chintito

Old Wounds Heal Not

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To all those who argue that we Bangladeshis have been demanding an apology from Pakistan for their 1971 crimes only after the AL government of 2001 came into office, the dated extracts below from our column will suffice to evidence otherwise, one.

Secondly, this is but one column; there are numerous other writings where authors and orations when speakers have time and again demanded an apology from the sinners of 1971.

But, after the meaningless and uncalled for outburst in the Pakistan Parliament, whose one astounding December resolution, tantamount to interfering in our internal affairs, shocked even many Pakistanis, as evident from subsequent Pakistani newspaper editorials and news streams, a Pak apology today may not be enough to normalise relationship between the two countries.

The financial debt in crores of dollars that Pakistan owes this nation has to be settled, if need be by international arbitration.

The criminality of Pakistan forces, of their officers and men, who unleashed a genocide on this nation has to be settled, if need be by an international trial.

We demanded an apology from Pakistan, are demanding an apology, and shall continue to demand an apology; but now there are at least two additional matters that were this far eclipsed by our magnanimity. The Pak Parliament resolution was a rude awakening for us.

On 30 May 1995, in **Bangalee's short memory,** Chintito wrote:

Perhaps each trait of the Bangalee has its good and bad sides. But the one peculiarity amongst some of us that is unpardonable is the short-lived memory, particularly with reference to politics. While the emblematic Bangalee will be envious of the Jews hunting down Nazi war criminals and profusely acknowledging their nationalism, the same Bangalee this far has tried to brush under the carpet any suggestions of bringing to book the culprits at home and abroad opposing our liberation. On the contrary, some of us have conveniently forgotten everything that happened before 1971, have taken to speaking Urdu and even supporting the Pakistan cricket team on Bangladesh soil, etc etc. The same Bangalee will find it hard to imagine Israelis cheering a Palestinian Football Team or Mandela twisting his tongue to speak in French with Chirac.

Many of them today lead a cosy life in havens far from the anguish of the dear ones of their victims for whom every new day is to live yet another in pain.

On 26 August 1997, in **An apology for gruesome crime,** Chintito wrote:

In our War of Liberation we had come across many brutes among the Pakistani officers whose actions would have made Dyer tremble in fear. Yes, many of them today lead a cosy life in havens far from the anguish of the dear ones of their victims for whom every new day is to live yet another in pain. Have we not heard of Bangalee children being flung into the air only to test the sharpness of Pakistani bayonets? Have we not been shamed by the rape of our mothers and sisters? Have we not seen the murder of innocent Bangalees, streets and alleyways littered with our soul and body? Yet, have we ever made a concerted effort to seek an apology from Pakistan?...

The Pakistani head of state has visited Bangladesh several times. Let alone at other times, have our graveyards and killing fields ever echoed with the demand for an apology for the most heinous crime in history by the most barbarous of forces to coincide with their visit? Do we then not consider the martyrdom of our shaheeds worthy of an apology?