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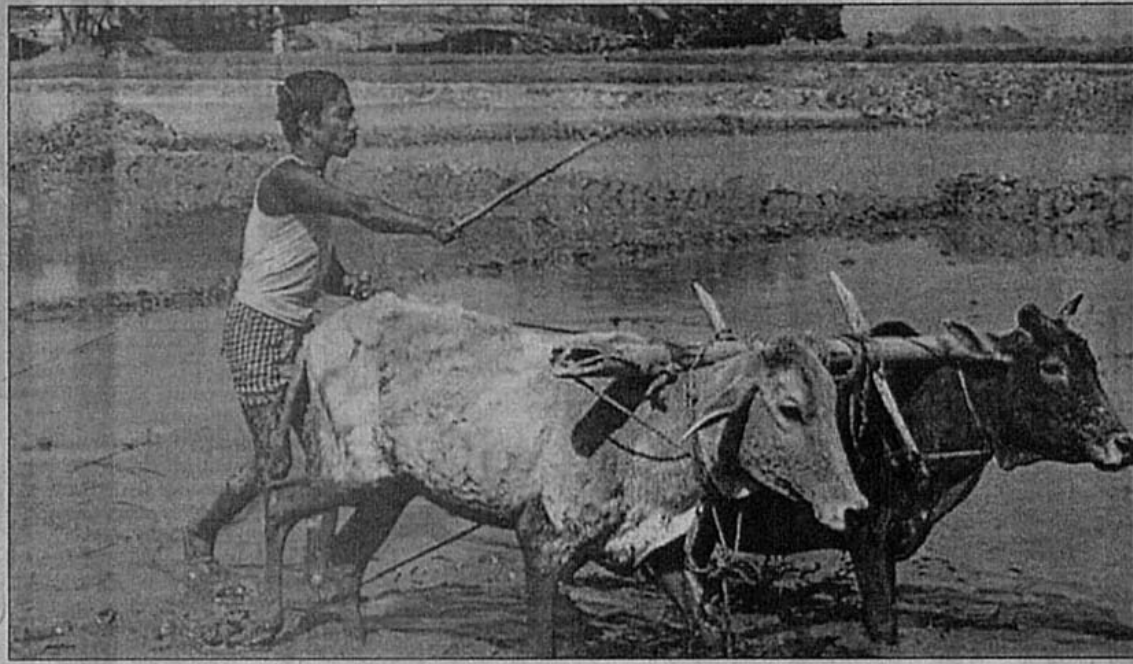


PHOTO: AFP

Politicians and 'Umra'

All our political leaders are officially reported to be praying for the welfare of the people and the country once they are in the Holy Land (I wonder about the adequacy of the Almighty's response). There is nothing wrong in it. But the Almighty is everywhere and He can be reached even without being in the Holy Land. As such, I would call upon our prime minister to postpone her 'Umra' visit and be with the 'monga' affected people at this point of time.

In the event of her itinerary being irrevocable, I would urge her to spend some time in the affected areas prior to her departure for Saudi Arabia.

Ahmed Ghani
Dhaka

Insurance for students

Lenon is not there on the campus. He along with his merit, brilliance, kidding and his smiling face are under a simple piece of land. The JU will not see his glass covered bright eyes any more. The department of business administration will not get his long helping hands back.

Lenon was the student of 10th batch there. A sharp student with a very good academic record. He got the stipend of the university for his outstanding performance. He was a smart, polite and brilliant student. During the strike he went to a break to Rangamati along with some of his friends. Could it be stopped? When he returned he had contracted a disease named cerebral malaria. No one knew, not even himself. It is such a disease that can kill a man within hours. After the diagnosis of the disease, he was alive for less than 100 hours. Tk 12 lakh was needed to have any chance, to have any miracle. But he didn't give us the time to collect it.

Here what I want is to point out the activities and responsibilities of the insurance companies. We have many so-called local or multinational insurance companies. They do us great "good" covering our life, health etc. In developed countries every university or even college student is under an insurance policy and it's mandatory. Both the university and insurance companies come together to help an ailing student as a fundamental duty. But things are very different here in Bangladesh.

I may be a nondescript person, but I have some dreams that those thousands of students have. We got

scared when we saw our friend dying without any hope. I hope the government and university authorities will bring all students under some kind of insurance coverage.

Sumon
JU, Dhaka

Stop renaming NU

I, on behalf of the general students of National University (NU), am requesting the government to think impartially about the matter before renaming the NU. If the government renames National University as Ziaur Rahman National University, it may not bear the name permanently as we have seen how the

National University itself has many problems in imparting quality higher education and providing standard facilities in comparison to other public universities in Bangladesh. In this position renaming will create more problems both in our classes and in our campuses.

Moreover, it would not be a wise decision to rename an old institution into another one. This renaming will definitely not brighten the image of the late president Ziaur Rahman. Rather it will create controversy among common people as well as common students.

Instead of renaming the NU, the government can establish a new

the Ahmadiyya community not only violates the tenets of Islam, but has also added a shameful chapter to our nation's history.

The government must take the culprits to task and recompense the victims for loss of property, pain and suffering.

Shomit Chowdhury
One-mail

Patriotism and objectivity

My attention has been drawn to Iftekharul Haque's letter of 1st November, under the caption "Patriotism and objectivity", wherein he

called intellectuals, but in a decent way with his feelings-- "We need to be a lot more patriotic to serve the country". The caption and the picture along with Mr. Alam's letter "Bangladesh my love" was simply splendid. The language of the picture echoed the feelings of Mr. Islam.

If Mr. Haque could understand the language of the picture he would not have been so harsh on our politicians. However, I must congratulate for the picture selection under the caption "Bangladesh my love". At the same time, picture selection under the caption "Patriotism and objectivity" seems to be

How long? It's a matter of shame that people like Mr. Hamid Karzai and Mr. Aeyad Allawi are ruling and representing the Muslims.

I've been observing that it is the Muslims who condemn 9/11, besides it's the Muslims who are the worst victims of all kinds of bestiality! It's high time Muslims did something to save themselves from such unending persecution.

Cantara Wali Ruhi, JU

Certificate tampering

In western countries before appointing a judge they consider the candidate's past records, character and eligibility. On the other hand, a person who has forged his certificate can be a judge in our country. It is shame for us.

Recently, the Supreme Court Bar Association boycotted the Chief Justice's Court for two months in the wake of appointment of 19 additional judges. According to them, they are not qualified. Every past government appointed the judges who were loyal to them. Why is it happening again and again? The main reason is lack of stringent rule or policy behind the appointment of judges in the High Court Division. A mere guideline is provided in Article 95 of our Constitution which contains that a person shall not be qualified for appointment as a judge unless he is a citizen of Bangladesh and (a) has for not less than ten years been an advocate of the Supreme Court or (b) has for not less than ten years held judicial office in the territory of Bangladesh. The President will appoint them. In the original constitution, it was mandatory in case of appointment of a judge to consult the Chief Justice. But this provision has been omitted by the 4th Amendment.

Bivut Tarafdar
Department of Law, DU

Government's inaction

The government's inaction against JCD is inexplicable. The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) is attacking innocent people one after another, but the government is doing nothing. The BNP seems to have forgotten that not the JCD, rather the people brought it to power. Moreover, the JCD should not be immune to law just because it has the support of the ruling party. If proper action were taken against the JCD cadres after their terrorist activities in the meeting of Bikalpa Dhara and Oikkomanchcha in

Muslims in trouble

The killing of 84 innocent Muslims in Thailand is another example of communal violence. Where is Mr. Bush, the so called harbinger of peace and humanity? Why is he quiet now? I wonder how can the Muslim countries and Islamic organisations like OIC and Arab League play a dumb role in this critical time when Muslims are on the edge? Will the Muslims keep condemning and grumbling only?

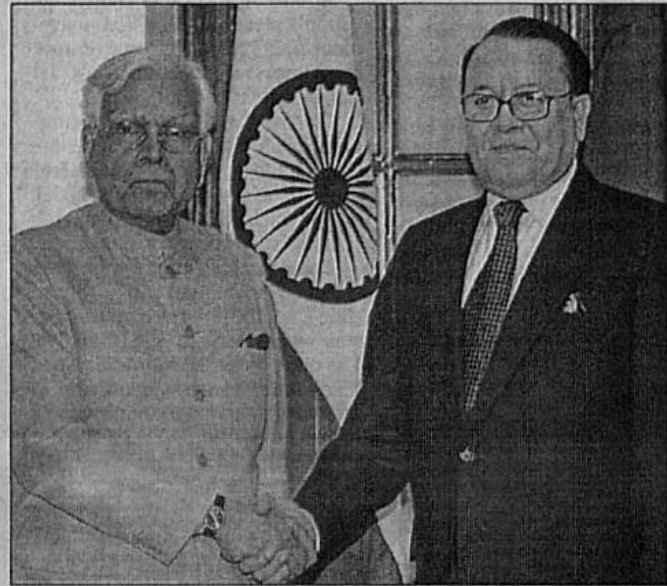


PHOTO: AFP

obliquely remarked in respect of our politicians, which is not desirable. He expressed in his letter, "Disregarding the vast majority of our politicians that come from the lowest crust of our society and academy, if notable intellectuals say something, it's time to listen. If intellectuals say Bangladesh is a den of terrorism, it's time to give the situation a look". Most probably, Mr. Haque failed to realise the sense of "international conspiracy" as mentioned by Mr. Islam & by passing such remarks he himself made a mountain out of a molehill.

I had the opportunity to go through Md. Shahidul Islam's letter of 27th October, which was very much comprehensive. Mr. Islam also blamed our politicians and so

unique, which reflected the negative outlook of the letter contents.

However, I appreciate the total view of Mr. Haque and in my opinion he should be more optimistic.

Md. Habib Mansur
Dhaka, Bangladesh

"Vulnerability of Muslims"

Mr. Barua's letter on your editorial about the massacre of Muslims in Thailand was a strange one, to say the least (DS November 1). The 80 plus people killed were all Muslims. Newspapers round the world, including those in India, have carried the news under the banner of Muslims being massacred selectively and brutally. They were killed after Muslims in the Thai province had protested about issues that related to repression against them by the Thai government. So how else could an editorial on this massacre be written without referring to those killed as Muslims? So much for Mr. Barua's strange letter.

The Thai government has been pursuing a policy of repression against its Muslim minority for quite some time now. The manner of the deaths in question is very reprehensible. Unfortunately, the Thai government has not been taken to task for this act by the international community in a manner that would have done justice for the crime committed. The initial reaction of Prime Minister Thaksin was very deplorable as he referred to those killed in a very derogatory manner. He of course later corrected his first reaction to this heinous crime, yet he has been allowed to go without much censure.

The Muslim countries have allowed this massacre to go without taking any action. There should have been condemnation of this gruesome act by all Muslim countries individually and at the OIC collectively. Unfortunately, the rest of the world that are non-Muslim also let this act go without condemnation. This is most unfortunate. The only plausible answer to this silence could be attributed to the fact that the Muslim world is too divided to stand up for its rights and the non-Muslim world could not care less when those being massacred are Muslims.

However, Mr. Thaksin will have to pay a price for this act of cruelty by his military under his watch. He was emerging as the natural leader of the ASEAN. His remarks after the incident and more importantly the poor record in protection of the Muslims by his government are certain to dampen the prospects of his leadership of the ASEAN keeping in mind that two major nations of this group, namely Indonesia and Malaysia, are Muslim nations.

Shahjahan Ahmed, Dhanmondi RA, Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

The Tigers

Once again the Tigers have let down their numerous supporters. Though they started quite brilliantly by knocking off the 'Black Caps' for 224 runs, they finished in the most humiliating way. Looking back at their dismal performance I tend to believe that they don't need any opponent to outplay them. In fact they outplay themselves. When the bowlers and fielders do their job rather immaculately, their batsmen make sure that they do just the opposite and throw away their wickets in the most irresponsible way. On the day, though rarely, the batsmen do a good job, their bowlers and fielders flop most miserably. So if one part of the team performs, the other part makes no mistake in destroying the gains. So the Tigers are not fighting any opponents, in reality they are fighting themselves. The team must act as one unit before they can achieve anything. If part of the team continues to 'assist' the opponents their job becomes much easier. The Tigers have a serious psychological problem. Who can help and how long is it going to take?

AFM Salimullah, One-mail

I have been reading all the comments about the Bangladesh

team in the newspapers. Every one of these has been negative. Some explicitly bashed the individual players, the management, and the coach. While I admit that our performance as a team has much to be desired, I must say that the deluge of vitriol only manifests our short memory and impatience. I would like to refer all of you to Mark Richardson's recent article in BBC Sports. We would do

well to heed his advice.

Blaming Whatmore is going to help the least, especially when the team performance improved after he took over. In the bowling department Bangladesh has made large strides. It was once taken for granted that a team would score 300 against us. Moreover, we were hardly able to take all ten wickets in a Test match. When Bangladesh went to Sri Lanka bats-

men were declaring their innings because the BD bowlers could not get them out. After Whatmore came in, we are consistently getting the opponents out. When it comes to batting, one-day batting has deteriorated. But we should not lose all hope. In Zimbabwe, we were pretty close to getting the series. In West Indies we came even closer to winning an ODI. Batting in Test matches, how-



PHOTO: AFP

Ailing Arafat

To me, and everyone among the 1.3 billion Muslims in the world, this news came from the blue. Yasser Arafat, the leader of Palestine, was reported to be fatally ill, but then we also received the news that his illness was not life-threatening.

We could manage to get a glimpse of his face on the TV screen as he was boarding a helicopter from Ramallah. He looked shattered and tired. He got out of his compound for the first time in the last two and half years. He is a president by all his grace and popularity, and by far the most unfortunate leader of a country who lives like a prisoner in his own motherland. The Israeli authorities claim audaciously that it is their sheer generosity that Arafat is still alive and not being haunted like many Hamas leaders or innocent Palestinians.

The fighting in the occupied land that has been going on since decades has cost lives of thousands of Palestinians. This fight for survival has given birth to many Islamic guerrilla groups which are tagged as terrorists by the US and Israel. The arc of evil formed by these two countries' administrations have dislocated the Palestinians from their own land.

This crisis has seen the emergence of a gifted and popular leader like Yasser Arafat. His stride towards a peaceful Palestine gave us a new hope. We started feeling optimistic that some day peace would be established in the West Bank. In our dreams we saw boys and girls chanting in joy in Gaza and West Bank... a mother who lost her son in the fighting finally has a smile in her face thinking that no mother would lose her son any more.

But if anything happens to Arafat... if he does not come back to Ramallah... the whole peace process is likely to be lost in the oblivion. Fighting is likely to break out all over Palestine. Fearing this hundreds of his supporters gathered at Ramallah to see him off... chanting at the top of their voices... we love you Arafat.

Let us realise that this is an impending crisis for the Muslim world. Arafat must come back to Palestine... for the sake of peace, for the sake of humanity and for the Muslim world. Let us hold our hands together and pray for his quick recovery. In every blink of our eyes... in every bit of our hearts... let's wish that Arafat comes back to Ramallah and peace finally makes its way into Palestine.

Md. Bashar Farhad
Mirpur, Dhaka

Rangpur, it would not have created chaos in Mymensingh and hurt students and teachers of Rajshahi University. If no action is taken against them, I believe the JCD will cause much damage to the BNP in future.

Dr. Mahboob Hossain
Niigata University of Pharmacy
Niigata, Japan

Judiciary in jeopardy

Bangladeshi judiciary is in an image crisis now. The total system of our judiciary has been politicised. It is alleged that most of the justices are appointed politically. Seniority and credentials are ignored in promotion and recruitment. A few months back, a senior justice was indicted for taking bribe. And now our legal

arena is in bedlam on the allegation of marks sheet tampering by an additional justice. He reportedly doctored his LLB exams marks sheet.

He has been withdrawn already to lessen our concern. Frankly speaking, our judiciary has been contaminated by nasty politicisation. The ruling party appoints their lackeys as judges, or that is the impression we get. The government should halt such kind of sordid practice. They should appoint some honest, decent, veteran and professional persons as justices in our apex judicial body.

I hope the government will take this matter seriously. Molla Mohammad Shaheen
Dept of English, DU