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Govt must control its armed student cadres

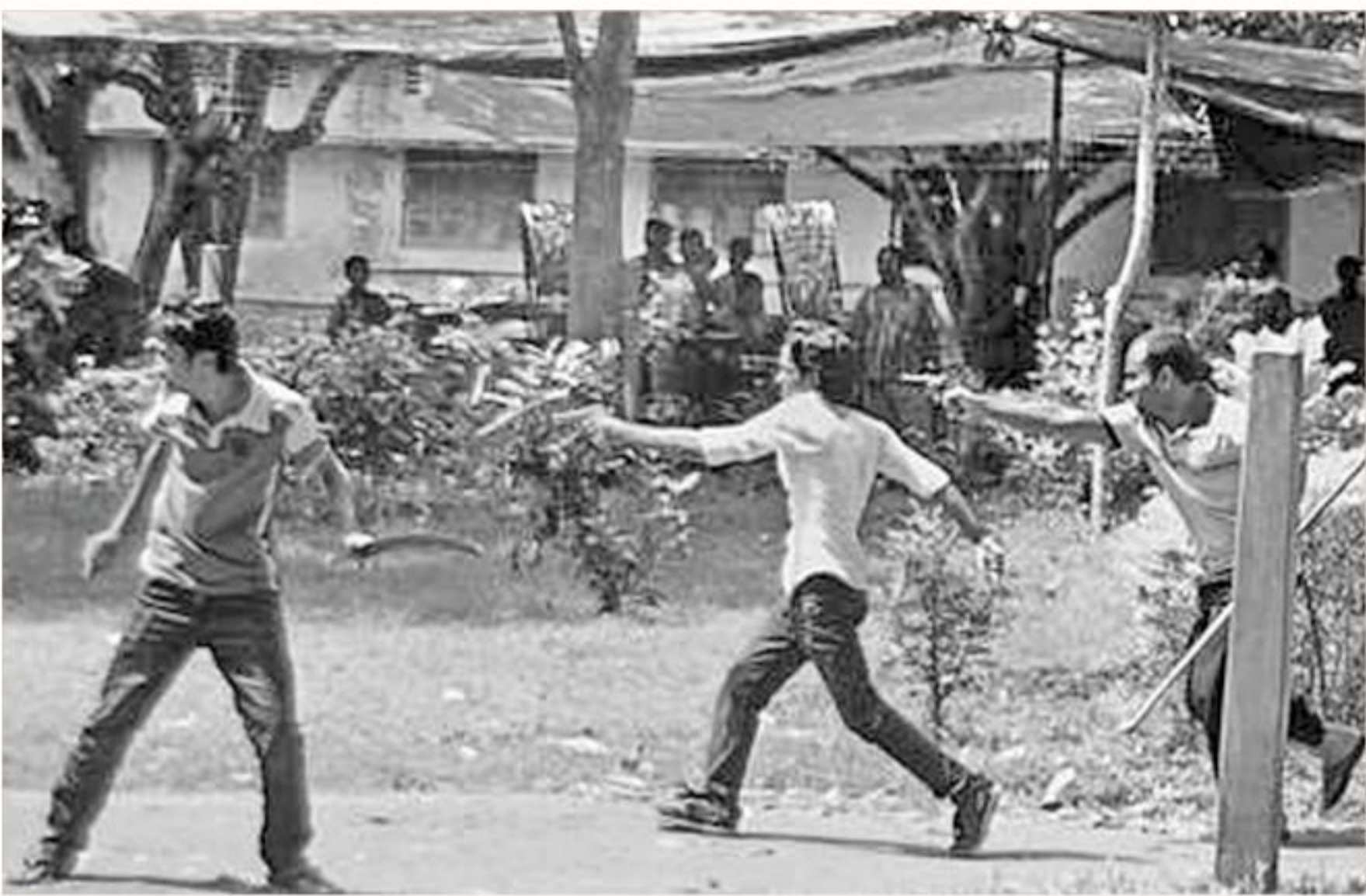


PHOTO: STAR

Thanks to adequate modern media presence at Rajshahi University campus that we could see the recent fighting between Shibir and BCL cadres so graphically. Almost all the newspapers featured the BCL cadres lunging forward with guns in hand shooting at the opposition Shibir cadres with police taking no action to stop the fighting. BCL leaders say that they with the help of general students resisted the onslaught of Shibir. The incident begs the questions as to what made Shibir so outrageous that necessitated the resistance, what led the students to use lethal weapons and most importantly what the authorities have already done to arrest the gun-wielding students. We have the disconcerting report that the very gun-toting BCL leaders went to the Motihar police station to file cases against the Shibir cadres and went away without police arresting them obviously because they are the pro-government student cadres. This cannot be the norms of a democratic country. The long culture of ruling party autocracy and resultant injustice and oppression has been creating social maladies and unrest. The government can no longer evade responsibility for making the opposition scapegoat for all these serious social malaises.

Tinku
 On e-mail

Save the rivers Jhenai and Bairan from grabbers

Jhenai and Bairan are two small rivers originating from the Jamuna and have been flowing across Jamalpur and Tangail districts. Once these two rivers had heavy current and abundant water all the year round.

Many engine-driven boats and launches would ply during the monsoon for about six months of the year. Fishermen and villagers would catch fish for a living. But at present the condition of these two rivers is very deplorable. Now no boat can ply the river except for two months a year. The rivers remain dry and sandy. Land-grabbers have encroached on the river banks and erected establishments in many places.

The corrupt local political persons are also grabbing the river and building houses or digging ponds by making embankments. I, on behalf of the villagers and the poor rivers, urge the countrymen as well as the government to come forward and take appropriate measures to save the rivers Jhenai and Bairan from dying.

Badsha Solaiman
 Gopalpur
 Tangail

Street children need our help

Street children live neither with their parents nor in a home. They have either lost their parents or their parents have left them. They live on the streets and have to earn a living by begging or stealing. Street children can be found in almost all countries. Many of them take drugs to cope with their life. Due to the drugs and horrific living conditions they often get sick. Is it not our duty to extend our helping hands towards them so that they can live a healthy life?

Tahia Ahmed Naba
 Sylhet Grammar School
 Sylhet

We are confined in our little prisons!

Nowadays we can't find a single field! Children are deprived of playgrounds, which means no physical exercise. Many studies have revealed that students can become really good in studies if they have a balance of physical and mental exercise. But no, we are confined to our own homes. Now, in our free time what will we do? Playing games on electronic gadgets like Nintendo DS, PSP and watching TV, we become mentally exhausted. In the past there was no shortage of playgrounds. But now due to towers, skyscrapers (and all the other selfish reasons of petty people) there is not a single field left for us. When will a saviour come, hear our plea, and save us from our little prison called home?

Ahmed As Sami
 Anandeniketan School
 Subhanighat, Sylhet



PHOTO: STAR

Killing of Bangladeshis in the US

According to a news report published in the DS dated Sept 29, a 26-year-old Bangladeshi, Shafiqul Islam Sohel, was shot dead in a shop at Pine Bluff near Little Rock of Arkansas state on the night of Sept 25. The young man from Rangpur worked for Big Red Food Mart owned by a Bangladeshi there. It is also reported that he was the third Bangladeshi to be so killed there over the last one month. Earlier on Sept 21, Moin Hassan, a post graduate student died a day after he was shot inside a shop at Bridgeport city in Connecticut. Another victim Lutfor Rahman was shot dead at a Food Mart in Pine Bluff on Aug 25.

We are very much shocked to hear these reports of gruesome murder of innocent Bangladeshis in the United States. Such shooting incidents inside shopping centres are very rare even in a poor country like Bangladesh.

We do not know the identity of the assailants and the real motive behind such killings. We sincerely hope that the authorities in the US will immediately arrest the criminals and produce them before the court for proper punishment. We also request the US authorities concerned for taking effective measures to stop recurrence of such sad incidents in the future.

Md. Mohsin Ali
 Nutan Courtpara
 Kushtia

Land-grabbing was the motive?

There are no excuses and the home minister has to shoulder the whole responsibility as his men in uniform and all the intelligence wings in the country took no action during continued rampage for hours. This is an act of serious human rights violation. The state failed to protect a community which happens to be a minority and we all find that there is also an element of incitement in the sad incident. There are also unconfirmed reports that the whole episode was carefully carried out as a land grabbing project by a few powerful people.

This cannot possibly be regarded as communal violence. This is crime against humanity and a gross violation of human rights. There is every reason to believe that it was premeditated. The home minister must be able to answer and act quickly. We cannot be playing with fire and this is an act within its own capacity to destabilise a country.

What BJP did in Ajodhya by demolishing Babri Mosque in India, Awami League did the same by destroying Buddhist temples in Ramu, Cox's Bazar. The motive was land grabbing in both cases and both has happened under political direction and possible local administrative support.

Sheikh Monirul Islam, Opee

Loss of a true friend



Ataus Samad, my beloved friend's death shocked me since he was my best friend since school days. Friends and political parties paid him rich tributes as he devoted his life to the profession of journalism.

We studied in the same class in Barisal Zilla School and we passed the Matriculation Examination together in 1952. Both of us entered journalism although we served different newspapers. Many years have gone; I had no connection with my best friend but I believe that two souls are immortal and I will meet him after my death in the outer world.

We joined BSS as special correspondents in 1977. I was assigned to cover the then president General Ziaur Rahman who was to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London. Ataus Samad helped me a lot with the preparation. Since he was my best friend, he always extended his help in all respects. Two weeks after the conference, I suffered a severe stroke and I was hospitalised for a while. Ataus Samad and Renu bhabi used to visit me every day. I seriously thought that my career as a journalist was over. Two persons, Ataus Samad and Jaglul Ahmed Choudhury helped me in coming out of the crisis.

As I have been living in London for the last 18 years, I was out of touch with him for a long time. Had Ataus Samad been alive today, he would probably meet the same fate as I have been facing. I truly believe he died a glorious death. I pray to the Almighty Allah that his soul may rest in peace. I offer my heartiest condolences to his family to sustain such a great loss.

Mufazzal Hussain
 Journalist
 London, UK

Hydropower for agriculture

I congratulate the government on all its efforts to fight power outages and alleviate poverty, and make the country self-reliant. I believe the government has tried its best and will continue to do so to take Bangladesh to greater heights and dignity. Though power generation is a top priority for the government, we know it is a daunting task to bring a perfect balance between demand and supply at this moment. During the IRRI cultivation season, the demand for electricity hits the peak, raising the frequency of load-shedding across the country and leading to enormous public sufferings.

As Bangladesh is an agro-based country, hydroelectric power generation from multi-purpose irrigation dams can offer a solution to the perennial electricity crisis. Japan, Indonesia and even India have become good examples to follow.

A mini-hydropower plant can produce up to 100 kw of electricity using the natural flow of water. These installations can provide power to an isolated home or a small community, or are sometimes connected to electric power networks. In such plants, the water passing through a generator is directed back into the stream with relatively little impact on the surrounding ecology.

If the site can produce a large amount of excess energy, some power companies will buy the surplus electricity or it can be added to the national grid.

Md Mizanur Rahman
 Headmaster
 Malapara Govt. Primary School
 Hajiganj
 Chandpur

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's *The Daily Star* news report headlined "Hall-Mark seeks fresh Sonali loan"

N. Alamgir

Is this supposed to be a joke? Why are the government agencies not making arrests? Are they backed by the highest echelon in the government? People surely want to know about this go-slow attitude. Why did the Sonali Bank board of directors decide against filing a suit against Hall-Mark group? These are the questions. The people of Bangladesh want to know the answers.

Barkat

When the entire nation is in shock and expecting action against the defaulters, they expect that they should get more loans.

Translucent

Sonali Bank needs to force Hall-Mark to accept an administrator with full power. This way the bank could at least be aware of all the goings-on in the group and might recover some of the money it lent.

Hasan Mamun

No more drama, please.

Anonymous

It shows the degree of corruption in our country.

A reader

What a shame!

Neutral

If the Hall-Mark group can take a turn and ask for fresh loan from the same bank, what is the ACC doing to stop corruption?

Reaz Hassan

Hall-Mark group has lost all trust and confidence of the people and hence they do not deserve a single pie. All the high sounding words are ill-motivated false pretensions to plunder more funds. It is really strange how could these hardened criminals still be walking free after having gulped down two thousand and six hundred crore taka from a state-owned bank. Punish them and confiscate all their moveable and immovable property.

Nasim Hasan

This is the actual picture of public banks in Bangladesh. I know pretty well from my experience how fresh and honest investors are treated by the public banks in Bangladesh.

I applied for an industrial credit amounting taka 100 million from Sonali Bank for establishing a footwear industry. I went to the bank after completing the total construction work, electrification and other necessities of the factory with my own money worth around taka 125 million. Still the bank has not sanctioned my loan. Public banks are basically run by government nominated directors. And those directors are busy building their own as well as their party peoples' fortune in five years.

Manzoor Ashraf

Only these types of people can do business

Remove traffic jam

Traffic jam is one of the worst and disgusting problems in Dhaka city. Every day the city dwellers face this boring problem and feel exhausted. From morning till late night the roads are busy and overloaded with vehicles. Due to traffic jam people, especially the job holders are suffering unbearable pains. When they start the day they have to face the worst traffic and at the end of the day, they have to face the same nightmare.

Sometimes life comes to a standstill because of this unending problem. Don't we have anything to do but suffer in silence? Traffic jam kills time, damages working spirit and wastes fuels. The government must take proper measures to remove traffic jam immediately and relieve the citizens of this daily ordeal.

Sultana Khatun
 Government Teachers' Training College
 Dhaka