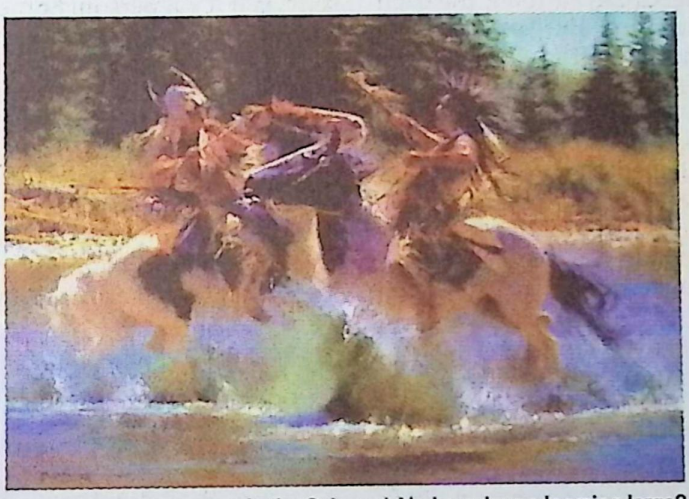
Brothers against Brothers

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The gruesome event that took place on February 25 2009 at the Darbar Hall of BDR and its surrounding areas have numbed Bangladeshis with shock. While the inhabitants of Dhaka panicked at the knowledge of being in such close proximity to the carnage and to be living in what had become one of the most unsafe places in the country, Bangladeshis living abroad were in a another state of anxiety for their loved ones in the city. All they could do was to keep making frantic phone calls or emails for reassurances and consolation. As in Singapore, we do not have one single Bangladeshi channel and so we had no clue what was really happening. We felt like birds in cages with no one to open the doors.



Is the Cain and Abel syndrome looming large?

It seems that after 38 years of emancipation, we have proved to be slaves of corruption which lie within us -- in our own hearts and souls. Our question arises that in this century, is the Cain and Abel syndrome still looming large amongst us? Cain and Abel were the two brothers who brought the beginning of fratricide, or brother killing his own brother. The Pilkhana mass murder happened because the beast within man was unleashed, the beast that thirsts for another's blood. This frenzied hatred and animal-like predatory instinct left so many men killed, so many women widowed and so many children orphaned and that too, in one single event.

The land of Bangladesh is to be compared with a mother in the family who has been ill treated, looted and dehumanized whenever an opportunity presented itself. Up until now, we had looked away from all these incidents, terming them as destructions of invaders from other lands. But what about this one in our own homeland by our own people? Are these the same children who would not think twice to lay down their lives for the emancipation of our motherland in 1971? Are these the same boys within the uniforms?

The brutality has made us shiver within our souls. It is a war where a brother is killing his own brother for some minor cause . Whatever the cause may be, it cannot overlook the cause of humanity.

Once again we need a Messiah -- but this Messiah lives within us and shall come from within too. There is an eternal war going on between the path of creation and the ways of destruction in our souls which is something we need to ponder on. At this time of devastation within and without, our national unity is our only hope. This is the time when we should do some soul-searching. This is not the time for bloodshed, but the time to rebuild our future so that we leave some space for our future generation. As it is, we are already fighting for our survival against the degradation of global environment.

It is not a war against external enemies --- it is a war we need to wage against our internal enemy and that is the confusion of the necessity of existence in this world. Our own souls need to be purged of this alienated foreignness (of our minds) while living and nurturing our hearts in our own land. Love towards our motherland and responsibility, as well as responsible attitudes can be the chemotherapy with which we may be able to cure this cancer of our soul.

The war of liberation has not ended. Once again, it has only begun but this time only it is on a different issue -- this time it is for the liberation of the soul. This war has to be fought and won against our enemy which sits inside us. It is more venomous than hemlock, which is diffusing within us every single hour and day to make us unconscious of the changes around us; if we fail to win this war, then that day is not far off when it will make the entire nation numb , too numb to wage a war against the enemy which may destroy and remove our names from the human list of the world and make our existence a chapter in the pages of history books. ■