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Shahbagh epitomises youths' patriotism



PHOTO: AFP

I could not stop myself from going to Shahbagh last Friday. I strongly believe, just like me many others felt the same and ran to the Projonmo Chatter of Shahbagh.

However, in my view, this grand protest inspired the young generation to demonstrate their patriotism and provided them with a big platform to perform their duty for their motherland. This huge protest has proved that they are no longer confined to their Facebook giving statuses and hitting 'likes'. Heartfelt thanks to the organizers who have shown the entire world what we can do.

There are hardly any people who are against this Shahbagh movement. The young leaders have some simple words for those people who are against this movement. The words are: "Tui Rajakar, Tui Rajakar."

Khandker Nabil Abrar
 Uttara, Dhaka

Tragic and thoroughly reprehensible!

The gruesome murder of a teacher, Mustafa, by an SSC examinee is another instance of crime committed by a student. This has exposed a very alarming development in our juvenile psyche. A teacher has the right to punish any examinee who has adopted unfair means in an exam. But in this case, the student chose a violent path and took revenge by stabbing his teacher to death. This is outrageous. The authorities should take necessary action against the culprit student as well as inculcate the students with moral values so that they learnt to respect their teachers.

Humayun Hyder
 Zigatola, Dhaka

Shahbagh to safeguard judiciary's independence

I regret to disagree with Neil Taylor's view in your letters column of 13 Jan 2013 that, 'in this case the judges clearly seem to have acted independently in deciding a sentence based only on the evidence presented to them at the tribunal, which is all the verdict should be based on.'

I have closely seen and heard what was developing from day one at Shahbagh Morh, which is now called Pojonmo Chatter. When life imprisonment was declared for Abdul Quader Mollah instead of death penalty when Bachu Rajakar was awarded death penalty for reportedly lesser crimes, the Dhaka University students and their associates smelled 'foul play' by the government. They assumed that to avert further arson and anarchy by Jamaat and their hoodlums, a milder sentence was considered to be wise and best under the political circumstances prevailing at that moment.

The students at once reacted to the government's interference in the verdict, questioning the very independence of the International Crimes Tribunal. They took to the streets in unison to protest against the government's dictates and demanded the Tribunal to focus on safeguarding the system of independent judiciary in Bangladesh.

Md. Mahmoodul Haque
 Gulshan, Dhaka

Bangladeshi students of Ohio University express solidarity with Shahbagh

Bangladeshis from all walks of life are gathering at Shahbagh, Dhaka every day and chanting slogans for their demand. They have only one demand and that is capital punishment for the war criminals of 1971. Unfortunately, for the past long 42 years since our liberation, those heinous criminals had been able to roam around the country freely. In an effort to express our spontaneous solidarity with the youth of Shahbagh, the Bangladeshi students in The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA have staged their demonstrations against the war criminals on February 8, 2013. Their oath is not to cease until their goal is achieved.

Sajedur Akanda
 On behalf of Bangladesh Student Association
 The Ohio State University
 USA



PHOTO: WRITER

Why this farce of arrests?

Sagar Sarwar and Mehrun Runi were brutally murdered on February 11, 2012 in their apartment in West Rajabazar in front of their son Megh. During the last one year, the police failed to shed any light on the horrifying incident. DNA samples of some professional thieves were sent abroad and the mortal remains of Sagar-Runi were exhumed from their graves for forensic test. It was very painful for their relatives. But the mystery remained as it was.

From the February 10, 2013 issue of The Daily Star, we learned that security guard Enamul was arrested by RAB on February 9, 2013. We are very surprised by this news because Enamul had earlier been arrested several times and police had to let him go as they could not find any evidence against him.

On October 10, 2012 Home Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir claimed to have identified seven suspects including Enamul and announced a bounty of Tk 10 lakh on Enamul. So, Enamul was arrested and brought to the RAB headquarters for questioning.

Megh, son of Sagar-Runi, was interrogated by the police and RAB, but he did not mention the name of Enamul. It is hard to understand why he was arrested. I have to quote a few lines from Rabindranath Tagore's dance drama "Shyama": "Chor chai, je korei hok, hok na she je kono lok."

Nur Jahan, Chittagong

Why victims' families not yet compensated?

It is really shocking that families of 69 death victims have not yet received any compensation even more than two months after the tragic Tazreen fire incident. A recent report of this daily says that to date only 43 of the 112 families of the dead were given compensation of Tk 6 lakh each on December 4.

We hope there will be no more dillydallying over the issue. We would also like to know from the media the reasons for this delay in disbursing compensations.

Mobarak Ali
 RK Mission Road
 Gopibagh
 Dhaka



PHOTO: AFP

Fulfil journalists' demands

I sincerely support the demands of the journalists which include trial of killers of journalists including Sagar-Runi, safety for the news media people and a free press in the country. These demands have been made as per the decision taken at the journalists' grand rally held recently in front of the National Press Club.

I heartily appreciate the role of our journalists in protecting people's rights and the country's democracy. Our esteemed journalists of both print and electronic media have been creditably discharging their duties and responsibilities even under stress and so many limitations. I sincerely hope that the government will take appropriate measures to fulfil the journalists' just demands.

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



PHOTO: STAR

Opposition leader should clarify her stance

When all people of the country have taken the side of the Shahbagh protesters, the main opposition of the country and its leader Khaleda Zia keep mum. The way the BNP leaders are observing or commenting on the situation of Shahbagh is unacceptable. Why has not Khaleda Zia been frank and take a clear stance on Jamaat and the war criminals?

Md. Sairul Islam
 Lecturer in English
 Jahangirpur Girls' School and College
 Mohadveppur, Naogaon

We must adhere to basic tenets of law

Justice and judgment depend on evidence. In criminal matters, there has to be proof beyond a reasonable doubt before a person is judged guilty in an independent judiciary by a judge or jury who will only see the admissible evidence presented before him or her prior to giving their verdict. Until someone is proven guilty without a proof beyond a reasonable doubt in such a manner, the person is presumed to be innocent in the eyes of law. This is an ancient tenet of English Common Law, and this is also the key feature of Islamic Criminal Law.

I am observing with concern that the current developments of criminal justice system in Bangladesh are violating the basics of the justice system that a first year law student even knows. We are setting a disturbing bad precedent for our criminal justice system. But we need to adhere to the basic tenets of law.

Usman Hannan
 Barrister & Solicitor, Hannan Hannan Barristers



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Youths rekindle spirit of '71

Tens of thousands of people raise voice against religion-based politics, demand capital punishment to war criminals, vow to boycott Jamaat-Shibir (February 9, 2013)

Rubo

The rekindling of 71's spirit by our youths has opened a new opportunity for us to protest against injustice, misrule, misuse of power, corruption, nepotism, etc. Let Shahbagh become the focal point of our protests against corruption like Padma bridge scam, railway gate scandal, etc.

Anonymous

I am proud of our young generation. Please go ahead; we are with you.

Masum

Salute to those youths who gave the wake-up call to the nation.

Asif

We should also protest the wrongdoings of our government and oppositions.

Misir Ali

That's the spirit! Keep it up!

We're always with you. Let's show them that we, the people, can do anything if we want.

Reza

The new generation who hates the dirty politics of compromise is united for one demand -- capital punishment of war criminals and banning their politics in our country. The supporters of war criminals will face the same fate.

A Choudhury

I am proud to see the human sea of young generation recreating the spirit of 1971. Those who collaborated and actively participated in the in crimes with the Pakistani forces against our people must now migrate to their beloved Pakistan.

Muktadir Hossain

We will hang all the Rajakars. That's the oath of the youth!

Anonymous

Congratulations to our youths. I wish they were equally vocal against the thugery of our politicians regardless of their party affiliation.

Nayeem

I request my friends at Shahbagh to please convince our top two leaders of the two major political parties to come together to protest against Jamaat-Shibir.

Amjad Hossain

Jamaat-e-Islami committed criminal activities in the country during the Liberation War. A court of international standard could have been set up with international judges. A 'Bangladesh spring' should start in Bangladesh to drive out the old corrupt politicians from all political parties of the country. Bangladesh does not belong to any coterie: Awami League or BNP or Jatiya Party. Young and honest blood should join politics today.

Tirtho Mahmud

This effort of the new generation is highly commendable. However, I think it should be a platform to boycott not only Jamaat, but also violent student politics in all its forms. The memory of Bishwajit who was hacked to death in front of the world media is still fresh, and similar brutality is taking place in Bangladesh every now and then. I sincerely hope the organisers will

be able to keep this spirit of positive activism alive and spread in other areas of local politics that resort to violence and bloodshed.

Dr. Mokhesur Rahman

The 1971 spirit is back. Let all the anti-Liberation forces be eliminated from the country. Let the youths lead the protest peacefully until the objectives are achieved.

Syed Karim

Earlier in the week, I was shocked to see Jamaat and Shibir thugs violently protesting the sentence of war criminal Quader Mollah. This is outright treason and an insult to those 3 million Bangalees killed by the Pakistan army. I am glad to see the patriotic people of Bangladesh took to the streets demanding death sentence for all the war criminals.

Ahmed Badruzzaman

I am proud of the stand our new generation has taken. For too long politicians have used the war crimes issue to gain political advantage, while those who committed war crimes went scot-free. Now that the youth and the people have spoken out, there will be no room for such machinations. I hope the country's politicians, of all parties; will also take notice of this. Rampant corruption and muscle power of these politicians will also not go unchallenged.