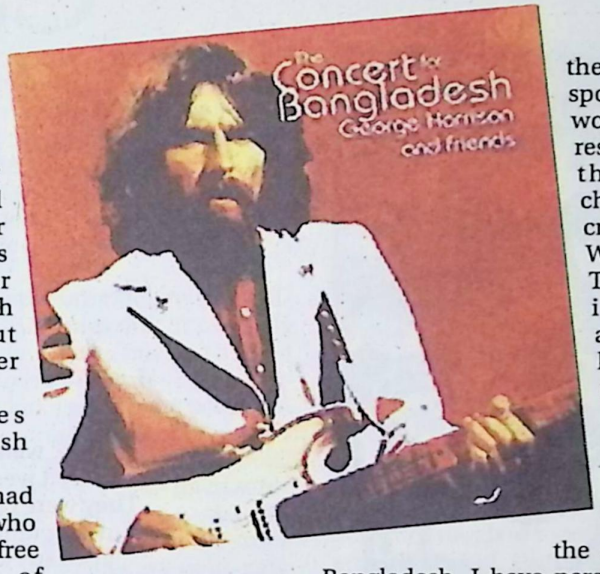
Blowing in the wind

Asrar Chowdhury



IN 1971 Bangladesh was created from one of the most brutal genocides in the history of mankind. In the 266 days of our Liberation War three million people sacrificed their lives to create a ten-letter word Bangladesh. This translates to 7.83 lives per minute. And still Bangladesh stood strong to come out victorious on 16 December 1971.

1971 therefore defines Bangladesh. And Bangladesh carries on defining 1971.

During those 'dark days' we had friends in the outside world who stood beside us in our cause to free ourselves from the yoke of domination. One such initiative was the Concert for Bangladesh. Two children of Bangladesh, Pandit Ravi Shankar and (The Late) Ustad Ali Akbar Khan approached (The Late) George Harrison of the Beatles to explore the possibility of a concert. If George could give a nod, then this would be the first time music would be used as weapon to fight a war on a global scale.

And so the stage was set at Madison Square Garden of New York for Sunday the first day of August 1971 where the friendly people of the USA extended a warm hand and joined in our struggle for freedom. *Bangla Dhun* in the grandeur of the *Bhatiyali* spoke and cried to the rest of the world. The rest of the world responded the way they knew in the *Love and Peace* that characterised probably the most creative decade in the history of Western music, the 1960s.

The Concert for Bangladesh was influential in creating awareness on what was actually happening in the newly founded State of Bangladesh. It was the first time music made a difference in such a cause. Unfortunately, even after 38 years, as a Nation we still have not said thanks to the organisers of the Concert for Bangladesh. I have personally raised this issue many times before and will continue to do so until the *winds change* their course.

On the eve of the Third Anniversary of Star Campus, with whom I am honoured to be associated, I pray this *campus generation* dawns Winds of Change by initiating an effort to 'officially' thank the musicians of Concert for Bangladesh for what they did for us in 1971. Can they do it? Yes they can and they will. *'The answer my friend, is blowing in the wind'!*

(The writer is a Faculty in Economics at Jahangirnagar and North South Universities)

Free movement on Dhaka roads

Rabeya Rowshin

I wish to see a Dhaka where there is no traffic jam. I wish to see a Dhaka where every road and route is well maintained and people follow the laws. The public transportation system will not overflow with passengers. It takes exactly 15 minutes and not 45 minutes to reach a place, which is 15 minutes away. We need to take the advice of experts on traffic control to ensure that thousands of hours in our national life are not wasted.



PHOTO: STAR