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# Commemorating our foreign friends of independence



PHOTO: BSS

Many years ago when George Harrison passed away, I wrote an email to a friend in Dhaka lamenting how we neglected to honour many of our Liberation heroes including Harrison. He subsequently printed it in The Daily Star. Almost eleven years later, another trinket in our national treasure has left us. The men and women who gave our struggle for freedom legitimacy, who brought before the rest of the world the plight of the innocent people and exposed the brutality of the Pakistani military, must not be forgotten. Aside from the monetary help, the famous concert in New York also kindled rays of hope for struggling millions and questioned the consciousness of the US population whose government was supporting our enemies as part of global chess game for supremacy. The truth was revealed, public opinion coalesced and the Congress relented, thanks primarily to Senator Kennedy and the Democratic Party. Public opinion created pressure on the US government.

In 2009, some of us in Houston tried desperately to honour Joan Baez, another one of our expatriate liberation heroes, during our annual FOBANA conference in Houston, Texas. Our hopes were shattered when we discovered that her summer schedule including the three days for July 4 weekend were booked well in advance and could not be changed. Although we were unsuccessful in seeing her in person, she wished us well for the convention. It is time our government recognised our the expatriate heroes who provided us with honour, dignity, legitimacy and visibility during the dire days of 1971 and declared a day in December commemorating their invaluable contribution to our struggle for freedom. There could be no better time than a day in December to tell the world that we are thankful and grateful as a nation for their moral positions and the sacrifice they made to stand up for a just cause.

**Manzur Khan**  
Houston, Texas, USA

## NU should hold exams timely

National University plays an important role in our education. Many meritorious students who fail to get admitted to public universities, choose NU for admission. But it is a matter of regret that NU doesn't follow its academic calendar. I am a student of NU (session 2010-11). A few days ago, my 1st year final examination was held while my batch mates, who are studying at public universities, will complete their 2nd Year soon. Besides, NU is also late in publishing results. So, we can not concentrate on our studies properly. On behalf of the students, I beg to the NU authorities and the controller of examinations to consider our case and take necessary steps.

**Rubel Islam (Hanif)**  
Govt. Bangla College, Dhaka

## Pakistanis regret their role in 1971

First of all, let me congratulate all Bangladeshi people on their Independence Day. As a Pakistani expatriate, I meet Bangladeshi friends in Australia and don't see in them any hatred for general Pakistanis. But every year one hears calls from Bangladesh to Pakistanis to apologise for what they did in 1971. This disturbs us who were born after 1971. I can tell the Bangladeshi people that most Pakistani people deeply regret the unfortunate incidents of 1971 and often criticise the irresponsible elements within the administration for the excesses.

**Malik Atif Mahmood Majoka**

# Ill-fated families of Ashulia fire

"Ma, I am going to die. You will find me in a toilet", Palash Mian, an unfortunate victim of Ashulia tragedy, called his mother Moyna Begum to say a final goodbye before his death. Mizan, 11 months old, and Masum, 18 months old, are now too exhausted to cry for their mother. They can't understand what has been lost from their life. Two reports published in The Daily Star on 30th November were such heart-breaking that it left me in tears. Nothing indeed could be more agonising for a family than this.

More than a hundred families like them will have to suffer a lot because of their beloved ones' death. Many families even didn't find the dead bodies of their relatives as those bodies were charred. How could these families bear the pain? Nobody can compensate them.

May Almighty Allah give them the strength to bear the loss. We don't want to see any such tragic incident ever in future.

**Yeasir Arafat Nadim**  
MSS, Department of Economics  
University of Dhaka



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Show no mercy to Bishwajit killers

A civilized society should never tolerate acts of such brutality as it happened to Biswajit Das, an innocent civilian. A young life was cut short, a bright future destroyed. Every conscious citizen should raise his/her voice against such criminality. I wonder why the present government is not being able to bring the killers to justice. Are they incapable of arresting the murderers? Or is it that the culprits have link with the ruling party?

Islam being a religion of peace teaches us equality and justice. During the era of our Prophet (pbuh), a member of an elite family was found guilty of theft. His family came to the Prophet (pbuh) for arbitration. The Prophet (pbuh) declared, "Even if the daughter of Muhammad was found guilty of stealing, I would order her hand to be severed". Our Prophet (pbuh) made it clear to his followers that giving protection to criminals will give rise to crimes. It will be highly admirable if the government does not show favour wards these cold-blooded killers and bring them to justice as soon as possible.

**Mufti Abdussamad Awal**  
Segunbagicha, Dhaka

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Only ordinary people are the victims of our deadly political game. Why had Bishwajit Das, a 24-year-old innocent tailor, to die at the hands of the notorious BCL cadres on his way to the workplace? He did not get any help from anyone although the police were very close to the killing spot. Police filed a murder case accusing some unidentified persons on 9th December in spite of being the eyewitness of the killing. But it was clear as daylight who the killers were. So, the law enforcers should arrest all the culprits immediately and try them instead of playing hide and seek. And the leaders of the political party to which the murderers belong should not influence the case to ensure rule of law.

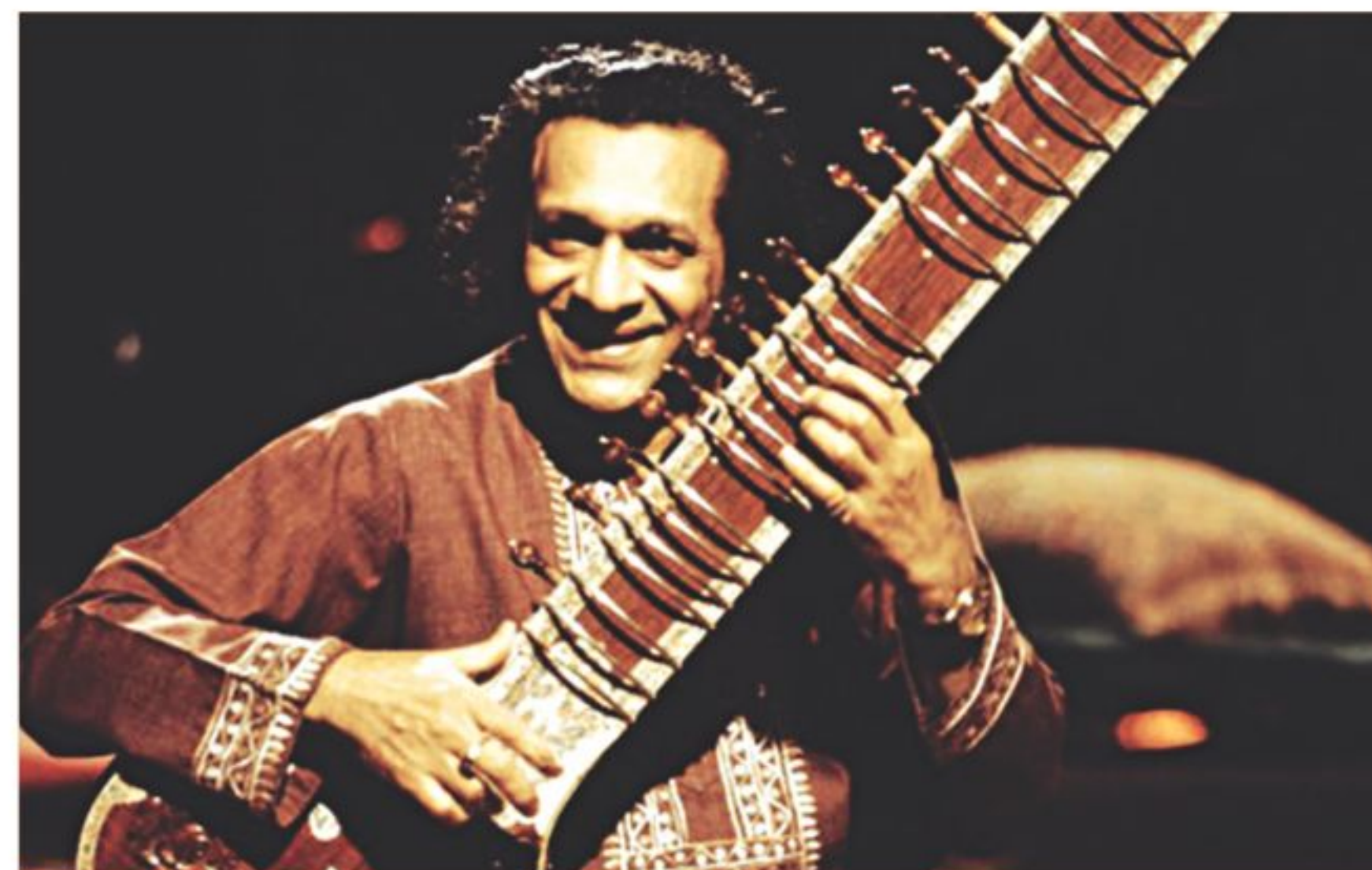
**Rasel Osman**  
Honours final year  
English Department  
Dhaka College

## Take immediate measures against corruption

We, the Bangladeshis living in foreign lands are observing that some people in the present government are involved in corruption for their own interest (e.g. Padma bridge corruption, Hallmark's money laundering, etc.). It is a great problem for the country. We expect immediate measures against corruption from the government to save Bangladesh and its people.

**Syed Asad**

# Pandit Ravi Sankar a real friend



Indian iconic Sitar maestro Pandit Ravi Sankar died on 12/12/12 in San Diego, USA at the age of 92. During the time of our Liberation War in 1971, Pandit Ravi Sankar arranged the Concert for Bangladesh at Madison Square Garden, New York, USA along with American singer-cum-guitarist George Harrison, Bob Dylan and others. The concert not only raised fund for Bangladesh but was also a great way to generate world support for Bangladesh. He received Padmavushan, Grammy, Doctorates, Deshikottom, etc awards. He has left world but he will live in the hearts of all Bangladeshis forever.

**S. M. Imranul Islam Rajon**  
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

## Now coaching centres in schools!

In order to stop the unethical practice of compelling students to receive coaching outside the classroom, our government has given a guideline for the teachers. Under the guideline, a teacher can not tutor the students of his/her own school, but can do it for students of other institutions. However, they can teach the weak students taking extra fees under the institution's supervision. This permission has brought blessings for them because now they have made coaching mandatory for all students. Now they are focussing more on coaching activities, neglecting the regular classes. As a guardian, I visited some schools at Mirpur-10 for getting my sister admitted in class V. The schools demanded admission fees as well as mandatory coaching fees from next January. I refused to pay this extra fee and so they denied my sister the opportunity to get admitted there. So, this new policy has not brought any good for the students and guardians, rather it has legalised coaching centres in schools and colleges.

**Md. Rejon Khan, Mirpur, Dhaka**

## Destiny scamsters should get exemplary punishment

It is a very shocking piece of news for the investors that their money was lost but good news for the embezzlers. They did it smoothly and top officials helped them in pursuing this evil work. Common people bear the brunt of it as usual. The embezzled amount is 3,350 crore. It is hard to calculate but imagine how one group of people stole such a large amount of public money. It seems cheating is the easiest way to be rich in Bangladesh nowadays.

The Daily Star published a news item entitled "Tk 3,350cr investors' money gobbled up" on December 14, 2012. The news revealed that the swindlers confessed to their wrongdoings before magistrate. Destiny group is liable for this. But the question is how did they do this? It was not an easy job to cheat so many people.

It is actually the media that have brought the scandal in the limelight. So, hats off to the media. Now anyone can question the role of Bangladesh Bank. Its inactivity fuelled such crimes. The watchdog concerned is either very weak or dishonest. The finance ministry should also be held accountable for this crime. Every regulatory committee concerned should be questioned and punished accordingly for helping the criminals. Every criminal must be brought to book. This unprecedented scam should be handled in an exemplary manner.

# READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Abul spared, for now"

### Robin

Bangladesh government along with the ACC has given a message to the world: it will tolerate corruption and give shelter to the corrupt.

### Neutral

When confidence is shaken, there is provision to request for transfer of an under-trial case from one court to another. The ACC is holding a straw to survive in a stormy ocean with heavy-handed Abul in its lap. The question will now arise why then Abul had to resign if no evidence of corruption is found against him yet?

### Truth Teller

It is becoming clear day by day that people in the higher positions were involved in the Padma bridge corruption. That is the reason why those higher-level people are protecting Abul fearing that Abul will let the cat out of the bag.

### Jumana Sarwar

This eyewash investigation and case filing is a complete waste of public money. One day people will make sure the certificate issuers and the receivers pay a price for mocking the nation.

### Amdem, USA

The good news is Abul has been spared but the bad news is Bangladesh is not getting World Bank's loan for Padma bridge.

### Aizul Islam

I guess the main culprit is off the hook because of his close ties with the high-ups in the AL government.

Let us see the response of the World Bank.

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Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Tazreen fire an act of sabotage"

### Reaz Hassan

This is a half done probe report leaving out the main issues. The prime minister had already said so (sabotage) without even any probe within 72 hours of the occurrence. We had read earlier in the newspaper that a woman had been apprehended who confessed to igniting the fire for Tk. 20,000. If it is an act of sabotage, the probe committee must tell us the cause and motive behind igniting such fire. Who were the masterminds? Please do not tell us any more about conspiracies. We are really fed up listening to these fairy tales.

### Abul, UK

It is primarily the failure of the government for not implementing safety provisions. How long will we keep hearing from this government about conspiracy behind each and every incident? If the conspirators are so powerful, then what is the government for? Those who have prevented the workers from running to safe places, must have known the true conspirators. Bring them before the media and make them speak. The government is clearly trying to make it a political issue.

### Tirtho Mahmud

I think it will be justice to give death penalty to at least one owner for the lives of nearly 120. If nothing is done, the future industrialists will also be careless about human lives. Please show no mercy.

### Jaffar Ullah

Since the first day of the fire, the government has been telling us that it was a sabotage. I guess the owner is somehow related to the government because some staffs