

Tried my best to get some time from Dad. After a long time, Dad finally had time for me on the 26th of March, our Independence Day.

Q: During the liberation movement, were you a student or a service man?

A: At that time I was an HSC student.

Q: Were you involved with student politics?

A: Yes, I was involved in politics only during my student life.

Q: Tell us something about yourself during the war.

A: I went to India for training, though I had primary training at Iqbal Hall. After the training period was over, the East Pakistan was divided into eleven sectors. I was in Sector 9, under Major M A Jallil. Khulna, Barisal, Patuakhali was under Sector 9. It was the biggest sector. The nights and days were horrible. My companions and I had to starve for seven days, as we could not manage to get any food.

Q: How did the war begin?

A: It's a long history. It began from the disparity between East and West Pakistan. When I was a student, I saw and judged what the West Pakistanis had deprived us of. The Pakistanis were cruel rulers. They were very much interested in our land but not in our improvement. The protests first began from our people in 1952 for the mother tongue. It continued in 1958 against the martial law, in 1962 for education, in 1966 to protest against

Interview of a MUKTIJODDAH

By Shymaa Mohammad

the Agartola Conspiracy case. A Mass movement against the Pakistanis began in 1970, when the Awami League Leader, Bangabandhu, won the election to be the Prime Minister but the Pakistanis did not agree to hand over the power to our leader. The whole nation was against the injustice and we decided not to cooperate with them any more.

Q: Why was the 7th of March speech by Bangabandhu so important?

A: It was because President Yahya Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the other members of the Parliament did not agree to give rights to East Pakistan. So, Bangabandhu told the whole nation on 7th of March to go forward. He also said, that we would give up our lives but not our pride and the war will be for our

freedom "Ebarer Sangram muktir Sangram, ebarer Sangram Shadhinotar Sangram".

From 8th of March there was a non-cooperation movement against West Pakistan. Later they came to East Pakistan and they began to a cruel genocide. They kept killing innocent people and the Pakistani Armies disrespected our mothers and sisters.

Q: How did Bangladesh Betar inspire the freedom fighters?

A: We were inspired by patriotic songs which were very touching at that time and the most important role of Bangladesh Betar during the Liberation War was that it carried special news to the common people by plays and jokes.

Q: What sort of arms did you use during the

war?

A: I mainly used a Staingun, SLR (self loading rifle), grenade and TNT explosive.

Q: What did you feel when you won the War?

A: It's very difficult to say in words, the feelings after twenty-eight years. After the long period of struggle, when we won, we burst into tears of joy, we hugged each other. And when the local boys went to their home to their dear ones, it reminded me of my widow mother and my elder sister. I did not know whether they were alive or not. I could not even communicate with them as it was impossible to do so during those nine months. After six days I went back to my village. My relatives were amazed to see me alive. My mom took me in her arms and we both cried in joy.

Q: Please say something to this young generation as a Muktiyoddah?

A: I like to say to those young ones who have not seen the Muktiyoddah, that they should know the true history of our Muktiyoddah. They should know how the Bangalis sacrificed their life to liberate the country. I also ask the young generation to come forward and help the crippled and the poor freedom fighters.

Q: Do you think it was worth for fighting for Bangladesh?

A: Of course! We might be one of the poorest countries in the world, but it does not matter. When we were able to gain victory, we will also be able to develop our country. At least with pride I can say "I am a Bangladeshi".

Is it a 'Shame' or intense dislike and hostility?

By Sanchari H. Akram

This article is addressed especially to those people who do not exercise their social responsibilities. I believe that by pointing everything towards politics is not the solution. The article "WHAT A SHAME! SHAME! Written by Mr. Mohd. Shahidul Islam (Tittoo) that was published in the last issue of 'Rising Star' (Date 13 Apr. 2000) seems to be unacceptable to me. I appreciate the Editor for giving us scope to express our opinions towards this matter. After reading the article carefully, I therefore, could draw only one conclusion from it.

I guess what the author wanted to state was in fact very impressive and also patriotic. I would like to share some of it only, as most of it appeared to be rather vague and biased. But, within these feelings, I could sense the agony, hatred and the urge of protest going on inside him.

There should not be any controversy regarding the fact that we are all proud to be Bangladeshis. Our ancestors shed a sea of blood for the sovereignty and integrity of our country starting from the 'British Raj' till the 'Pakistani Janta' and helped give birth to a nation now called Bangladesh.

In a game, one can support a team and that does not necessarily mean that he belongs to that country. We are all aware of the incidents that took place during our war of liberation. Nearly 29 years have passed by and what had happened then is now tragic history. Therefore, I see no possible reason for this to be related to the Pakistan Cricket Team, or any other country, or sports, for that matter.

Just supporting them does not mean that 'Yahyah Khan' has won the game. Bangladesh is among those few countries of the world that had fought a battle and gotten liberated from intruders. Chanting the words 'Pakistan Zindabad' during a

game does not mean that we have sold our souls to them, or have become Pakistanis. Our freedom fighters made Bangladesh a sovereign nation and their dreams came true in 1971. Back in history, our forefathers fought with the British for over 200 years and got independence in 1947. They never intended to maintain a hostile relationship with the Pakistanis or the British as permanent enemies. If we ever do that, then it would be a mere act of emotional instability. I think the author is making a big social issue out of a tiny molehill.

As far as politics are concerned, I really have no comments regarding this matter. I leave this to the policy makers of the country. I wonder, who the author is angry at... the Bangladeshis...Pakistanis or the... Politicians? I would also like to mention that the author has no right to call anybody a 'Razakar' or anything of similar manner since, Pakistan is not the team he supports. All I can deduce from the article is, that, the author is trying to pull the trigger from Yahya Khan's shoulder and the words used in the article to describe the audiences in the stadium are actually the author's own views. Anyway, we are not 'Razakars', 'Al-Badars', and 'Al-Shams'. We are simply proud Bangladeshis who know how to respect others. We are now in the 21st century, but it is a shame that our thoughts relate to the ancient times. We should learn to think broadly and globally.

Since Cricket is entering the global arena and bringing the friends and foes under one banner (The Asia Team) we should not mix this with politics. We felt proud when our boys defeated Pakistan and Scotland in the 'World Cup '99 and hope that in the near future Bangladesh will be an active member of the World Cricket family. However, we will require the active

support of world class cricketers to achieve such a goal.

I condemn the act when someone writes 'Shahid Afridi, please marry me', but can only pardon this as someone's 'over enthusiastic' and 'immature' remark about a handsome young cricketer. Obviously this has nothing to do with Pakistan, and getting married with any of the Pakistani team members does not mean that Dhaka has become a part of Pakistan, and that we have all become 'Razakars'. A time will come when similar things can happen to our Bangladeshi team and stars. In future, our boys will become world class stars such as Geoff Boycott, Sir Garry Sobers, Sir Vivian Richards, Courtney Walsh, Ian Botham, Asif Iqbal, Imran Khan, Kapil Dev, Brian Lara, S. Jayasuria, Wasim Akram, S Tendulkar or Jonty Rodes. They will carry the symbol of peace and harmony with them as ambassadors, and not hatred and hostility. We should not misguide our future generation by showing them the wrong path of enmity, but rather lead them towards the way of love, peace, and prosperity.

If we still continue this hostile attitude, no country will be ready to help another country just because they once fought a war. I think that the author's opinion is rather narrow minded and childish. I fear that after reading my article, there will be people who may not agree with me. I have with me all those people who are proud Bangladeshis and love to witness and welcome various games of different countries, support them and not mess 'pleasure with politics'. If they play in a healthy atmosphere, the mentality of our younger generation will improve. So why don't we embrace a much better alternative - forgive and forget everything that happened in the past, and live with what we have at the present.

Whatzup this week

By NIM

Weekly CD review

(Compiled from mtvasia.com)



Jessica Simpson

"Sweet Kisses" (Columbia Records)

Our Rating: 3/5

In Summary: Little doubt that Simpson won't hit a homer with this squeaky clean

debut.

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Britney! It's Christina! No -- it's Jessica! Simpson, that is. Yes, she's yet another addition to the minor glut of bubbly, pert, blond, gum-smacking, post-adolescent popsters. Jessica, 19 and a native of Dallas, offers up her plucky uber-produced debut, *Sweet Kisses*, for those of you who just can't get enough of well, pert, blond popsters. Initially making it big in the Christian music world, Jessica seems totally sincere and is prepared to stand behind her two-dimensional pop -- which is just fine. It's enough to get her opening gigs for 98 Degrees and Ricky Martin. And you know what? In today's market, it doesn't even seem to matter that her music isn't particularly distinguished, because (okay, I'm going out on a limb here) neither is Britney's or Christina's. Their mega-success defies logic, therefore by the current equation, there is no reason why Jessica Simpson, a bouncy, soulful young Christian, shouldn't become a mammoth mall performer too. She's got the strong, ultra-sheen vox and Chiclet-white teeth -- oh yeah, and the bod. *Sweet Kisses*, produced by Sam Watters

(Color Me Badd) and Louis Biancanella (Mariah Carey), has one canned pop tune after another. The single, "I Wanna Love You Forever," is a careening Axl Rose-could-have-written-it-just-add-electric-guitar-and-orchestra ballad. The happy-footed "I Think I'm In Love With You" samples from John Mellencamp's young love anthem "Jack and Diane." "Where You Are," featuring 98 Degrees' (and Simpson's beau) Nick Lachey, has a swirling Celine/Peabo effect sure to be a slow-dance classic. On "Final Heartbreak," Miss Simpson gets down and sassy (bring on the school uniform-wearing back-up dancers!). The same goes for "I've Got My Eyes On You" -- a shadow of Britney if ever there was one. "Woman in Me," featuring Destiny's Child, is a sunny track about having good self-esteem. Regardless of what I think of *Sweet Kisses*, though, there is little doubt that Jessica Simpson won't hit a homer with this squeaky clean debut

Drama

Rating: 4.5/5

Starring: Julia Roberts, Marg Helgenberger, Aaron Eckhart, Scotty Leavenworth, Albert Finney

The optimistic true story of a twice divorced mother of three who takes a position as a file clerk in a small town law firm. After stumbling into some information that implicates a major public utilities company, she convinces her boss to let her pursue the case. Her unflinching spirit and ability to overcome sexual prejudice results in the largest settlement ever paid in a direct action suit.



Movie of the Week

Erin Brockovich