

PHOTO: AFP

Familiarly Yours

This witty but thought provoking article reminds me of an incident that happened in my early childhood. A 'guest' from our 'desher bari' was staying at our house indefinitely—until my father arranged a job for him, that is. One day he asked me how much 'extra money' my father made. Even at that early age, I knew about the honesty and integrity my father upheld while discharging his official duties. The 'guest' had committed two wrongs here---first, he assumed that my father was corrupt like many other officials and then, he asked a very personal question---how much bribe money does your father make a month? It did not occur to him that even a corrupt person would not disclose that information because it is an invasion into privacy. I am now in my early thirties and I am still a bachelor. "Why aren't you getting married?" is a question I have to answer with a half-smile to at least three people everyday. We, as a people, do not have the slightest idea about what privacy is.

Monjoor Morshed
Azimpur, Dhaka

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

Nelson Mandela's philosophy of life was reflected in this paragraph in his autobiography: *No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.* How true his words ring in today's Bangladesh! We are a divided nation. Everywhere we look, we see hatred and violence. Let us learn to love. This country belongs to us all. If it prospers, we all enjoy the harvest. We hope the political parties will realise that and work toward taking the country further down on the path of prosperity based on love and compassion.

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Leaving 26

By deciding to give 16 December a miss this year, the author has actually proved how deeply he loves this country and how solemnly he reveres the sacrifices of those died and fought for the country. Maybe I will do the same. I wouldn't know what to celebrate this year.

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Victory Day

I want to congratulate the *Star* for bringing out a fascinating issue on the occasion of December 16. I appreciated all the articles in this issue including *What We've Lost, When Words Became Weapons, Newspapers in the time of War and Our Cruel Birth*. Great job, Star!

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