

Two wrongs are a wrong multiplied

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

LET me begin with German philosopher Friedrich Hegel's profound words, "Genuine tragedies in the world are not conflicts between right and wrong. They are conflicts

should be doing everything to preserve the gains through political maturity. While the BNP may live to regret its boycott of the January 5 election, the AL perhaps lives to regret backlash real-time of that unrepresentative election. Both sides will have to come to terms with inherent realities of their respective political strengths and learn to deal with their conflicts politically rather than by use of force. So far ruling party's political handling of the opponents' programmes has been reduced to muzzling the opposition voice ruthlessly and taking to the streets and fields to ensnare them under occupation. And as it happens political programmes

using the results of the tainted election to resolve their differences with the BNP on mechanics of holding next general election. Recall that in a reverse scenario BNP had utilised the outcome of its farcical election in February 15, 1996 to legislate caretaker system in the first place. The solution need not be the exact replica of the since annulled caretaker government but something close to it. The BNP is now ready for a dialogue and some compromise one would like to believe but all these must have a shelf life, which AL's astute political calculations should take into account. The midnight hurling of petrol bomb even at a police and BGB-escorted covered

'crossfire,' according to latest The Economist's coverage of Bangladesh. This is a cost exacted by perverse politics as though we are heading for something of a Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, although the intrinsic situations, inter se are not analogous. Even places with impenetrable police presence claiming multi-layered surveillance are not immune to one being a potshot or vulnerable to a snipe shot. In fact, it was a full scale premeditated attack on BNP adviser Reaz Rahman that along with the moving incident of Rangpur bus burning drew attention of the European Union (EU) dignitaries in Dhaka. They have voiced their concern over the self-

CLASH of the Satans

HUMOROUSLY YOURS



NAVEED MAHBUB

STEVE Emerson, a self-styled (aren't they all?) terrorism pundit says on Fox News that Birmingham, UK is an all-Muslim city where non-Muslims are not allowed in. David Cameron chokes on his breakfast. Mr. Emerson is a little off with his coordinates of

Birmingham ... Alabama, with its history of white shrouds. They are veils, aren't they? Wonder if his tweets spell the word 'Muslim' as 'KKK.'

Where are the pundits BEFORE tragedy strikes? Googling, perhaps. But the pundits are necessary to fill in the air time while being compensated with their 2 minutes (45 seconds plus TV commercials) of fame. After all, it takes time to find the perpetrators, even if one leaves his ID card in the getaway car.

That brings us to the perpetrators themselves, avenging by death the reference to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the very person who went to enquire about the well being of the woman who regularly laid thorns on his path. Not sure if the Kouachi brothers were aware of this. Nor is Fox News aware that backbiting is tantamount to eating the flesh of one's brother, arrogance puts us on Satan's VIP list and blowing one's own self up is more heinous than murder. If blowing yourself up with school kids is 'martyrdom,' then how come a billion Muslims still haven't chosen this 'easy' stairway to Heaven? Fox, CNN..., sounds Hebrew to you? No, you haven't heard these as you have given more than enough airtime to al-Qaeda to be our de facto spokespersons. Sometimes I wonder why we endure the painfully long waits of YouTube 'spooling' while bandwidth hogging videos of morbid threats or boastful claims to mayhem are seamlessly uploaded from the caves of Tora Bora.

Surprisingly, the Muslim countries exhibit no peer pressure to put PR pressure. Hey, Saudi Arabia, how about pour some petro dollars into a strong Muslim lobby. Nah, it's more important to spend millions on the tallest clock tower in the world in Mecca (where Muslims congregate to forget about all worldly matters, especially time), overshadowing, literally, the Holy Kabah.

So, the nameless one billion Muslims who can't make it to Paris (getting visas will be all the more difficult now), virtually join hands in the unity march. The sane world, regardless of faith, mourns the cartoonists and cops in Paris, the coffee sippers in Sydney, the school children in Peshawar, not to mention the countless in Baghdad, Damascus, Kabul...all those with zero involvement with and influence on policy makers. This is terrorism and by no means the soothing euphemism known as collateral damage, just as it is terrorism when the drone misses its intended mark, just as fatal drunk driving is terrorism, Budweiser style: "Where there's life to take, there's Bud Light."

As for Charlie Hebdo, sure, one can be left leaning, but not so left leaning that it is left with no compassion. Maybe to mock the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is 'freedom of speech' to someone, just as drawing a caricature of Prophet David (pbuh) is, er, anti-Semitism, or a pictorial ridicule of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is, er, racism. Remember the RR doctrine—with rights, come the responsibilities. The right to lampoon comes with the responsibility to at least consider the sentiments of one seventh of the world's population.

Does the world think that we (Muslims) will be on the other side of the Armageddon? Rupert Murdoch, CEO, NewsCorp, may think so as he tweets: "Maybe most Moslems [are] peaceful, but until they recognise and destroy their growing jihadist cancer, they must be held responsible."

Gosh! Do the one billion Muslims now have to display a yellow crescent on the lapel for its collective sin? I may be exempt—as a Muslim, I did go to a Catholic school...

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Peace is a 'period of cheating between two periods of fighting,' so the Devil's Dictionary defines peace in international relations. By some queer historical dynamic in Bangladesh, the spectacular definition holds good in our domestic politics.



are being addressed administratively and not politically at the level of politicians which is the staple of a democratic system. What we get to see is exchange of threats and intimidations clearly between two unequal sides, one having the state agencies to do its bidding and the other entirely at the receiving end. This has featured alternatively, almost chapter and verse, with the changing of guard at the helm. But the tale-tell difference in the present case is the extended hold on power by the AL and to top it off, it refuses to hold any election before 2019. The chestnut in the fire is: The ruling party can capitalise on the potential for

van on Rangpur-Dhaka highway burned passengers into cinder. In Dhaka, again a petrol bomb claimed lives of mother and child in a lethal embrace inside a three-wheeler. Everyday, fatalities and other forms of casualties add up to the total attrition as the blockade trudges along monstrosity. People are having to live in mortal fears, panicked about a new day -- wondering what more might be stacked up against them! These have been hogging headlines in the foreign media as stories awash with a feel of human suffering. If the people were sandwiched between political conflicts before they are now being caught in the

evident 'shrinkage' in democratic culture. In this backdrop, both the civil society in Bangladesh and the international community have renewed their call for AL-BNP dialogue. The more the uncertainty intensifies, what with its latest ramifications, the government will be under pressure to initiate a dialogue and the BNP to end its blockade. Just a catalyst of an approach from the right levels between the AL and the BNP could help craft a national charter for a stable and reassuring future the people so richly deserve.

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Are we raising good citizens?



NAIDINE SHAANTA MURSHID

A child born in a slum community is likely to have a different set of values and survival instincts than a child born in a middle class family, given that they are surrounded by different problems, types of behaviours and ways of living. At the same time, they see and are affected by the same billboards, they are affected similarly by the burning buses that accompany every strike/hartal, they are accustomed to the same begging children who get scolded for knocking on car doors. So amidst differences, there are similarities. Amidst different upbringings, they all normalise inequality, inequity, and oppression. And amidst the political violence all around them, they normalise violence to the extent that they all learn the use of violence.

Children learn what they see, they practice what they learn. When a child hears his mother say on the phone: "I'm on my way, I'll be there in 5 minutes," he learns that it is okay to lie. And he chooses to use lies when the opportunity arises. When he sees a car being burned in the middle of a road, he learns that things can be put on fire. But not everyone will put things on fire; whether or not people re-use that same violent behaviour will depend on what else is going on in their lives, including (but not limited to): whether they have acquired other coping skills, whether they know other conflict-management skills, whether they are prone to anger, and whether they find these acts protective or destructive, and whether they have positive sources of learning as well. In other words, the acculturated meaning that individuals ascribe to violent acts predates the use of vio-

lence, insofar as it meets their needs or realises their intentions. For example, if burning a bus is seen as, let's say, an act of protest, then the use of such violence is justified for them because they have ascribed meaning to the act. **The solution?** There seems to be no solution to such violence and its widespread use. But we need to start somewhere and the best thing to do is to start early. So, step 1 is to install a civic course in schools that would teach children what it means to be a good citizen. It should teach them that lying is not okay—not because Allah will give you gunah, but because it is wrong to lie to people. That it is not okay to touch them in inappropriate ways. Schools should teach them how to respect and love people, irrespective of age, sex, race, religion, and colour. And the way to do it is not by telling them, because that would only reinforce that behaviour, but by devising programmes in which these behaviours will be modeled to them. The programme will have to be tested, contextualised, and ensured that it is culturally competent before administration.

Most schools in Bangladesh do not provide any kind of civic education (other than the religious kind, and that too is directed towards the predominant Muslim population, not minorities). There are no tested and validated courses in which students are taught values, ethics, and what constitutes good citizenship. There are no sex education courses that demystify sex. These subjects need attention as they have long term effects on behaviours which in turn affect the society in which they live.

We, as individuals and parents, need to model behaviours that we want to see in the children that we rear. We need to be good citizens. We need to share our own ideas and experiences through mass media; blogs. Through discourse with our educators and moral guardians (imams and

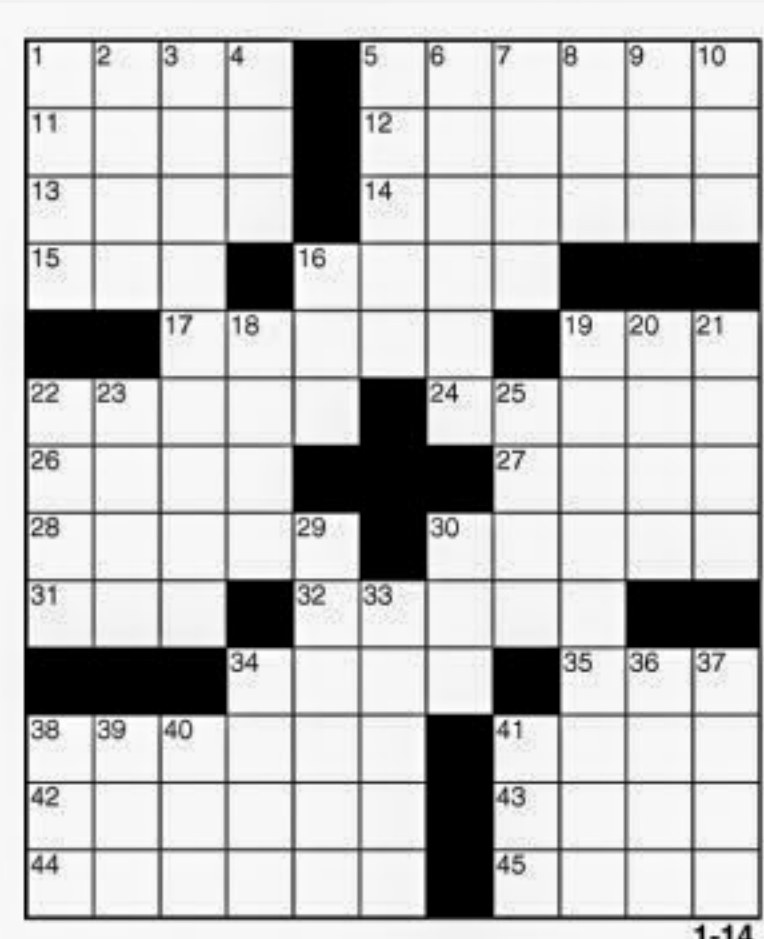
priests). We need to spread the word: violence or oppression or exploitation are not acceptable and will not be tolerated in any form, in any manner. And importantly, we need to remember that those who commit these crimes need mental health interventions and treatment. They need help to deal with what caused them to do what they do. **Violence as a public health issue** Violence is a critical public health issue, given that trauma from violence is debilitating for those who are at the brunt of such heinous acts. It is also debilitating for a nation that has limited resources and understanding of how to deal with violence in spite of laws that are rarely accessed due to lack of knowledge, fear of retribution, and a tendency to keep things private. When violence involves women, one of the most under-reported crimes in the world, it becomes clear (1) how exclusionary that experience is; and (2) the perception that there is no "safe" place to get help from. That unsafe place is to an extent an element of mistrust that is adaptive for those who experience such violence. However, a large part of that mistrust is fuelled by the environment in which they live. It is safe to say that friends and family, together with institutions such as the media, education, the arts, and literature have a large role in making the environment a safe one—safe to speak, safe to share, safe to feel what they feel—without fear of gossip and retribution, judgment and ridicule.

Individuals' exposure to political violence is somewhat different, but still debilitating, amidst a more widespread recognition of that violence (while other forms of violence such as marital violence or child abuse are less understood or recognised and recognisable). It is that very notion—the recognition of violence—that obscures the associated trauma of political violence as these individuals are often made into sacrificial

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CROSSWORD by Thomas Joseph

- ACROSS**
- 1 Big party
 - 5 Consider comparable
 - 11 Trade fair
 - 12 Infused with enthusiasm
 - 13 Stepped down
 - 14 Soaked up
 - 15 Director Brooks
 - 16 Young ones
 - 17 Andean beast
 - 19 Paint buy
 - 22 Fiery crime
 - 24 Doofus
 - 26 Pound sound
 - 27 Promgoers' car
 - 28 Touches on
 - 30 Stylist's spot
 - 31 So far
 - 32 Move like a baby
 - 34 Impact sound
 - 35 Mud bath site
 - 38 City opposite El Paso
 - 41 Fly high
 - 42 Punctual
 - 43 Composer Weill
 - 44 Enjoyed the canal
 - 45 Wee
- DOWN**
- 1 Ceiling support
 - 2 Wheel connector
 - 3 Is disgorged
 - 4 Blazing
 - 5 Derby town
 - 6 Porportional share
 - 7 Ballpark figures
 - 8 Smart phone download
 - 9 Kicker's aid
 - 10 Hall-of-Famer Roush
 - 16 Sandy color
 - 18 Big apartment
 - 19 Relaxes
 - 20 Clip contents
 - 21 Lunch hour
 - 22 Not at home
 - 23 Lounge attire
 - 25 Lobster part
 - 29 Plot
 - 30 Sleuth Spade
 - 33 Tore down
 - 34 Legal paper
 - 36 Divide
 - 37 Prententious
 - 38 Occupation
 - 39 Dos predecessor
 - 40 -- standstill
 - 41 Go downhill



Yesterday's answer

MESH SHAKIN
 ATHOS CABIN
 SHORTCOMING
 TIPRATDDE
 SEPTET NELL
 REHABODES
 AMASS
 SPANLAIRS
 CAVELYRICS
 AREPOIBEA
 LONGRUNNING
 ALGAE GESTE
 REEDY DIS

CRYPTOQUOTE

YBRJHR MHJP'S ZXP LI KBWJ EBLG, NXL LGJO YMVJ EIPCJHZXK MPSJRLIHR. - CMWBC NHJPPJH

Yesterday's CRYPTOQUOTE: AS YOU GET OLDER THREE THINGS HAPPEN, THE FIRST IS YOUR MEMORY GOES, AND I CAN'T REMEMBER THE OTHER TWO. - NORMAN WISDOM

BEETLE BAILEY

Henry



Henry



Henry



QUOTABLE Quote
 That which seems the height of absurdity in one generation often becomes the height of wisdom in another.
 Adlai Stevenson