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Bangladesh and UNO

17 September, 2005 is the 35th anniversary of Bangladesh being given the membership of the United Nations Organisation as the 136th member country. After a nine month long war, it was freed on 16 December, 1971 from Pakistan. After the liberation, the new-born country Bangladesh had to face many problems, especially in the international forum. The US, China and the so-called Muslim solidarity loving Middle East countries didn't recognise Bangladesh instantly. Even the Maoist-China exercised 'veto' in the Security Council against the proposal for the membership of Bangladesh in the UNO in 1972.

Anyway, Bangladesh achieved its membership in 1974 and as the head of the government Sk. Mujibur Rahman delivered his speech in Bangla on 25 September, 1974 at the 29th General Assembly. It was a glory and victory, I think for a nation. After that, Bangladesh didn't have to look back. What's the position of today's Bangladesh in the international forums? It is a leading peacekeeper under the UNO. As a result, it is earning a huge amount of foreign currency as well as brightening its image.

The process of advancement and development started by Bangabandhu is still going on. We should acknowledge his contribution to this nation without any hesitation.

MAHNazim, University of Dhaka

Inclement Nature

The hurricane Katrina in New Orleans has shown us how small we are to Nature's power. From day one I am watching the warning. Water, wind, fire, --Nature has shown all its might in one instance. The world's superpower can boast of its power, but Nature surpassed it all.

I am a housewife. I have enough time to watch all the current happenings in the world. These things made me reflect on some issues.

Let's have a look at the recent bombings in London, Dhaka, Sylhet. The fanatics claimed that it is their duty to unite people, to show the right path, but I strongly feel that it is they who are tarnishing the image of Islam more than any other nation or the followers of different religions.

To me, belief is something personal. You can't impose it. It comes from within. Muslims, Christians, Jews, Buddhists all believe in their own religion. It is not right to claim that one's religion is better than others', and why they try to do so is beyond my understanding.

To the War Lord, to the Fanatics, to the Extremists, to the Terrorists, I have a point to make. You can try to destroy everything but you will not succeed.

Islam is a religion of peace and understanding; be an ideal Muslim - preach by being a leader!

In the recent years, we have seen the Gulf War, destruction of Iraq, wrath of Nature in the form of Katrina & Rita, the London bomb attacks, and also various terrorist attacks in Bangladesh - in every instance, after every crisis/ disaster, people have survived!

Our Creator has timed our lives and despite crisis / disaster / terrorism, we all will 'serve our time'. Syeda Maleka Parvin, Purana Pallan, Dhaka

Independence of Judiciary

I read the article "The mystery of the letter to Dr. Rice" by Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed.

In relation to a comment 'the lower courts (in Bangladesh) are under the authority of the executive and they lack independence' by US legislators he wrote, "the degree of political independence of the judiciary varies from country to country." He went on reiterating "and it is fascinating that the US legislators would take such keen interest in the working of Bangladesh's lower courts!" He drew an example, "let us recall that in 2000, it was not the American voters, but the US Supreme Court which in a 5 to 4 decision installed George W. Bush as the President of the United States."

In his cheerfulness to oppose

ture in Bangladesh is not wholly foolproof, rather it is very much flawed. And if we adopt the ideas of the developed countries in this regard, we can update the process massively. If the group could hold the conference, Bangladesh could get technical expertise to hold the next general election smoothly. Molla Mohammad Shaheen, Dept of English, DU

Savage amusement!

We have been watching lots of sports through the cable channels. We love to watch live cricket, football, lawn tennis, golf and some other games and sports. But when you happen to watch certain bizarre activities called sports you might get appalled. Furthermore, when you watch wrestling, awe-some and brutal actions on the stage might upset you.

More appalling is the fact that, nowadays, you'll see some women wrestlers barely clothed, fighting with their gigantic male opponents! Isn't it savage amusement? Rafiqul Islam Rime, Agrabad, Chittagong

Fifteen years of democracy

Our forefathers fought for liberation because they wanted us to live in a free and democratic country. In reality, the democracy remained elusive for a long period. Finally, it triumphed in 1990. Since then we have plucked some fruits of it. At least once in five years politicians have to face the people. And the verdict of mass people can be very ruthless, as both the major political parties learned the hard way. They learned that no matter what they show on TV, people are not fools.

They know. Another fruit of democracy is that newspapers, a pillar of democracy, are a lot freer in expressing their views and publishing news.

However, a lot of expectation still remains unfulfilled, which makes the achievements look small:

1. Parliament remains ineffective because of opposition boycott. The government shows little interest in creating an environment for their participation; the opposition also seems more comfortable in avoiding the duty voters have given them.

2. Politicians still depend on thugs and goons to further their political goals. It is not clear why they do so despite the fact that it is mass people who vote them to power.

3. The black laws like Section 54 still remain a big hindrance on the way to asserting people's rights.

4. An independent judiciary is a must for proper functioning of democracy. Despite repeated promises by political parties, the judiciary has not been separated from the executive body.

5. Electronic media is not yet free enough in their broadcasting. Since they reach a wider audience than print media, they should be allowed to do their job without interference.

Ashish Ahsan, Uttara, Dhaka

Seats in halls

Being a student of the country's premier university, I am not at all satisfied due to the absence of adequate facilities at the university. Since the beginning of my university life I have been watching students facing seat crisis due to student politics. Recently, the hall authorities have taken some time-bound measures to solve the problem of seat allocation. The young house tutors are searching the vacant rooms and they are allotting the rooms to bona fide students. It is a praise worthy move, but it is not an unmixed blessing for all. Due to the untimely

visit by house tutors at their respective floors and negligence of hall officials, some genuine students have been deprived of seats. The illegal occupants are not allowing the students to enter the rooms. Some of them have been assaulted by the political goons presenting themselves as students.

Is the university not in a position to take stern action against violators of law? In most of the cases the criminals are supported by the student wing of the ruling party. When will this come to an end?

Bazlur Rahman, Dhaka University

Lawlessness

To run a human society law is essential. That is why we see no civilised country running without law. It is needless to say, as a civilised country we have laws in every sector. But the people of our society are violating the laws. Consequently, our society is going to turn into a lawless one. Muhammad Shahabuddin, Mirpur-6, Dhaka

Political double standard and terrorism

I applaud your newspaper for the ample coverage you gave to the story regarding the opinions of the prominent Asian Islamic scholars. Needless to say that I completely agree with them.

Terrorism and extremism are not inherent in Islam, as some people want us to believe. This is a very recent phenomenon. Worldwide mass media is throwing the world events on our face every day and what we see is not pretty. Especially the Muslims all over the world are finding that most of them are not in control of their own destinies. Most of them are governed by corrupt, with a few exceptions, governments, who do not show any concern for the well being of their own citizens. Social injustice is rampant and the mounting undercurrent of frustration is giving way to extremism.

Until we stop glorifying the system, which endorses this prevalent idea of social Darwinism, we will not be able to understand this phenomenon of terrorism and extremism. That is true, both in national and international arena. Only fairness and justice can address this scar of violent extremism.

M.A. Islam, US

Is it nationalism?

Some days ago in a dinner party with the Bangladesh cricket team in Sri Lanka, our state minister for sports quoted from a speech given by Field Marshall Ayub Khan (during the 1965 Indo-Pak war) to inspire the Bangladeshi cricket team where there was a dialogue "Pakistan Payendabad". Now in our country the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is in power and our honourable minister is a lawmaker of that party. From the name of this party it is clear to us that the motto of the BNP is to uphold nationalism.

The movement, engineered by the great minds of the then East Pakistan, to oust the military government headed by Ayub Khan is a milestone in our history of independence. But is it the definition of Nationalism that a minister of this free nation would quote from a man's speech who was one of the masterminds of Bengalee bashing? This speech thus has revealed the deviation of our leaders from their own political motto.

This is not the first time; earlier we saw in the newspapers that the

Biman strike



My grandfather passed away on Monday and my uncle left for Dhaka from the United States with his family to attend his funeral. Due to the Biman strike he was stranded in Dubai for an



extra 24 hours. Would you please ask the government and Biman officials about the painful experience they are delivering to people?

I understand that both the

parties have issues, but shouldn't there be some guidelines for such service industries to stay out of "hartal/strike"? I bet this is another reason for us to get such bad name around the

world. May Allah bless us. That's all we can pray for, because our leaders are not helping us. Avictim, One-mail

ministers and the big-wigs of the ruling party made this type of statements several times, even while conversing with foreign guests.

If our national leaders think like that, then how can we expect anything from them for the benefit of

protest against government neglect that has let the local roads become a sea of mud. By planting paddy in the road, they made their point in an amusing manner, while avoiding inconvenience to the local population, destruction of property or disruption to the local

exports, these strikes serve no purpose but only enforce the rule of hired thugs and demonstrate the opposition's power to destroy.

As much as I disagree with Communist philosophy, I am forced to ask; who would you trust more to shoulder the responsibility of leading the country a party that plans its tactics with imagination and flair, for maximum impact with minimum inconvenience to the public, or the dinosaurs with a one-track record, whose response to every situation is hartal? Raquib Shamsad, London

A rational voice

I congratulate Athar Ali, the commentator and ex-cricketer for his courageous role in the commentary and discussion sessions. I think many of our cricket lovers will appreciate his rational voice at the international level. We feel proud of him. Thank you, Athar, Dr. Mohsin U. Ahmed, Crescent Road, Dhaka

Recognise them

I would like to draw your attention to the letter titled "Indian TV shows" (DS 9/9/05). The writer pointed out some limitations of Bangladeshi TV channels. Actually the main drawback is "our mentality". Recently, the private TV channels of our country have come up with many talent shows. Among them ntvis doing well.

And we are watching such talents like Beauty, Rumi, Mehrab. Obviously, they can compete with Indian talents. Why are we not responding well to this programme? Because, we don't love our country. We don't love anything local.

Let's love our country & give good response to the good things produced here. We have to have confidence in our ability. Cadet Elias, Faujdharhat Cadet College, Chittagong

Abolition of death penalty

Bertrand Russell, the philosopher, said in his book "Power" that the clear difference between the human being and the animal is instinctive rationality, by which the former creates dominion over the whole animal kingdom and the others. Despite instinct, sensitivity and rationality in human beings to date we have been wrangling over whether to abolish death penalty for good - an issue that deserves immediate attention.

Death is an inevitable reality of life-- for both the biped and the quadruped. But, what is repellent and creates repugnance is in spite of our intellectual fecundity and profundity, we, in the name of justice, deliver the verdict of ending a life. So, the moral or moot question is "Does anybody have any right to sentence a criminal to death when s/he can't create a life? This is cruelty that we don't notice even in the animals, why should it be continuing in human societies for the sake of justice?"

Life is a very valuable possession in the animated universe. If we look back to the rudimentary stage of civilisation, we become awestruck to peruse the horror of decapitation in France before the Renaissance.

Presently, Amnesty International is running a campaign to abolish this noxious practice in the name of justice. They need support from the people of intellect and intelligence. Let's support their campaign and stand by their logical demand. Sulav Chowdhury, London, England

'Mollah Barir Bou'

Our cinema is going from bad to worse day by day. "Molla Barir Bou" is a good movie that will help change the impression about our films. Perhaps, the viewers are now ready to come back to the deserted halls. The charming story of the film is picked up from village life of our country. The mischief of the so-called 'Molla' who has no knowledge except fanatic sentiments perturbed all. His home is the seat of an oppressive regime.

The film is a flicker of hope for the industry as a whole. Abdullah-al-Mujahid, Dhaka University



the country? Kamrul Hasan, BUET

A unique protest

I am writing to commend the CPB on their imaginative and worthy

economy. Their cause and means of protest deserve widespread publicity and recognition.

Designed to cause maximum disruption to people's lives, to weaken the economy and damage

Tourism



In the article "Tourism", placed September 7th, Sujon Ghosh expresses a few widely accepted, though false statements. I am a tourist from Holland. I have travelled 25 countries and this is my second visit to Bangladesh.

Tourists aren't cattle, which you can lead over every road you want as long as it is nicely paved. The modern tourist is spoiled and knows what he wants. The modern tourist has a lot of demands and wants the whole package. A lot of countries make the same mistake as Sujon Ghosh and wonder why the tourists aren't coming. To make your tourist policy work you have to, before all, do research to what visitors want. Bangladesh has the

longest sea-beach. That's nice but who cares? The question should be "Why do tourists visit the beach and can we offer the same or better?" "Why do tourists take a 15-day trip through India and not through Bangladesh?"

I'll give you a few hints: 1) India can be reached by direct flight from most European countries, Bangladesh can't. 2) India promotes itself through media and stands, Bangladesh doesn't. 3) Travel agencies have trips to India in their shop window, not to Bangladesh.

Conclusion: Do research prior to investment and save yourself a lot of money. Twin van Leeuwen, Arnhem, Holland

This is not the first time Dr. Ahmed had tried to smokescreen the issues. The fact is that persons such as Senator Kennedy are a genuine and trusted friend of Bangladesh. How can one forget the very positive role played by the Senator in our War of Liberation in 1971? Air Cdre Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury (Retd), Baridhara, Dhaka