designed to teach the caste Hindus a "lesson" by the British for spearheading the Indian independence agitation. But he ignores that the so-called Communal Award, which distributed the provincial legislative seats to different religious/ethnic communities, was not the sudden and one-sided concession by the British. An outcome of negotiations through the Round Table Conferences, the Muslims deserved the legislative majority by virtue of their demographic strength, which was not acknowledged during the earlier 1919 constitutional reforms that first created the quasi-parliamentary institutions in the British Indian provinces. Also the caste Hindus were not alone in the freedom movement, the lower caste Hindus, the Muslims and other religious minorities were also active in the anti-British campaign.

In numerous such fictional accounts, it is the Muslims who are, directly or indirectly, portrayed as the sole perpetrators of violence and expropriators of the Hindu jobs, lands, business and properties in what is now Bangladesh. The invariable message in many such works is that the British Raj favoured the Muslims to balance the Hindu nationalists, and gives an impression that it was the Muslim communalism, fanned by the colonial masters, that divided Bengal in 1947. Actually, that is a questionable allegation, and even some professional historians have advanced such tainted narratives. But I am aware of a few West

Bengali scholars, who did not make the Muslims the sole "culprit" of the 1947 religious division; however, outside the serious academic domains, they don't appear in the flourishing popular literature in Calcutta.

As a contrast, the contemporary Bangladesh intellectuals rarely wailed and whined about the sufferings of the Indian Muslims, including those from West Bengal, who fled to what was then East Pakistan, to escape the heat of communalism in West Bengal and other parts of India.

The plight of the so-called Biharis seldom attracted the literary imagination of the Bangladesh writers (even before 1971). Few established Bangladesh authors, in their recent short stories, novels, poems and essays deliberately blamed the oppressive (Hindu) landlords, the biased politicians and the exploitative moneylenders for their unconscionable treatment of the Muslim peasantry. Some Bangladesh secular thinkers are considered to be the local validators of what the West Bengali intellectuals thought of the Bangladesh history and identity. Still, Bangladesh has demonstrated a spirit of a historical as well as literary re-examination that does not seem to be happening in West Bengal, at least not in their imagination of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has its own share of religious fundamentalism and political Islam, but they were not so prominent in the mainstream intellectual establishments.

The influential Bangladeshi intellectuals generally carry the reputation of looking upon Calcutta as the cultural Mecca, and the mutual exchanges and meetings between Calcutta and Dhaka writers, artists, singers and musicians have increased significantly. Half a century after India's division, the Calcutta-based lingering pejoration of the 1947 Bengal partition, sustained through Bangladesh that broke away from Pakistan, is confounding. Bangladesh has been unable to resolve the raucous encounter with its own history and identity (that I examined in The Daily Star recently), and indirectly, the West Bengali calloousness to Bangladesh is the outcome of that acrimony.

Ms Taslima Nasreen, a controversial feminist writer was an embarrassment even to many liberals in Bangladesh,

but her book Lajja, with no great literary distinction, did not move off the best seller list for months in Calcutta. Sadly, the work was a bonanza for the communal forces in West Bengal and other parts of India with the BJP being its principal backer. It was the "geopolitics" of the book Lajja that made a debatable writing so well known, much of the international publicity of its controversial writer came via Calcutta.

She received the Ananda prize from the Ananda Bazar Patrika, a popular Calcutta Bengali daily newspaper. From 1958 to 1994, no other Bangladeshi author or book had proudly received that award. Many Bangladeshis believed that the award to Taslima Nasreen was politically motivated, and it was considered a calculated insult to the Bangladesh literatures who usually had profound respect for the Calcutta literary circle. It was a pity that the West Bengali intellectuals, with a few honorable exceptions, used a contestable fiction to prove the charges of unhindered communalism in Bangladesh.

Some of the intellectuals from Calcutta were unhappy when the first Bangladesh constitution declared that the Bangladesh citizens would be identified as Bangalees. I consider this an extension of the old ambivalence over the Bengali Muslim identity. Curiously, the Muslim aristocracy is connected with geography since the Muslim aristocrats in Bengal often claimed to have come from outside.

But the Bengali Hindu bhadrakul, in general, also did not quite consider the Bengali Muslims as real Bangalees; they were more looked upon as Muslims, purportedly the outsiders! Nirad Chaudhuri, the celebrated Bengali writer, in his Autobiography, has recorded the arrogant (Hindu) contempt for the Muslims and a deep-seated hostility towards them. We can link the on-going re-creative narratives of numerous West Bengali writers to their predecessors like Bankim Chatterjee for their anti-Muslim contention and the convoluted contempt for the Muslims that characterized some of their famous novels. Few of the great Bengali classics (written by the Hindu writers) ever depicted the Muslims and their way of life as the pivot of their narratives.

The historical reality that Bangladesh is now a separate and sovereign state, through the momentous developments of both 1971 and earlier in 1947, deserves a genuine recognition and mutual respect before a lasting and friendly understanding between West Bengal and Bangladesh can work.

The author writes from Glassboro, New Jersey, USA.

Child Labour in Garment Industry

by M Ashraf Ali

Apparently, the issue of child labour is delicate. It has both national and international dimensions. The loud criticism of garment manufacturing units by human rights activists in this country and the various pressure groups like the CLC in the USA have to be taken into consideration for adoption of corrective measures.

THE issue of child labour has now received the attention of the people in the world. It took centuries, before it could draw the attention of the people in general and the powers that be in different continents in particular. It is in 1990 that the UNICEF organised the World Summit for Children and adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As many as 71 Heads of State and Government and 88 senior officials, mostly at the ministerial level, attended the world summit on September 29-30, 1990 and adopted a Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for implementing the Declaration in the 1990's. May be one will see a different world by the turn of the century, when the Plan of Action will fully be implemented and the rights of child will be fully safeguarded.

With the industrial revolution, the relation between worker and his work place has been spelt out in the form of jobs — with skill requirement. The subject of work became a matter of concern for those also in management. The current spate of references to skills, productivity, management and the like in preference to traditional vocations is largely an outcome of the changes that took place in the past century or so. The current move to prescribe age-limit within which one may be considered suitable for a given job is quite innovative and normative.

In the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children adopted on September 30, 1990 in New York different dimensions of the work including the challenge, the opportunity, the task and the commitment were spelt out in clear terms. The declaration envisaged that all will act together "for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide educational opportunities for all children irrespective of their background and gender, that prepare children for productive employment and life-long learning, opportunities; i.e. through vocational training; and that enable children to grow to adulthood within a supportive and nurturing cultural and social context."

It was preceded by the adoption of the convention on the Rights of the Child in the General Assembly on the UN on November 20, 1989. A child ac-

cording to Article 1 of the Convention is one below the age of 18. Since the adoption, substantive actions have been taken by UN agencies, national governments and even trade unions and NGOs for protecting the rights and interests of children in general and child labour in particular.

Interestingly, the definition of child as per age appears to be diverse. One remaining below the age of 18 is a child as per the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, while the laws in different countries set the age limit to 14 or 15 years or less as per provisions of enactments. Even in the same country the connotation is different vis-à-vis the age of entry into wage employment. As per the Factories Act of 1965, one attaining the age of 14 may qualify for employment in different establishments subject to some conditions. The Tea Plantation Workers Ordinance of 1962 has an enabling clause, whereby a child attaining 12 years of age may also join wage employment. More details may need attention for making any assessment.

The otherwise agro-based economy of Bangladesh has entered into a phase of development where industry is expected to contribute more and more to the GDP. And industry has a tradition of using locally available raw materials like raw jute, sugar cane, tobacco and tea-leaves etc. More of industries could be set up for processing grains and fruits both for local and foreign market. Despite such a prospect, entrepreneurs in this country have come out of the traditional sectors and gone for export oriented industries. And garment manufacturing has become a veritable subsector in the industrial scene. Some two thousand units of garment manufacturing plants have since been set up in the country. The majority of them are in the capital Dhaka and the port city of Chittagong. Some of them have gone to other neighbouring towns having infra-structure facilities including the assured supply of electricity needed for industrial production. The total employment in these garment manufacturing plants are over one million, of whom according to a source, some sixty thousand fall in the category of child labour.

The figure of child labour in garment manufacturing units has become debatable and that due to the fact that none of them can show their birth certificates as a proof of age. In the absence of such a survey one may go with the views of some trade union leaders and state that over fifty thousand of the workers in garment manufacturing units fall in the category. The employers are, however, found telling that very few children below the age of 14 are employed and such child workers are

found coming to the work places with their mothers and sisters and do some peripheral work that does not require much of skill and in exchange of some food and remuneration. And, as reported in the press, employers suggest that they have already retrenched a bulk of the child workers and the rest will be sorted out by October 31, 1995. In the process, employers have set up schools for retrenched child workers who will be rehabilitated with proper education and vocational training. In view of prevailing poverty both employment and rehabilitation of retrenched workers have become difficult in this country.

It may be worthwhile to examine the problem of child labour in the country, and that for averting any crisis and for ensuring absorption of child labour retrenched from garment manufacturing units to other fields of activities. The direction for such corrective measures has been set not only by the well-meaning among the owners of garment manufacturing units but by official agencies, NGOs and even UN agencies like the UNICEF and the ILO.

On the top of all, the provisions of law have to be enforced by official agencies like the Department of Labour and the Office of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Establishments. The current deficiencies of these official agencies have to be removed by putting in more funding resources, manpower and other facilities. These agencies should work in collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations in the garment manufacturing sector. Necessary arrangements should be made for tripartite consultation and united activities needed for handling the sensitive child labour issue. The process of unionization and bilateral discussions should also be taken to its logical end of the rights and interests of the employed are to be protected. Though it is a new dimension of work, rehabilitation of retrenched child labour is all the important.

Apparently, the issue of child labour is delicate. It has both national and international dimensions. The loud criticism of garment manufacturing units by human rights activists in this country and the various pressure groups like the CLC in the USA have to be taken into consideration for adoption of corrective measures. In the process, the international inputs like the funding and technical assistance from the UNICEF, the ILO and other multilateral agencies have to be neatly utilized for bringing about necessary changes in the employment scene in the country. The support from the IPEC programme of the ILO should also be used for the purpose.

Cosovo: Deadlines Come and Go, the Problem Remains

by Dr M Zakir Husain

THE Rambouillet negotiations did not produce an agreement either on political proposals or on deployment of peace-keepers under NATO. Two deadlines have come and gone. Deadline (at gunpoint) diplomacy has failed. In the process NATO credibility has been damaged and the Kosovo conflict has perhaps taken a turn for the worse. Going by the mood of Belgrade, yet another military drive into Kosovo may be imminent. That will kill the climate of negotiation and harden the position of the Kosovo Liberation Army and ethnic Albanians of Kosovo.

Predictably, there will be more flexing of NATO military muscle which is already in fatigue. The non-activation of two ultimatums must have convinced Belgrade of the deep inertia within NATO and division within the Contact Group itself. So the familiar cycle of military expedition by Belgrade, reprisals by KLA, and fleeing refugees will remain unbroken. That is a bleak scenario; options before NATO and Contact Group will be even more limited.

Yet, what are the historical facts? People of Kosovo had long ago been promised autonomy by Belgrade. That promise was broken; instead repression was unleashed on Kosovo. The broken pledge and cycle of brutal atrocities turned the KLA more belligerent which embraced complete independence as the goal. The KLA and the Kosovar civilians remember how Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia became independent Republics having broken away

from Yugoslavia. The will of those people was recognised. Kosovars also witnessed how Dayton Agreement produced a makeshift peace under an anomalous political arrangement of quasi-independence for Bosnia-Herzegovina. In these perspectives, the cry for independence by Kosovars would seem to be a natural historical consequence and totally legitimate.

But the West is not ready to recognise or accept what they had accepted for Slovenia and Croatia. The standard meanwhile changed: Kosovars are not Slovenians or Croats; and the West do not want to see further breaking up of Yugoslavia. All of this is understandable, but does it conform to recent history in the Balkans and Eastern Europe itself? Does it fulfil the obligations of the international community?

The Contact Group and NATO have so far succeeded to confirm the futility of any further negotiations. While that may sound uncharitable, it nevertheless is a fact so far. Given the precedents in the Balkans, and events in Kosovo, can anyone doubt the inevitability of independence of Kosovo? The US knows it in heart; Europe fears it and wishes to procrastinate; Belgrade believes it can exterminate KLA and the Albanians as well.

What the international community will do to bring enduring peace to the troubled Balkans other than to guarantee the people of Kosovo their right of self-determination?

Contempt Petition against PM: Full Text of Judgement

In the Supreme Court of Bangladesh Appellate Division Present: Mr Justice ATM Afzal, Chief Justice Mr Justice Mustafa Kamal Mr Justice Latifur Rahman Mr Justice Bimalendu Bikash Roy Choudhury Mr Justice AM Mahmudur Rahman An application of Mr Habibul Islam Bhuiyan. President. Supreme Court Bar Association. Mr Mahmudur Islam, Attorney General of Bangladesh. Date of Hearing: 17th February, 1999.

JUDGEMENT CJ: By an application dated 1st February, 1999, Mr Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, Senior Advocate and President of the Supreme Court Bar Association declaring himself further as an officer of this Court brought to my notice certain statements published in the daily 'Dinkal' and daily 'Sangram' of 30 January, 1999 which were alleged to have been made by Sheikh Hasina Wazed, the Hon'ble Prime Minister, at a Press Conference held in the Gana Bhavan on 29 January, 1999 on her return from India.

It has been alleged in the application, inter alia, that the said statements clearly amount to contempt of Court of the highest degree because she knew well that such statements will create doubt in the public mind about the integrity and wisdom of the learned Judges of the Supreme Court and of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Bangladesh and yet she made such false statements consciously lowering the high image and unimpeachable integrity and wisdom of the learned Judges of the Supreme Court and of the Chief Justice of Bangladesh in the estimation of the public at large. The petitioner prayed for drawing up of an appropriate proceeding for contempt of Court against the Prime Minister.

The application was listed for hearing in Court on 3rd February, 1999 with notice to the learned Attorney General.

During hearing the alleged offensive portion in the statement of the Prime Minister was pointed out by the petitioner and marked by us as follows.

Daily 'Dinkal'২৬ ও ২৭ আশ্বিন দুইশ হাজারে ১২শ মাসকার জামিন হয়েছিল। এটা কান্দো হতে পারে না। এর কোর্ট পরিবর্তন করা হয়েছে। কিন্তু প্রধান বিচারপতি এ ব্যাপারে কোন ব্যবস্থা নেননি।

Daily 'Sangram' বাংলাদেশের হাইকোর্টের এমন অবস্থা করে রেখে গেছে পূর্বের সরকার যে, দুইদিনে ১২শ মাসকার জামিন হয়ে যায়। কিতাবে হলো, কেন হলো এটা কোনদিন হয় এটা প্রধান বিচারপতির দৃষ্টিতে আনা হয়েছে। যদিও কোর্ট ক্ষেত্র করা হয়েছে কিন্তু কোন ব্যবস্থা তিনি নেননি। যদি তদন্ত করা হতো এবং ব্যবস্থা নেয়া হতো তবে জুজিসমিটী অনেক সময়দায়িত্ব থেকে মুক্তি পেত। জুজিসমিটী সম্পর্কে মানুষের কোন সন্দেহ দেখা দিল না।

At the hearing the reports as published on (the aforesaid subject) in several other newspapers, namely, Daily Janakantha, Pratham Alo, Banglar Bani, Sangbad, Muktakantha, The New Nation were also cited before us. It appears that, in none of the newspapers except the 'Dinkal' and 'Sangram' the alleged comments respectively — এটা কান্দো হতে পারে না, কিতাবে হলো, কেন হলো এটা কোনদিন হয় do not find place. However, in Sangbad it has been put in this manner এদের জামিন কিতাবে হলো সেইই প্রশ্ন। Similarly except Sangram, no other newspaper report mentioned .. বাংলাদেশের হাইকোর্টের এমন অবস্থা করে রেখে গেছে পূর্বের সরকার যে ..What appears to be the common feat in two days (26 and 27 August, 1998) the High Court (apparently she meant a Bench of the High Court Division) had granted bail in 1200 cases and when the attention of the Chief Justice was drawn to it, he only changed the Bench but did not take any other steps had been taken step, people would not have any doubt about the judiciary.

We have had experience that unfortunately it is difficult to always rely upon newspaper reports in our country. In the instant case, the difficulty is no less but more because the reports were made on the basis of extempore remarks of the Prime Minister. We have been informed by the learned Attorney General that there is cassette record of the prepared statement of the Prime Minister which she had made in the Press Conference but there is no record of her off-hand remarks made in answer to the questions put by the Journalists.

The impugned remarks of the Prime Minister as to granting of bail in 1200 cases in two days have a background and that is, that in the months of September/October, 1998, there were some reports/comments published in some newspapers about granting of bail allegedly in a large number of cases by a Bench of the High Court Division in two days (26 and 27 August, 1998) on the eve of the annual long vacation of the Court. We were quite surprised to see from the impugned statement coming as it does from no less a person than the Prime Minister of the country that a Bench had disposed of 1200 cases, may be motions for bail, in two days which, if one is aware of the functioning of the High Court Division, is almost physically impossible. If the Judges had that rate of disposal, there would not have been any backlog in Courts. We have for our satisfaction checked up and found that on the aforesaid two dates the total number of motions in which Rule and bail were granted by the Bench concerned was (834-72) 135 and the number of persons released on ad-interim bail was (2194-148) 367.

In the circumstances we thought it appropriate to ask for a statement from the Prime Minister on the impugned reports attributed to her before proceeding any further and requested the learned Attorney General accordingly. On the adjourned date, a signed statement of the Prime Minister has been made over to us which reads as follows:

২৬শে আশ্বিনী সাংবাদিক সম্মেলনে ভারত সফর সম্পর্কে বক্তব্য রাখার পর সাংবাদিকগণ আমাকে বিভিন্ন প্রশ্ন করেন যার উত্তর বিভিন্ন পত্রিকায় বিভিন্নভাবে পরিবেশন করা হয়েছে। প্রশ্ন-উত্তরের এক পর্যায়ে দুইটি মোকদ্দমা বিচারে বিলম্ব হলো প্রসঙ্গে প্রশ্ন করলে আমি বলি যে বাংলাদেশে সাধারণত কাজ করছে, সেখানে সরকার স্বতন্ত্রপন করতে পারে না। হাইকোর্টের ব্যবস্থা কালেক্ট হইবেই যে হাইকোর্ট বিচারের একটি বেঞ্চে দুইদিনে ১২০০ জামিন দেওয়া হয়। এ বিষয়ে বিভিন্ন পত্রিকায় বিভিন্ন ধরনের সংবাদ/বক্তব্য আমার নজরে আসে। সংবাদ প্রকাশিত হয় যে, জাতীয় সংসদের আইন, বিচার ও সংসদ বিষয়ক মহাপরিষদের স্বাধীনতাটি এ ব্যাপারে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে, যা জাতীয় সংসদের গণসম্মেলন শাখা সঠিক নয় বলে প্রকাশ করেছে। একটি সাংবাদিক পত্রিকায় এমনও বক্তব্য করা হয়েছে, "When the hate campaign was building, the Law Minister and the Attorney General met the helpless Chief Justice almost daily, reportedly trying to influence the latter." (Weekly Holiday of 6-11-1998, page 1, Caption: "Supreme Court under clouds" by Akbar Imam) আমি বলিবে আসে ব্যবস্থা কালেক্ট আগাম জামিনের জামিন ব্যাপারে হাইকোর্ট বিচারের একটি বেঞ্চে এক অধীক্ষকের ঘটনা বিবরণ দেয়া হয়। প্রোবোন একজন সিনিয়র এডভোকেট বলেন যে, ঐ বেঞ্চে তার মতেপ্রশ্ন সুবিচার পাচ্ছেনা। এ সংসদের প্রেক্ষিতে যখন সাংবাদিক সম্মেলনে মোকদ্দমা বিচার প্রসঙ্গে প্রশ্ন করা হয় তখন ব্যবস্থার কালেক্ট প্রকাশিত, উল্লেখকৃত সংবাদ উল্লেখ করে, আমার ব্যক্তিগত মনে পড়ে, আমি বলছিলাম যে এ ঘটনা প্রধান বিচারপতির কাছে জানানো হলে তিনি ক্ষেত্র পরিবর্তন করে দেন আর কোন ব্যবস্থা নেননি, রাব্বার দিলে জুজিসমিটী অনেক সময়দায়িত্ব থেকে মুক্তি পেতো এবং জুজিসমিটী সম্পর্কে মানুষের কোন সন্দেহ দেখা দিল না। দেশে আইন-শৃঙ্খলা ও সেই প্রসঙ্গে প্রকাশিত সংবাদ/মতাবলয় প্রেক্ষিতে আমি এ অভিমত প্রকাশ করেছিলাম। এ অভিমত প্রকাশ করলে বিচারিক সংস্থা সম্পর্কে কোন সন্দেহ প্রকাশ করিনি বা এ অভিমত প্রকাশ করার কোনো আশঙ্কা প্রকাশ করেছি বা প্রকাশ বিচারপতির মর্যাদা সুলভ করার বা বিচার বিভাগের কাজে হস্তক্ষেপ করার কোন অভিপ্রায় আমার ছিল না।

১৪ শে ফেব্রুয়ারি ১৫/২/৯৯

The Prime Minister has mentioned newspaper reports as her source for the figure of 1200 cases although the name or names

by Jim Davis

