

Attack on Buddhists...

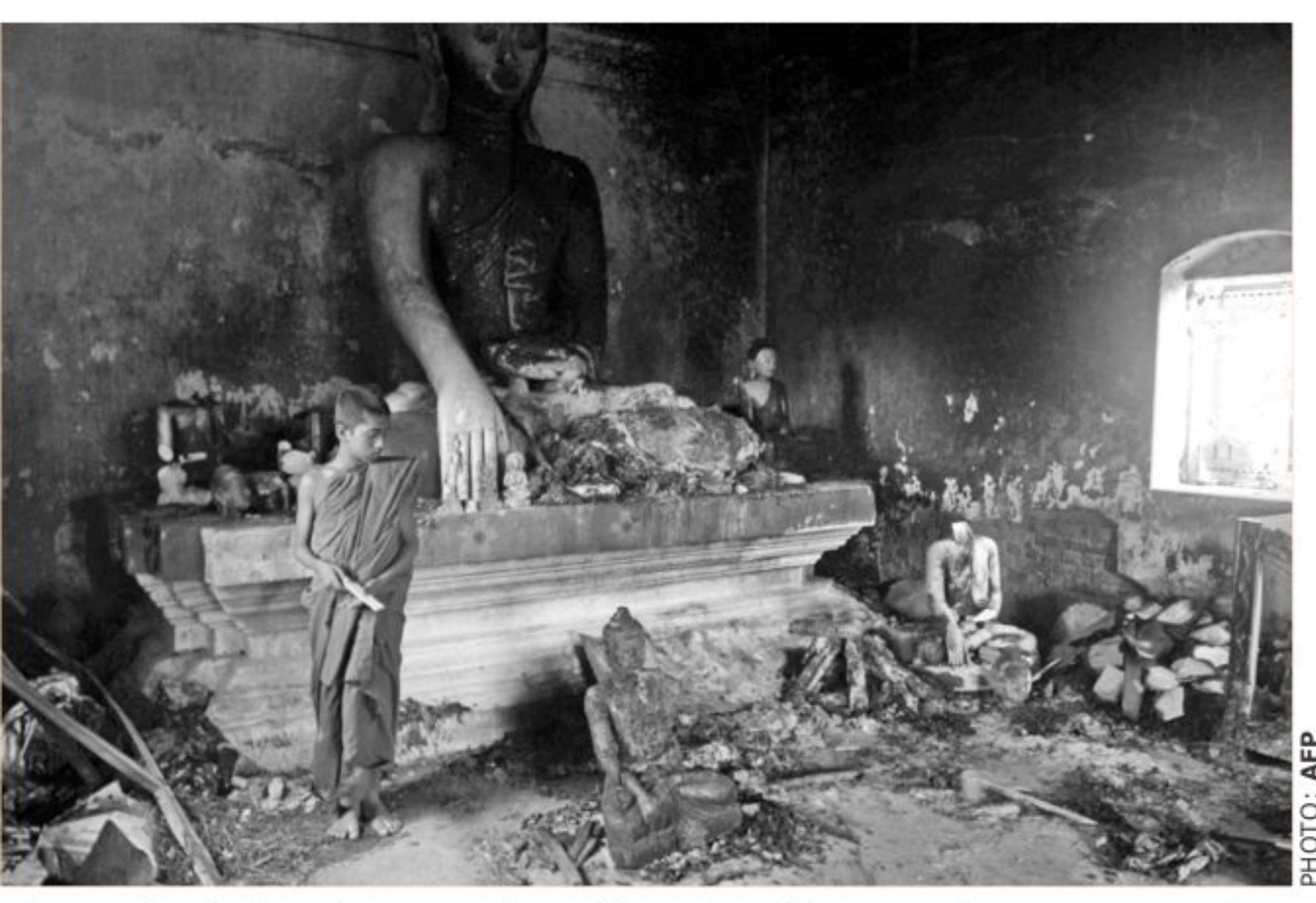


PHOTO: AFP

We are shocked at the spate of attacks on Buddhist temples at Ramu and other places. Hordes of marauders swooped on the temples at dead of night leaving behind an orgy of destruction. They set the temples on fire, desecrated the statues of Buddha and destroyed century-old manuscripts. These despicable acts of arson and vandalism are a huge blow to our ethos of communal harmony.

As the news reports suggest, the attacks were preplanned. So the masterminds behind the heinous attacks must be brought to justice. The law-enforcers have failed to provide security to those ill-fated temples. Now it is their duty to find out the culprits.

Zabed Wali
On e-mail

Stop question paper leaks

The culture of question paper leak of public and competitive examinations is not new. The question paper leak of the 33rd Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination has brought before us some long-lasting problems which need to be resolved urgently. The incident definitely pointed to some age-old flaws in the system. BPSC did not take any initiative to find out the persons involved. According to some reports of the newspapers, Exam Controller (cadre) of BPSC AYM Nesar Uddin told that they have a rule to print the question papers only in the state-owned BG press. This rule needs to be amended. It is known to people that the BG press has a vicious circle of corrupt quarters that are involved in such kind of illegal activities, although the authorities concerned refute such kind of claims. It would be better if some sets of question papers can be printed in other presses under strict supervision. The PSC should take immediate measures to find out the people involved in the crime and also take steps to stop question paper leaks in future.

Yeaiah All Mamun
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Immortality gene and telomeres

Who doesn't wish to live on this earth for ever? But death is inevitable. Human beings under the natural process of aging slowly move towards death. Of course, dreadful diseases like cancer often cause human beings to die young.

Scientists in advanced countries are now working vigorously on finding out the ways and means to extend human life expectancy, they are even aspiring to make humans immortal.

In 2009, three scientists were awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine for discovering "immortality gene" - a gene that can help us live forever in good health with no fear of aging. But as ill luck would have it, the scientists to their utter surprise witnessed that the immortal gene in every cell of every human being is permanently switched off. Interestingly, the immortality gene produces a very important 'life-extending enzyme' which is capable of stopping, preventing and even reversing the aging process. And when the immortality gene stops functioning, we age, our organ weakens, our body system is attacked by various diseases and eventually the inevitable happens, we die!

Meanwhile, cell biologists later discovered a kind of chain of repeating pairs of enzyme called 'telomeres' on the tip of the DNA molecule. Telomeres help protect DNA's cap during cell division and copying of the cell. Due to repeated division telomeres become ineffective. Different diseases also reduce the effectiveness of telomeres and gradually push us to death accelerating the process of aging.

Although no method or means has so far been invented to switch on the immortality gene but scientists are working on telomere biology for increasing the life expectancy of the humans from present average 76 to 150 years!

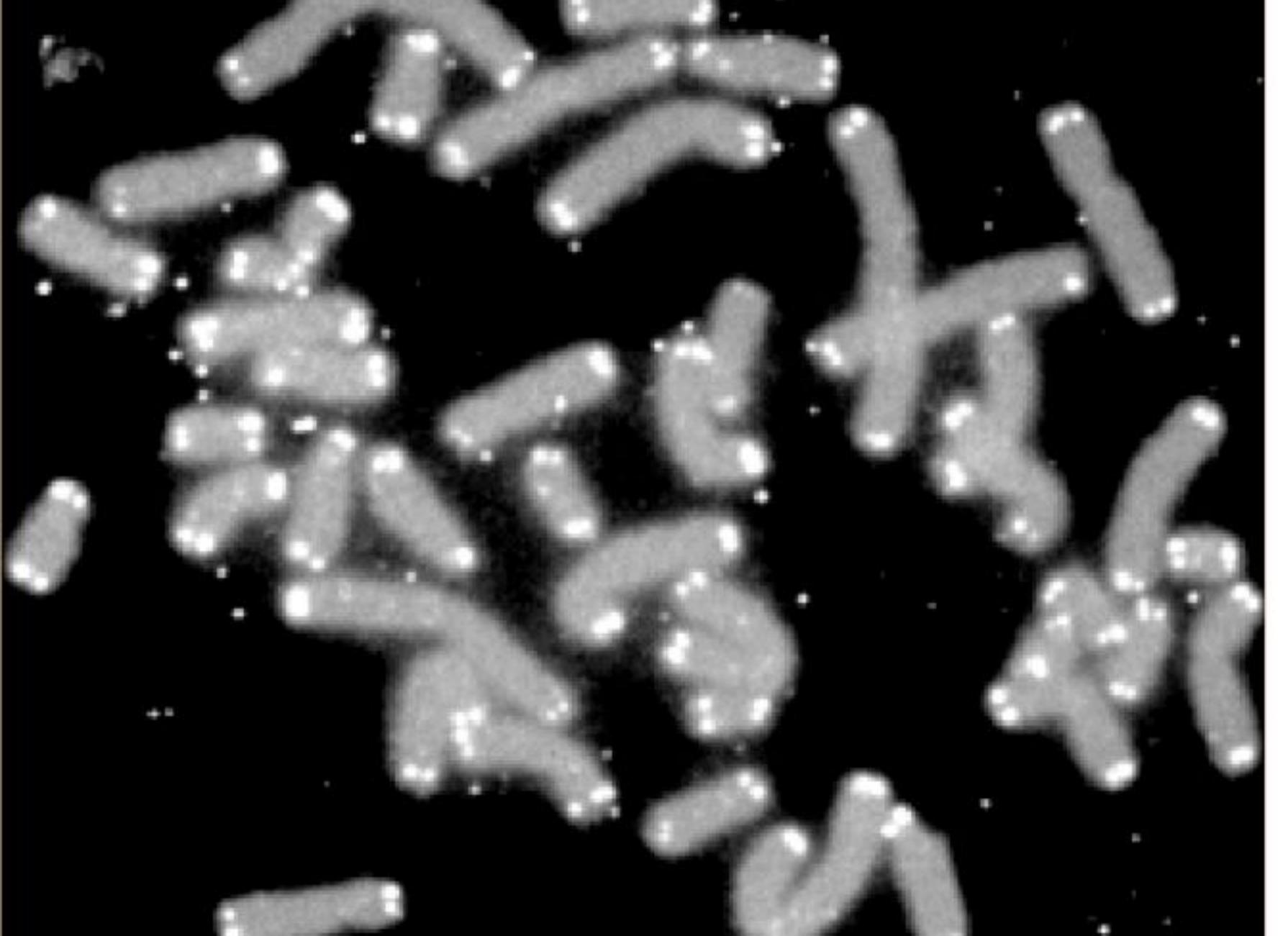
It may be mentioned here that all living beings including plants have immortality gene and if through application of biotechnology this gene could be manipulated, there would be a new evolution and revolution too.

Professor M Zahidul Haque

Dean

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Excuse of documentary evidence!

Chairman of ACC Mr. Ghulam Rahman on October 7, 2012 in his remark before the TV camera brushed aside what the driver of the APS to the former Railway Minister Suranji Sengupta said on the ground that his confessional statement can not be taken into cognizance to convict a person without any documentary evidence.

I cannot help wondering at what other documentary evidence does the chairman requires besides the found in the car that amounted to Tk. 74 Lac. Is he under the impression that it was a set-up and the driver is the major player in the incident? But the question is where the driver could manage such a large amount of money from, without the involvement of the high-ups?

If confessional statement is not good enough to accuse a person of a crime, according to the chairman of ACC, then how can the government convict the war criminals, who committed the crimes during the War of Independence, only on confessional statements without any documentary evidence?

I think, the bureaucrat turned chairman commented as such to please his mentors, which implies that the ACC, in essence, is not independent of government influence.

Saleh Mohammad Ayub
Houston, Texas, USA

A selfish capitalist!

Rep. Paul Ryan at an Atlas Society meeting celebrating Ayn Rand's life in 2005 said that "The reason I got involved in public service, by and large, if I had to credit one thinker, one person, it would be Ayn Rand", and "I grew up reading Ayn Rand and it taught me quite a bit about who I am and what my value systems are, and what my beliefs are. It's inspired me so much that it's a required reading in my office for all my interns and my staff."

Greenspan was born and educated in New York City, where he earned a BA, MA and, 27 years later in 1977, a PhD in economics. After earning his MA in 1950, Greenspan became an associate of famed philosopher Ayn Rand, author of books "The Virtue of Selfishness," "Atlas Shrugged" and more. Greenspan wrote for Rand's newsletters and authored a chapter for a Rand book. As legend has it, Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan was once a member of Ayn Rand's 1960's salon. He was invited guest at Rand's apartment and apparently was close enough to have read her epic "Atlas Shrugged" as it came off her typewriter.

With his selection of Representative Paul Ryan as a running mate, Mitt Romney has told us exactly who he would be as President: a selfish capitalist. A Romney-Ryan White House would elevate selfishness above all else. To understand the values of Mr. Romney and Mr. Ryan, it is necessary to understand their intellectual forebear, Ayn Rand. Ms. Rand was one of the most extreme public intellectuals of the twentieth century. As her central creed, she rejected the idea that people in a community should approach each other with charity, compassion, and altruism.

Ted Rudow III, MA
Encina Ave

Ordeal of bumpy travel from Teknaf to Dhaka



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

The other day I had the ill-fortune to travel by car from Teknaf to Dhaka.

One thought kept bothering me throughout my travail. Are we such a poor country that we cannot keep our roads in good condition? Or is it the work of dishonest contractors in connivance with corrupt officials of the roads and highways department? There were approximately 100 places where the road was broken, had potholes, and was water-logged.

The bone jarring drive will always be remembered along with the inadvertent curses on those responsible. I would seriously advise that no pregnant lady should take to these roads as a miscarriage may occur.

May I also advise the minister and chief engineer of the ministry concerned to personally drive down and see for themselves the state of affairs of these roads? Also an audit should be carried out as to which contractors and department officials were involved in building these under specifications roads that need repair after a few years of completion.

If the roads and highways department has any sense of responsibility to the public, they should take some positive action. Although, I am very skeptical that anyone will do anything, as my mother says "the world is built on hope".

Syed Wasif Islam

On e-mail

BTV's mockery of telecasting T20

Since the start of the T20 World Cup, Star Cricket was blocked in the country. The excuse was that BTV had bought the rights to telecast World T20 matches in Bangladesh. Though BTV refrained from telecasting the news and other programmes during the matches, it was very disturbing that they aired advertisements at every possible opportunity. Several times the replay of a dismissal was not shown because of BTV's commercial approach. When the matches were of less importance, such as South Africa vs. Zimbabwe, the advertisement level was tolerable. But when Bangladesh or other strong nations were playing, it seemed the match was being shown between the advertisement breaks. Moreover, the quality of BTV's pre-show, mid-innings show and post-show were nowhere near compared to Star Cricket's, where experts like Harsha Bhogle, Ian Chappell and Kevin Pietersen gave their opinions.

Not only that. Star Cricket would provide regular highlights of previous matches, but BTV did not have this provision. In my case, I had missed Shakib al Hasan's sublime knock of 84 against Pakistan due to load shedding. Unfortunately, BTV did not show the highlights of the match and I had to be content with the news footages in some channels. I strongly criticize the information ministry for blocking our right to watch T20 World Cup and thereby hurting the sentiments of millions of fans. It is time we all stopped making cricket a means for making money, which ultimately will be misused for corruption.

Tauhidul Islam

The Aga Khan School, Uttara, Dhaka

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star news report headlined "A devil's design"

Subir Das

Perhaps one of the best investigative reports published ever in Bangladeshi newspapers. Thanks for this outstanding report. If this level of journalism is maintained, people will have immense faith in the media.

Hafeejul Alam

We appreciate this investigative report by The Daily Star. The government should take note of it and act accordingly. Islam never accepts such hate campaign and as a matter of fact no religion favours it. It is the half-educated *mallahs* who are responsible for all these criminal acts. Meanwhile, the learned Islamic scholars should frequently visit Ramu and preach the message of peace and accommodation as emphasised in the Holy Quran.

Nuton

Please don't torture them. Get them lawyers as required. We do have court of justice to bring them to book.

Rk

TDS has done a very good job. The fanatics should be punished as per the rule of law.

Kamal Khan

I have read in some newspapers that Muktadir's mother is an office bearer of local AL. I am confused; this report has exposed some facts but more importantly, kept much important information hidden. This report is also questionable.

Mahbubul Haque

The government must be held responsible for the inaction of police during the mayhem. Has the government done something about it?

Shaugat Ali Sagar

Salute to The Daily Star for such investigative journalism.

Jumana Sarwar

Julikar Ali Manik, Can you please explain why the administration and police remained silent and inactive during the whole episode of arson and looting? How much faith do you have in our police regarding their account on portraying people's character and political affiliation?

M. K. Alam

The government, the opposition party and the civil society have reported on the issue in their own ways. But the only solution is to hold an independent judicial inquiry headed by a retired chief justice immediately to unearth the actual reasons and facts about the violence and take drastic action against the culprits. The sooner it is done, the better for the government and the country as well.

Imam Haque

Nice investigative report about where the sparks began.

Asad Zaman

"A devil's design" - what an excellent headline that justifies its outstanding content based on investigative journalism.

Rajib Halder

It seems that anyone can use any software without any registration. If our government does not change this system, this type of incident will happen again and again.

Shabbir A Bashar

This report has raised the bar of investigative journalism in Bangladesh. It is time to get international cyber crime units of law enforcement to verify the claims of the correspondent.

Rina

We need the media to come up with this kind of investigative reports. Please do not stop here, follow-up.

Md. Maniruzzaman

The real culprits should be brought to justice so that no one can dare to take part in any subversive activities in future.

Reaz Hassan

Who do we believe - the government version, the BNP report, the citizens' report or the one now prepared by The Daily Star? I am completely at a loss as to why we are not being comforted by the government by constituting an independent judicial inquiry commission under two or more judges of the Supreme Court.

Firko

Anybody can easily understand without investi-