

Publish more Liberation War writings



PHOTO: AFP

QSA Zahir's interesting write-up, published in your pages on 16th. December, deeply moved me; for our kindness extended to the mother of a soldier who died fighting for the birth of Bangladesh! I also thank our top authorities for fulfilling the cherished desire of a grieving mother. The writer of the piece has surely earned the heart-felt good wishes and gratitude of the elderly mourning mother who finally got peace of mind, by praying for the salvation of her son's departed soul at Gangasagar, Bangladesh, where Ekka (the Falcon) made the ultimate sacrifice for winning our freedom!

It will be appreciated if such stories based on various facts related to our War of Liberation are published by you for many eager readers; as such writings in English are scarce!

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

When they forgot they were enemies...

British soldiers were spending Christmas Eve 1914 on a French battlefield during World War I. After four months of fighting, over a million men had perished in the bloody conflict. The bodies of dead soldiers were scattered between the trenches of the opposing armies. It was in the middle of a freezing battlefield in France, that a miracle occurred! British troops watched in amazement as candle-lit trees appeared above the German trenches. "From the German parapet, a rich baritone voice had begun to sing a song I remember my German nurse singing to me ... the grave and tender voice rose out of the frozen mist. It was all so strange ... like being in another world," a young British soldier wrote in his diary. "Silent Night, Holy Night. All is calm. All is bright."

When the German soldiers finished singing, the British decided to retaliate. Rather than retaliate with the roar of a cannon, the army chaps from England sang, "The first noel, the angels did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay ..." When the boys from jolly old England finished, "Born is the King of Israel!", the enemy began clapping and struck up a rousing rendition of "Oh Tannebaum!" When the British troops began singing, "Oh Come All Ye Faithful!", it was at that moment that the Germans immediately joined in. They were singing with the enemy. This was the most extraordinary event taking place in the middle of a blood-drenched battlefield! Two opposing nations were singing the same Christmas Carol in the middle of a fierce war. It is recorded that enemy soldiers greeted each other in the no-man's-land that just minutes before had been a killing zone. Soldiers wished one another a Merry Christmas and agreed not to fire their rifles on Christmas Day.

Ted Rudow III, MA
Encina Ave
Palo Alto, CA

We mourn Sandy Hook schoolchildren's death

We are still grieving for those kids who died in the shootout at Sandy Hook Elementary School at Newtown in Connecticut, USA. Adam Lanza nipped 20 innocent lives in their buds and also killed 6 adults including teachers of the school.

I really appreciate the way Obama expressed his sympathy for the grief-stricken families of the victims. His mournful speech and images demonstrated that he reacted not just as a president, but as a parent too. But it is more important that the Obama government takes gun-shooting of this sort into account, and take necessary measures to prevent it since such attacks in US are not unprecedented. Adam Lanza once again reminds us of the gun-shooting of 2007 at Virginia Tech University. I, however, hope that the Obama administration would do everything necessary to prevent these types of incidents in the future.

Tanbir Uddin Arman
Department of International Relations
University of Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

What's home ministry up to?

When people all over the country were still in shock after the brutal murder of Bishwajit, another drama unfolded. Top terrorist Bikash Kumar Biswas was released from Kashimpur jail under strict secrecy. It has been reported that it was done by a special order from the home ministry.

Jail Super Ashraful Islam refrained from making any comments and Gazipur Police Super Abdul Baten said that they do not know anything about the matter. Senior officials of the police and the detective branch do not know anything about the secret release of Bikash, a convicted murderer.

It is like opening the doors of the cages of ferocious animals and letting them loose so that they can kill freely. We are deeply frightened by these events; all hopes for a peaceful Bangladesh are fading away.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

PM's greetings on V Day

It is heartening that prime minister Sheikh Hasina is communicating with the common citizens by sending a short message of greetings on the Victory Day, 2012. In her message, the PM sought continuous cooperation of the people for the betterment of the country and its people. This message of greetings reflects the PM's goodwill which definitely deserves appreciation. Nowadays, many world leaders are communicating with their people using digital facilities (sms, e-mail, etc.) for reducing the gap between government and citizens. I sincerely hope that our esteemed prime minister will work towards resolving the ongoing political crisis for strengthening democracy in Bangladesh.

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Dean, Faculty of Agriculture
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Dhaka

Getting out of denial mode

The whole world - including all the NGOs, charities and government agencies active in this dear country and millions of Bangladeshis themselves - want Bangladesh to be able to run its own affairs independently. Before I came here, in 1999, I taught schoolchildren about aid to poor countries and helped an international charity by door-to-door collections and by shaking tins outside supermarkets. When 'Bangladesh' is mentioned, hands go into pockets! Hence, the frustration at how responsibility for problems is ignored or avoided by blaming 'conspiracies', 'sabotage' and the 'forces of evil'. Now, it seems the terrible garment factory fire was because FOREIGN CUSTOMERS signed contracts with the owners to produce goods at a price too low for the 'poor owners' to afford the necessary safety requirements! Whose fault was THAT? Now, some countries are being told to change trading arrangements to give greater priority to 'poor Bangladesh' Yet the fact is that Bangladesh is rolling in money! The Bangladesh Bank declared that there are 23,212 multi-millionaires in Bangladesh and the National Board of Revenue say that the number of people paying more than 100,000 taka as personal income tax in the 2011-2012 taxation year did not go over a thousand!

Again and again, people wonder how they can help those who, so often, refuse to be helped. Bangladesh, stop breaking the hearts of those who want to help you! Join the rest of the world at the feet of a merciful God, owning up to the many mistakes we all make, and rejoice to see the doors flying open to freedom to do the right thing through all that God sends to help us. Happy Christmas!

Angela Robinson

Victims of madness

I have deep sympathy for the victims of the school killings in Newtown, Connecticut. However, I feel greater sympathy for those Afghan families that are butchered in silence by American drones. They are not mourned by the world, nor even noticed by the media. Yet their lives are equally valuable. The same blood flows in their veins and the same flesh adorns their skeletons. But to the US, if they are anything at all, they are mere statistics.

Iftexhar Sayeed
Dhaka

A significant call from opposition leader

We learnt from a report of this daily recently that leader of the opposition Khaleda Zia urged the garment factory owners, their trade body, the government, the financial institutions and the buyers in the closing ceremony of the Batexpo-2012 to ensure compliance at the factories to keep the sector competitive in the global market. She also added, "Not the machines, the workers behind the machines are the lifeline of the sector. Justice cannot be ensured without giving importance to their life, safety and better working conditions." Her comments came in the wake of a deadly fire at Tazreen Fashions that killed at least 112 workers last month.

It is said that Bangladesh is the second largest apparel exporter after China, and earned \$19 billion last year from garment exports that accounted for about 80 percent of the country's total export earnings. But Bangladesh's stake in the global apparel market is only 4 percent, whereas China controls 37 percent. According to McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm, Bangladesh could bag about \$45 billion in the next one decade.

It is undeniable that without ensuring safety and better working conditions for workers, it would not be possible for Bangladesh to grab this huge market. So we endorse the demand for BGMEA's self-regulation to prevent repetition of fire incident.

However, we thank Khaleda Zia for her significant call in this regard.

Mobarak Ali
RK Mission Road

Improve running between the wickets

The Tigers played well against the West Indies and they really deserve to be praised for their individual performance. I have always believed that it is from criticism that one always learns more. In the only T20 match played against the West Indies, Bangladesh lost by only 18 runs. First of all, I would like to commend them for how valiantly they chased a steep target set by the West Indians and also the fact that no one threw away their wickets needlessly. Secondly, I think that running between the wickets was very poor. They relied too much on hitting boundaries which were not coming easily; but when it came to running between the wickets, they ran very slowly. They took singles when they could have easily taken 2 or 3 runs if they had run faster. I firmly believe they could easily make 18 more runs if they ran faster. Many of the shots played were fielded near the boundary and there was ample time to take a second run but they did not do so. I feel that an improvement in this sector would enable our players to pile on more runs and have a better-looking scorecard.

Aminur Rahim
New DOHS, Mohakhali
Dhaka



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



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Full verdict on 7th amendment released
Martial law stays illegal for good
(December 20, 2012)

Reaz Hassan

Martial Law had always been illegal, if I am not mistaken. When politicians fail miserably to govern and the country is threatened with civil strife, they step in. It is not unique in Bangladesh only, it has happened in many emerging developing nations. We must not create dangerous situations so that the army gets a chance to usurp civil powers.

Shafique Ullah

To plunder the resources some politicians in collaboration with army generals of underdeveloped countries bring martial laws. Look at the

position of Pakistan and some Southeast Asian and African countries.

M. Khan

Martial law stays illegal but creating Bakshal stays legal!

Nuton

Martial law is already 'history' all over the world except for some poor and corrupt countries.

Sohul Ahmed, lawyer of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh

Martial law is the violation of the constitution - if so, what is the remedy when a political

government fails to protect public? Is it Army-backed government as we saw in 2008?

M Shaheed

Bravo, a historic verdict! Thanks to all the judges.

News Analysis
Bank owner cum minister
Clear violation of constitution

S. Ahmad

What is constitution? Constitution is what the people in power say and do!

Roni Rahman

When a culture of rampant violations of the rule of law, or lawlessness committed by the political leaders becomes 'law', any outrageous misrule is to be expected as an outcome. So it is hardly surprising that the majority of us remain silent in the face of the continuous decline in our institutions, top murderers and terrorists like Bikash are being freed by home

minister MKA, AL/MKA is trying to shelter the murderers of Bishwajit, the president is giving clemency to convicted murderers in a wholesale manner and the government is sheltering the corrupt ministers in Padma bridge episodes.

Suahmed

MKA might have got the approval from BB by showing his power as home minister. The constitution is always violated by ruling party. So far the constitution was violated many times and none was punished.

Dr. Nazmul Haq

This man seems to be above the law. Even if the law does not permit him to be the owner of the bank, it should not be a problem. The solution lies in changing the constitution. It will take a few minutes for our parliament to do that.

Shaheen Subhan

Clearly, MKA has no other option but to resign. He can't have it both ways.