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Surrender sites of Pakistan army

After long nine months of genocide, rapes, arsons, loots, plunders and a short 13 days' 'war', Pakistan Army Eastern Commander Lt. General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi ('Tiger') surrendered unconditionally on behalf of his 93 thousands war criminals and country at a public ceremony at Dhaka Ramna Race Course (now named Suhrawardy Uddan) to the Bangladesh and Indian joint command on 16 December 1971. Since the end of Second World War it is the largest surrender of any army. Also, this is one of the fastest surrender in military history.

However, 1971 surrender of Pakistan Army in Bangladesh was eventful. As a military custom each Pakistan army division, Air, Navy, para military forces surrendered separately after General Niazi. Outside Dhaka before and after 16 December, in order to save life many Pakistani units (division to company) surrendered to the advancing local joint command at public ceremonies by laying down their weapons/ badges of rank and by signing the instruments of surrender. For communication problem surrender of some units were delayed. A few units ignored the surrender of General Niazi. Some Bihari (paramilitary) gangs and other elements were active in pockets of Dhaka (Mirpur), North Bengal and Chittagong Hill Tracts until February 1972 and after 'negotiation' surrendered their arms.

Pakistan Army 107 Brigade commander Brigadier Malik Hayat Khan with his four thousand soldiers surrendered at a public ceremony in Khulna on 17th December. Chittagong people witnessed Pakistani surrender on 18 December. Four thousand Pakistani soldiers surrendered at Naogaon on 20 December.

Construction works of 'Shadhinata Stambha' monument complex has restarted at the historic Suhrawardy Uddan to commemorate the 7th March speech of Bangabandhu and 16th December capitulation of the occupation Pakistan Army. We would



request the government to identify and mark all Pakistan Army public surrender sites in Bangladesh. From India and other countries all surrender document copies/ photographs/ videos can be collected and displayed. Living witnesses should also be video recorded.

These public surrender sites will serve as the graveyards of Pakistan Army's unsuccessful ambition to permanently colonise Bangladesh through a genocide.

M Emad
Oxford, UK

Susang Durgapur

Susang Durgapur situated in one of the districts of Bangladesh called Netrakona is 182 km from Dhaka. It is a genuine natural splendour of woodland river & hills where the Garos and other tribals reside. One can easily take pleasure in boating in the river, seeing the green bushes around, climbing hills etc. Wild elephants at times comes from the jungle. However, going to Susang Durgapur is bothersome for both the domestic and overseas tourists because of the communication problem in this area. Nonetheless, especially during winter, Durgapur is crowded with many tourists.

It is my firm conviction that development of the communications system and availability of transport including adequate number of hotels, motels, guest houses etc could certainly lead to the arrival of many local and international tourists in Susang Durgapur. It is such an exotic place! As a matter of fact, Susang Durgapur can be one of the most attractive destinations for the visitors.

Shohag Mustafij

MBA (Strategic & International Management)

University of Dhaka

HM Ershad

I was surprised when I found the former President Hussain Mohammad Ershad all of a sudden transformed himself from a poet to a columnist. His article 'Untold story of Grameen Bank' gave me new information about the contribution of late General M.A. Munim, his wife Prof. Ayesha Akter Munim and even a new insight on President Ershad.

President Ershad suffered a lot for his decisions and actions. As a poet, he must have been inspired by his sufferings to write more poems.

Dennis D. Datta
Mirpur, Dhaka

Rickshaw issue

The logic is simple. Eliminating rickshaws in Dhaka city would mean less people would migrate to Dhaka from the rural areas. This would be an effective way of controlling the population of Dhaka. This would also mean less crime in Dhaka as well as less traffic jam. As far as the rural areas go, the government will have to decentralize and develop the other cities in Bangladesh to create more opportunities for the people. Let's all move forward and try to keep up with the rest of the world.

Aminur Rahim
New DOHS
Mohakhali, Dhaka

Nizami's fatwa

A couple of days earlier, there were news reports in some Bangla newspapers on Mr. Matiur Rahman Nizami, Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. He is reported to have given a Fatwa, 'religious ruling' that the present government's initiative to try the war criminals are, in fact, acts of anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic kind. We do not know wherefrom he brought these rulings of Islam for the people of Bangladesh, but we do hear the interpretations of the Holy Quran which rather emphasize severe punishments for rapists, arsonists, killers, unpatriotic citizens and collaborators who work against the motherland. In Islam, the people who work against their homeland, support the occupiers and invite the invaders are "non-believers".

During the war of liberation in 1971, the present listed war criminals were directly involved in all the above crimes. They raped our women, they burnt many houses, they killed Mukti Bahini men, they actively collaborated with the Pakistani army, they helped locate the houses of patriotic liberation forces to loot and burn for which they deserve "capital punishment" according to the Islamic law.

By delivering this sermon Mr. Matiur Rahman Nizami has, in fact, misinterpreted Islam and tried to mislead the Muslims. I demand that Mr. Nizami quote the verses of Islam wherein it has been said that the trial of war criminals

amounts to an anti-Islamic activity. If he fails to quote he should be charged with misinterpretation of the Holy Quran or Islam because these are the people who are actively helping the destruction of Islam in the name of Jihad against infidels in Afghanistan, Pakistan and in other Muslim countries.

They do not want our sons and daughters to get modern education. They support education centres wherefrom they get easy recruits for their so-called Islamic Jihad. While Allah, the Merciful, Himself made education "Farz" or compulsory for all men and women, they support destruction of girl schools like Swat in Pakistan.

Let us all be cautious about these people to save Islam and Muslims all over the world.

Shafiqul Islam, NY

Babri Mosque case

It is so horrible and sad to learn that Babri Mosque was demolished at the order of top BJP leaders in India, back in 1992. This news was revealed as an Indian newspaper was able to publish it on 23 November, 2009, before the Liberhan Commission was brought to Indian Parliament.

The issue became so hot as Indian parliamentarians were excited while they were discussing this very matter in parliament, when its winter session was on. Those learned parliamentarians demanded submission of Liberhan Commission report to parliament as quickly as possible.

The report was later submitted, but no action has been taken against those perpetrators yet.

Shame on those people who were involved in Babri Mosque demolition.

Mahmud Ali Kabir
Ex-BSS correspondent
Social worker
Gopalganj

Simply inhuman!

Anyone visiting our lower courts both criminal and civil will find number of people including old, disabled, children and some mothers with their infants crowded in the open porch (veranda) of the courtrooms, anxiously awaiting their turns of hearing inside the court chambers. They have to remain standing for hours. Some tired of standing sit on the dirty floors to lessen their fatigue. One can see the pain and frustration on their faces. But they all have assembled there seeking justice. This looks so pathetic

Notebooks

One of the obstacles that is seen in the creative education system is guidebook and notebook. The main purpose of creative education system is to enhance creative thinking among the students. This education system mitigates the sole dependence of the students on memorizing. But if the guidebooks and notebooks are published the students are more likely to memorize the answers from those books. The teachers will also prepare question papers from such books. As a result, creativity among the students will not develop. Due to the existence of guidebooks and notebooks, the students study the textbooks very little. The students also try to pass through adopting unfair means. Realizing the truth, the government took the decision to ban guidebooks and notebooks. But publishers and sellers filed a writ petition against the government order. The High Court dismissed it and upheld the order. After that the Supreme Court stayed the High Court verdict following their petition. Getting the opportunity they published guidebooks and notebooks.

On 10 December, the SC upheld the HC verdict. The verdict is very significant and crucial for our education system.

So, I think the SC verdict is certainly praiseworthy and hope that the government will implement it and gradually ban guidebooks and notebooks at higher levels of education.

Md. Fuad Hasan
Sirajganj



FIROZ QAZI / DRINKNEWS

Crowded cities

The country is turning into the land of the rich and the poor. Lots of people move to the towns every day leaving of the villages. As a result, the cities are getting crowded. But though they come to town in search of food and work for living, sometimes their dreams are not fulfilled.

We have to bring the whole thing within the purview of a long term plan that will stop the town-ward swirl of people and create better living conditions in the cities.

Bipra Kanungo
Momin Road, Chittagong

Attention: Apollo Hospital

In the past, following consultation, a patient used to get the prescription directly from the doctor at the Apollo Hospital. Patient had the choice either to purchase the medicine from Apollo's Pharmacy or to buy outside. But now Apollo doctors send all prescriptions through their Local Area Network to their Pharmacy Billing.

There are only two counters at the Pharmacy Billing with computers working at a snail's pace for the thousands of patients visiting Apollo every day. As a result, while my wife spent hardly ten minutes with the Consultant reviewing the test reports, I had to stand in the queue one and a quarter hour to get a printout of the prescription (for purchase

outside). Apollo could at least set up a separate counter to provide prescription printouts for those patients who want to buy medicines outside.

Engr. ABM Nurul Islam
Gulshan-2, Dhaka

Winter is here

Winter, the second last season & obviously the coldest season sets in again as per the rule of the nature and is greeting us with its little fog at night & dawn as it is the outset yet. We have been getting the indication of winter from the last few days. As a season of pithas it is second to none. Different kinds of handmade cakes are made by our women, especially in rural areas to get the full taste of the winter. Date juice adds more pleasure to that. Besides, lots of colourful guest birds also come to Bangladesh with the commencement of winter, as if winter invites the birds to stay for a while (two months). However, the winter of Bangladesh is much more comfortable undoubtedly than the winter of other countries as we do not have snow & ice.

In spite of this, the poor people who cannot afford to buy winter clothes are the great sufferers. We should extend our helping hand to them. Thus, we can enjoy winter.

Mohammad Zia-ul-Haque
Eng. department
International Islamic
University Ctg.

Triumph of judiciary

The Supreme Court verdict on Bangabandhu murder case has debunked Gladstone's adage "Justice delayed, justice denied". We had to wait for long 34 years to get justice. Many nefarious machinations were taken to scupper the process of the trial. The Indemnity Ordinance was the first step in this regard. The villainous politicians were very active to save the self-declared killers of Bangabandhu that was very unfortunate for our country. Ultimately their attempts did not succeed ultimately. The apex court of Bangladesh played its due role boldly and responsibly. We cannot but genuflect to the Supreme Court of Bangladesh for its landmark judgement. Now, the government should take necessary steps to execute the verdict as soon as possible. Besides, it is imperative for the incumbent government to make diplomatic endeavours to extradite the convicts who are hiding in different countries. If the govt. succeeds in bringing back the ringleaders to Bangladesh through the diplomatic process, it will be a great victory for the nation. We hope the AL led government will leave no stone unturned to materialize the SC verdict for the sake of rule of law.

Molla Mohammad Shaheen
Lecturer, Dept. of English
Leading University, Sylhet

Bad example

It is most unfortunate that still party clout and favouritism take precedence over the 'rule of law' to be equally dispensed with. The waiver of conviction of Mr. Akbar, son of an AL leader, by the President is a glaringly bad example.

The AL or Mohajote government is failing to deliver fair play and by that, together with many other inequities/inadequacies, it is going downhill, paving the way for the opposition to take to streets.

Dowan Hafiz
Auliabad, Dohar, Dhaka

Launch capsizes

It is refreshing to see that the government has decided to take stern actions against those responsible for the recent launch capsizing in Bhola. If the authorities mean what they say, and are willing to follow through with it without bias or prejudice, it will set a precedence worth following.

Is the government also willing to look into, and take similar actions for the countless road mishaps, launch capsizes and train derailments that have been taking place over the last 38 years? Or is this particular launch capsizing a case of "special interest"? What about all the lives that have been lost till now? And what about those who caused all the deaths through negligence and irresponsibility? A truck runs over a rickshaw, kills everyone in it, and then the driver of the truck makes good his escape. It is news which appears only once on the pages of a newspaper and is then buried and forgotten forever. We don't care because those in the rickshaw were not one of ours. Or maybe because those the dead leave behind discover that justice is not meant for all. I am yet to see a single fleeing truck driver being made to justify his misdeed. It is the same story with those (at every level) who mismanage movement over water, rail and in the air.

The accepted norm for those who could not care less about the lives being lost is "You can wrong, and not be held responsible". Is this the standard we have set for ourselves?

Dr. C. Zaman
Ottawa
Canada

Firing range in forests

After going through a series of reports on depleting Modhupur forests in The Daily Star, I visited the forest and became frustrated seeing the destroyed forests. But it was another surprising matter for me to see a BAF firing range in Rasulpur area of the forests. What is the effect of sounds of bombing by aircrafts on the animals of the forests?

Pradyut Kumar Saha
Sukrabad, Dhaka

Slow moving rickshaws



ANDADUL HUQ / DRINKNEWS

Transports play an important role in carrying people and goods from one place to another. It may be both speedy and slow transports. Rickshaw is one of them and unfortunately it is one of the causes of traffic jam. It causes traffic jam in the narrow lanes in the city area, especially in Dhaka city. Scooters are also responsible for traffic jam. As a result, traffic jam is a common phenomenon in our city life. It is also so acute in almost all the urban areas of Bangladesh. So, to lead a traffic jam-free life rickshaws and

scooters should be removed from the towns.

Moreover, two flyovers one from Gulistan to Babu Bazar Bridge and another one from the same place to Jatrabari are very much necessary to avoid traffic jam. I would like to thank the govt. for taking such kind of steps. Actually, the people don't like to see any kind of traffic jam any more.

Md. Abdus Salam
Senior Assistant Teacher
Joypara Pilot High School
Joypara, Dohar, Dhaka

Palm tree plantation

The recent attempt of planting palm trees in different regions of Bangladesh by a few individuals and organisations will go futile as the weather and soil condition of our country are not congenial for such plantations and this very fact is known to our experts and the forest department. A real life picture of palm trees bearing very ordinary fruits can be visualized on a trip to Sylhet in the forests located by the side of highway which does not contain the material for either soap or edible oil. Frequent rainfall all over the year, which is the very basic necessity for the productive growth of palm trees, is absent in our country. As a result, it is unlikely for us to grow palm trees for the production of edible oil.

I am happy to see the advertisement in The Daily Star, dated December 06, 2009, regarding "1st Malaysia - Bangladesh Palm Oil Trade Fair and Seminar 2009" that was reportedly held on 12 December in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. The seminar was a good one, so far as trade & marketing of palm oil between Bangladesh & Malaysia goes. But in the highlights, a subject like "Scope for Oil Palm Plantation in Bangladesh" has scared me as plantation of palm oil plants by all standards is not feasible in Bangladesh.

I am afraid wondering about a situation where a person taking a summary in favour of palm tree plantation goes to a bank and takes a loan for the same plantation project which will result in bank default as well as spoil the agricultural land of Bangladesh.

The Malaysian oil corporation office in BD invites at least 6-7 Bangladeshi experts every year to see their palm tree



plantations and learn about its usefulness, which according to them is very useful for health and heart. Naturally in those visits every year, delegates from Bangladesh put a question regarding plantation of palm trees in Bangladesh as we have a small period of rainfall in our region. The reply is that a plantation is possible but not at all viable as such rainfall will allow the trees to bear only one fruit which will not contain necessary ingredients to produce oil. A palm tree bears three fruits in a year and as such it is not viable in Bangladesh. Palm trees can only be produced in Malaysia, Indonesia and some Caribbean countries where there is adequate rainfall over the year.

I believe that the forest department will make necessary clarification in this regard on the basis of the facts which I have given above.

Zahid A. Choudhury
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka