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Words and bloodshed



The game of bloodletting has been a very common spectacle every now and then in Iraq. Nowadays, whenever we look at the newspaper, we find news of killings led by militants. Words like carnage, genocide, violence and suicide bombings have become very common and we are always being brought into contact with them. It seems as if these words have been coined only to be used for all such conflicts as Shia vs.

Sunni, Israeli vs. Palestinian, and Gaza vs. Hamas, and so forth.

It is pretty much true that behind most of the conflicts that have been taking place, the role of the United States has in some way or the other been noticeable.

And Americans, one suspects, consider themselves the only people who have the right to judge any person or any country. The current president of the US only

knows how to lead the world to bloodshed in the name of making the world a safer place.

I know this letter will not help change anything that is taking place in Iraq. Many well-known columnists have written innumerable articles but the results of their efforts have been insignificant.

H. M. Abu Hasnat (Razib)
On e-mail

Liberation War Museum

The Muktijoddha Jadughar or Liberation War Museum established through private initiative symbolises the glorious traditions set by our Liberation War. Housed in small premises at Segunbagicha, the museum has upheld the supreme sacrifices of the freedom fighters, intellectuals and unsung millions. Due to paucity of space, the valuable documents as well as the countless memorabilia at the museum are gradually being damaged and cannot be displayed properly. The small courtyard also is inadequate for any large gatherings such as seminars, symposia and cultural events.

The caretaker government has on a number of occasions vowed to uphold the glorious spirit of the Liberation War and acknowledged the immense contribution of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The government received praise and appreciation from all quarters for such bold and courageous decisions.

During the recent drive against illegal occupations, the government was successful in reclaiming many buildings across the capital city. The museum deserves better premises. I would, therefore, request the government to lease out the spacious building at Gulshan, previously illegally occupied by former political secretary to the former prime minister, to the Liberation War Museum. Such a gesture will enable the museum to overcome many problems and would be treasured by the freedom loving people of our country for many years to come.

Shamim Ahmed
On e-mail

Braveheart Siraj-ud Dowla

Though 250 years have passed, the Battle of Palashi has hardly lost its significance. Still, it is a surprising matter that we, as a nation, have forgotten the black day of our national history and our unsung hero, Nawab Siraj-ud Dowla.

Can we forgive ourselves for our indifference? The anniversary of the Battle of Palashi is a day to be observed with grief, but neither the government nor the media took any initiative to observe 250th anniversary of this day with due respect and attention.

So many events have taken place within this span of time. The British Raj foisted itself on India through the then Bengal province and also quit, being forced by the turmoil of the post-war period. Pakistan and India became two different nations.

And, finally, present-day Bangladesh arose on December 16, 1971, after a tortuous War of Liberation against Pakistan. Whatever the national politics of Bangladesh, the Battle of Palashi has always injected life blood into us through reminding us of the

consequences of disunity, conspiracy and internal conflicts.

Bangladesh is now going through a transitional period. We are at a crossroads. For this reason, we must learn to evaluate the Battle of Palashi in a proper manner, and should bestow respect on our first unsung hero Nawab Siraj-ud Dowla, a defeated king but a courageous braveheart.

Rizwan-ul Huq
English Discipline KU

Impediments to teaching

Teaching is a noble profession. But it was once a much neglected vocation in our society. No one wanted to come to this profession.

But its importance is increasing day by day as our government has been providing the teachers with more and more facilities. So many of us who are really qualified are inclined to taking up this career but at present cannot. The reason is that when a non-government school teacher retires from service, the post remains vacant. The authorities of the schools cannot appoint any teacher to that post as they do not have approval for such action. And they need a clearance certificate from the Director Of Secondary and Higher Education Directorate.

Moreover, the authorities concerned think that each and every non-government institution has more teachers than students, according to the sections system in such an institution. But if they would

kindly investigate the matter, they would, of course, know the fact that there is no school in our country where teachers are more in number than students according. Schools in the city areas can appoint teachers on a contract basis, which is quite impossible for schools in the rural areas. It may be mentioned here that a lot of teachers who are engaged in many educational institutions all over the country are not being included in the M.P.O. because they do not have approval for additional sections. As a result, they are suffering from financial crisis and job security.

I cannot but mention here that the school where I serve as an assistant teacher is no doubt a renowned school in Dohar Thana. In this school, there are about 1700

students while teachers number only twenty one. So how is it possible for us to teach so many students? Also, four teachers are going to be retire very soon. If the school authorities cannot appoint teachers to those vacant posts, how will the school run? I think this situation is common all over the country and if it continues in future, the true aim of education will be hampered greatly. If that happens, how will the nation prosper?

The authorities concerned should, therefore, take immediate steps to solve the problem.

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Urea fertiliser price

Through your esteemed daily, I wholeheartedly congratulate the advisor in charge of the ministry of industries for realising the problems relating to urea fertilizer as well as those faced by their producers and for taking steps to refix the price of urea. Over the last ten years or so, all the fertiliser producing factories have reached a state of collapse. This latest step will save the urea factories and BCIC. In the name of subsidy to farmers, the price was fixed at Tk.4800 per ton. Neither did the farmers get the subsidy nor was the factory reimbursed the difference. All the benefits went to the middlemen. Such action by the authorities converted the BCIC, one of the best corporations, to one of the worst.

References to urea prices in India and Myanmar have been made. The government of India has been providing subsidy to farmers through a scheme called Retention Pricing Scheme (RPS). A factory price commonly known as retention price is fixed for products manufactured by a unit based on prescribed efficiency norms with regard to capacity utilisation and consumption of raw materials and utilities. The pricing mechanism allows for a post-tax return of 12% on net worth. The excess of the retention price over the net realisation from selling at the controlled price to the farmer (consumer price-distribution margin) is reimbursed to the manufacturers by the government of India to both SOE and private manufacturers.

Fixation of price at Tk.7000 per ton i.e. at cost price will not save the urea manufacturers. It is really a bold and correct decision. The producers should be allowed some profit either in the form of price or subsidy from the government of Bangladesh so that they can carry out maintenance and replacement of worn out equipment. Urea manufacturing is a complicated, sophisticated and very high-pressure technology. Severe fatal accidents have occurred in different parts of the world. Fortunately, we have good safety records. But prolongation of the present condition may cause such fatal accidents.

There are two urea factories. One is Natural Gas Fertilizer Factory, Fenchuganj, Sylhet, and the other one is Polash Urea Factory. The yearly production of these factories is only 2.6 lac ton. The processes of both these factories are obsolete. These types of factories were closed many years ago considering wastage of precious energy. Our valuable gas is wasted. It is, in the interest of the nation, necessary to close down the factories and install new factories, like CUFL, JFCL or Kafco.

Using the infrastructure, a new factory in each site with an annual capacity of 5,17,000 MT at a cost less than half the price of a new factory can be built. In Indonesia, six factories of the same design, capacity and processes were installed in the government Sector. Their design and engineering cost became zero after the first factory. So, by installing new factories in our sites, surplus electric power can be supplied to the national grid or private customers. The two factories in question are also

polluting both Kushiara and Sitalakha rivers.

A very bad decision was made by the last government in prohibiting manufacture and marketing of single super phosphate (SSP) in the private sector on the plea that farmers were cheated over DAP and TSP. This was an unwise move. In India, more than 6.5 million tons of SSP are produced and marketed as powder. China, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand and many



other countries have been using SSP in huge quantities. A few entrepreneurs submitted proposals but could not proceed because of this unreasonable and unrealistic prohibition. The technology of SSP is simple, not capital intensive; and low-grade phosphate rocks can be easily used. High-grade rock phosphate for manufacturing phosphoric acid, DAP and TSP has depleted all over the world and as such has become very expensive. SSP is the most economical alternative.

Private entrepreneurs should be allowed to manufacture and market the same in the form of powder. SSP is not only a phosphatic fertilizer but also contains other plant nutrients like sulphur and calcium which do not exist in other forms of phosphatic fertilizers. This is a very good fertiliser for Rabi crops and vegetables. Introduction of SSP will reduce the consumption of urea and will increase productivity of agro-products.

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8X2

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