

Brutal crimes shake society again

BITTER TRUTH



MD. ASADULLAH KHAN

THE murder of a mother and daughter in Chittagong, the murder of Rini, a brilliant student in Narasingdi by her spurned suitor Al-Amin, the killing of a college teacher in Cox's bazaar, and businessman in Sylhet in recent time and a host of other ghastly murders, robbery and rape incidents in different parts of the country indicates an alarming trend of violence stalking the nation.

Even minor children are not spared. In Chittagong, four children were killed along with their mothers during the last one year because the perpetrators feared that they might have recognized them and reveal their identity to the police, if they were kept alive.

An inevitable crisis resulting from greed, jealousy, restlessness, the deviilish nature of politics and deteriorating moral standards of all sections of the populace, are reasons behind this terrifying trend. Youngsters, mostly dropouts from schools and having no work or business to do, are out on the streets with guns and daggers or acid bottles with such deviilish intentions. The apathy of the society to this escalating crisis and failure of the state to address this problem is most appalling. The menacing trend of the social disorder, and killing of neighbour's minor child or a business friend on the flimsiest pretext either for money or grabbing business or political rivalry are the deadliest urban upheavals in the country.

With each day bringing more incidents of heinous murder, rape, torture, extortion and robbery to light, the list could be dauntingly endless. In the morning of May 9, we learnt of the shocking incident: Babita (21), a just married girl in Lohagara upazila of Narail district was tied to a tree and beaten mercilessly by her husband Shafiqul, now working in the Sylhet Bangladeshi

Army Regiment and seven others of his relatives. The incident that took place on April 30 was hushed up because of the influence of village 'matobbars' and came to light through a Facebook exposition. The local police station did not initially record the complaint lodged by the victim's relations and took up the diary after the incident created resentment in the village through publicity on the social media. The High Court in the meantime on a writ petition filed by Advocate Manzil

only ominous but a chilling symbol of the breakdown of our moral fabric and social values. Shockingly, women in the age group of 16-30 are living under constant threat to their lives and in several cases, wary of humiliation, they have chosen to end their lives. According to a report published in a Bangla daily on May 11, unable to bear the humiliating teasing and comments day in and day out by Shaon, a hoodlum and son of Motaleb Howladar of the same village, Sathi Akter (14), a

her face and neck and walked away as she woke up screaming—all because she refused to marry him?

Unhappily, as the government has started its journey toward building a democratic governance, it continues to face the most harrowing time with so many criminal actions jeopardising governance and development initiatives. The government would possibly admit that the track record of the law enforcement agencies is not anything inspiring. It is not enough that policy directives are framed, it is important that these are implemented and complied with by those in charge of police administration without malice, fear or favour, and of necessity without delay.

In fact, gruesome incidents of violence, murder, rape, and abduction have started to stalk the country in a manner that nobody could comprehend. On May 7, extortionists shot a teacher of Sher-e-Bangla agricultural university in Mohammadpur at 11 am in the city and decamped with 7 lakh 80 thousand taka he was carrying in a bag to deposit in a bank.

Things have gone so wrong in the country because the governments all along did not understand the meaning of governance. The country had become a "soft" state revealing itself to be completely incapable of fighting the forces of violence and terror. True, the patronage of criminals by politicians in the past and a demoralised police force pushed up the crime graph in the country. Very often and on too many occasions, the question of cadre politics, partisan interest have hamstrung police investigation and the judicial process. On the other hand, we have till now a justice system so flawed that we have yet to bring to justice those who committed crimes years before. Unhappily, the release of the hardened criminals after a protracted trial because of the loopholes in the FIR or GD entry so emboldens them that they dare to threaten the relatives of victims with dire consequences should they proceed with the trial.

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Murshid on behalf of Human Rights, and Peace for Bangladesh has directed the local administration and police to arrest the attackers within 48 hours and submit a report by May 18 informing the steps taken in this regard. What is most unfortunate is that every time such barbaric incidents take place, the apex court of the country has to clamp down on the recalcitrant law enforcement agency in the country for proper handling of such issues. Reports of such macabre crimes are not

class nine student of Charmuguria girls' high school, ended her life by swallowing pesticide. It is hard to comprehend the violence—the anger, jealousy, and plain sadism that can drive these deluded youths to commit acts of unimaginable horror. How, for instance, are we to understand the evil spite of Rathin (23), of a Gopalganj village, who crept into the bamboo hut of a college girl in the same locality in the middle of the night, poured concentrated sulfuric acid on

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The ball is not in my court

If the perpetrators of the law and order situation are from the camp we do not see eye to eye (not because all politicians wear dark glasses), then we heave a sigh of relief because we will be above blame, realising little that either way our nation is one more step closer to going to the dogs.

CHINTITO SINCE 1995



NIZAMUDDIN AHMED

THE Dhaka University proctor is perhaps excusing himself from all Pahela Baishakh culpabilities because the unprecedented crime took place 'outside' his university elaka, the

Vice-Chancellor, (C) Take measures to involve the law because his university's image is threatened.

Perchance if an act of criminal nature, laced with any degree of *jhamela*, takes place on a road (or a river) that divides two neighbouring police stations, the victim has had it; the push and pull begins in deciding which *thana* has the jurisdiction to take up his left arm and which the right, and if matters are least rewarding how competitive they can be to avoid taking up the case.

You hear people yelling and shrieking, furniture toppling, more shouting, thuds and then eerie silence in an apartment in your building. What is your best move? (A) Knock on the door of the apartment seemingly under attack, (B) Press the calling bell and cough loudly because it could be a marital row, (C) Stay where you are and take cover under a doorsill; after all it is ten in the morning and they say an earthquake is imminent. No prizes for the right answer.

You are driving at cruising speed

along a highway. The car in front of you is too slow to your liking. You honk and honk. Grrrr! The car gathers speed, and in an attempt to give you pass veers so much to the left that it crashes into a three-wheeler, whose passengers are thrown off and are bleeding profusely on the tarmac. You press on the accelerator, and give not more than a left glance to catch a glimpse of the driver of the car you pushed, yes you, slumped on the steering wheel. What is your best move? You guessed right, move. Your logic: (A) Neither of the vehicles are your responsibility, (B) Honk does not necessarily mean the driver had to give you pass, you wouldn't, (C) Roads should be wider because you pay tax.

A news item concerning a public disturbance by political elements makes the headlines. Damage to property and critical injuries have occurred. Gunshots and death perhaps. One of our first reactions is 'who done it?' If the culprits belong to the party we support even if from

afar, then we immediately bring out the 'outsider' tag and squarely blame the opposition because (A) they have infiltrated into our ranks for pecuniary benefits, (B) this is typically their signature work, (C) our boys were never so bad.

On the other hand, if the perpetrators of the law and order situation are from the camp we do not see eye to eye (not because all politicians wear dark glasses), then we heave a sigh of relief because we will be above blame, realising little that either way our nation is one more step closer to going to the dogs.

Those of us who own/use cars are very particular about keeping the inside of our vehicle neat and tidy. We most usually blame the city mayor for the filth on the streets, not perhaps ever stopping to think that we may have made our contributions too. Since we are in our protected space costing lakhs, we consider it totally justified to soil the street that costs crores. Our brazen actions include throwing out of the window

tissue papers and foil packs and water bottles and banana peels and worn out sandals and the day's newspaper and well-used diapers because (A) the inside is air-conditioned, (B) there is only that much space inside, (C) the outside is someone else's court.

My mother is not in this hospital before which the signboard reads 'hospital' and I know patients need quiet from my twenty visits to Singapore and three to the USA. Oh! What a system they have there, I tell everyone. But, because this is Bangladesh (A) I shall blast my car's loud horn as many times as I feel is right to make the b---- puller move his rickshaw, (B) I shall open the car window and up the volume to maximum, so that Dhakabassis can hear this fabulous new release, (C) there is no system here.

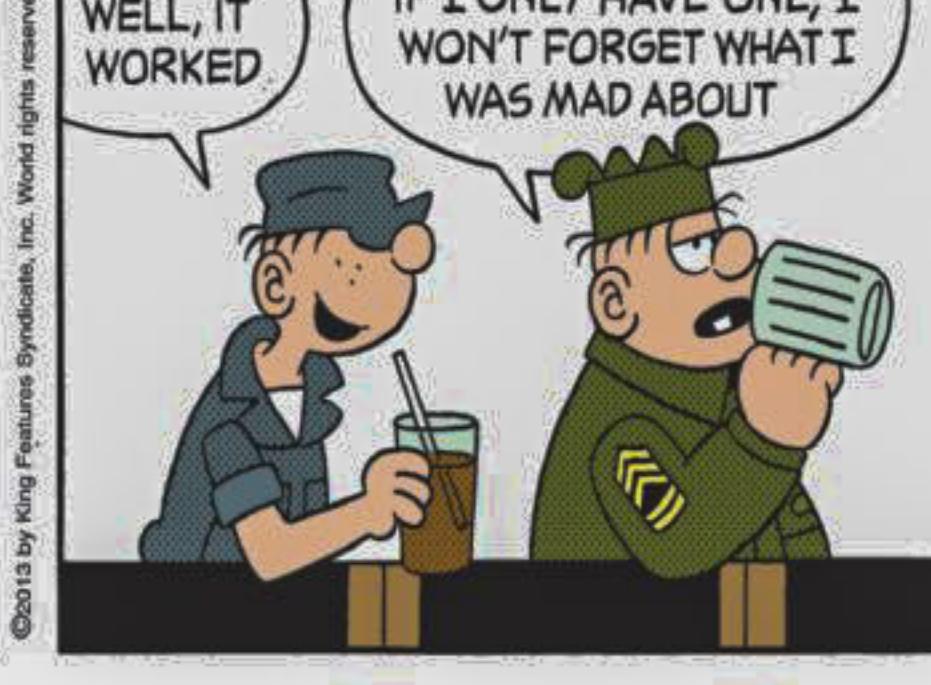
My son does not go to this school ...

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BEETLE BAILEY



by Mort Walker



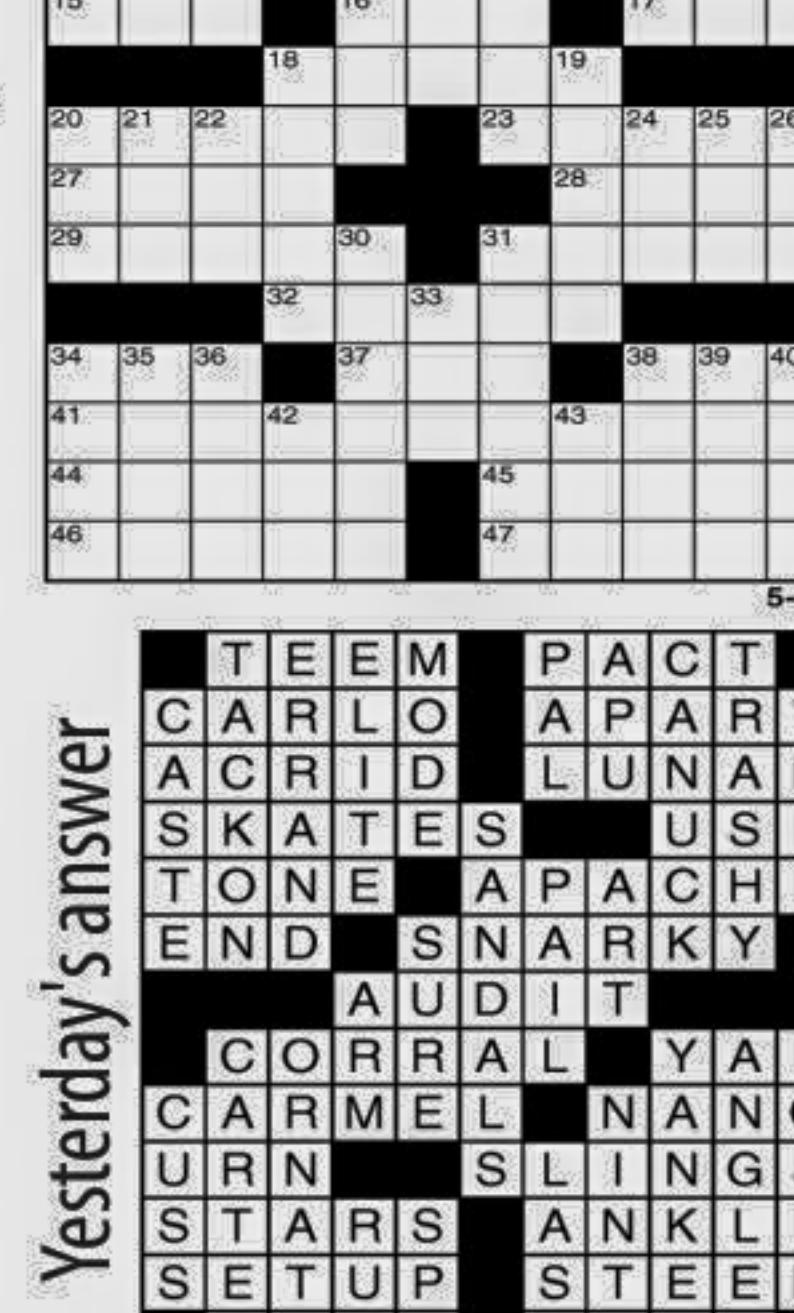
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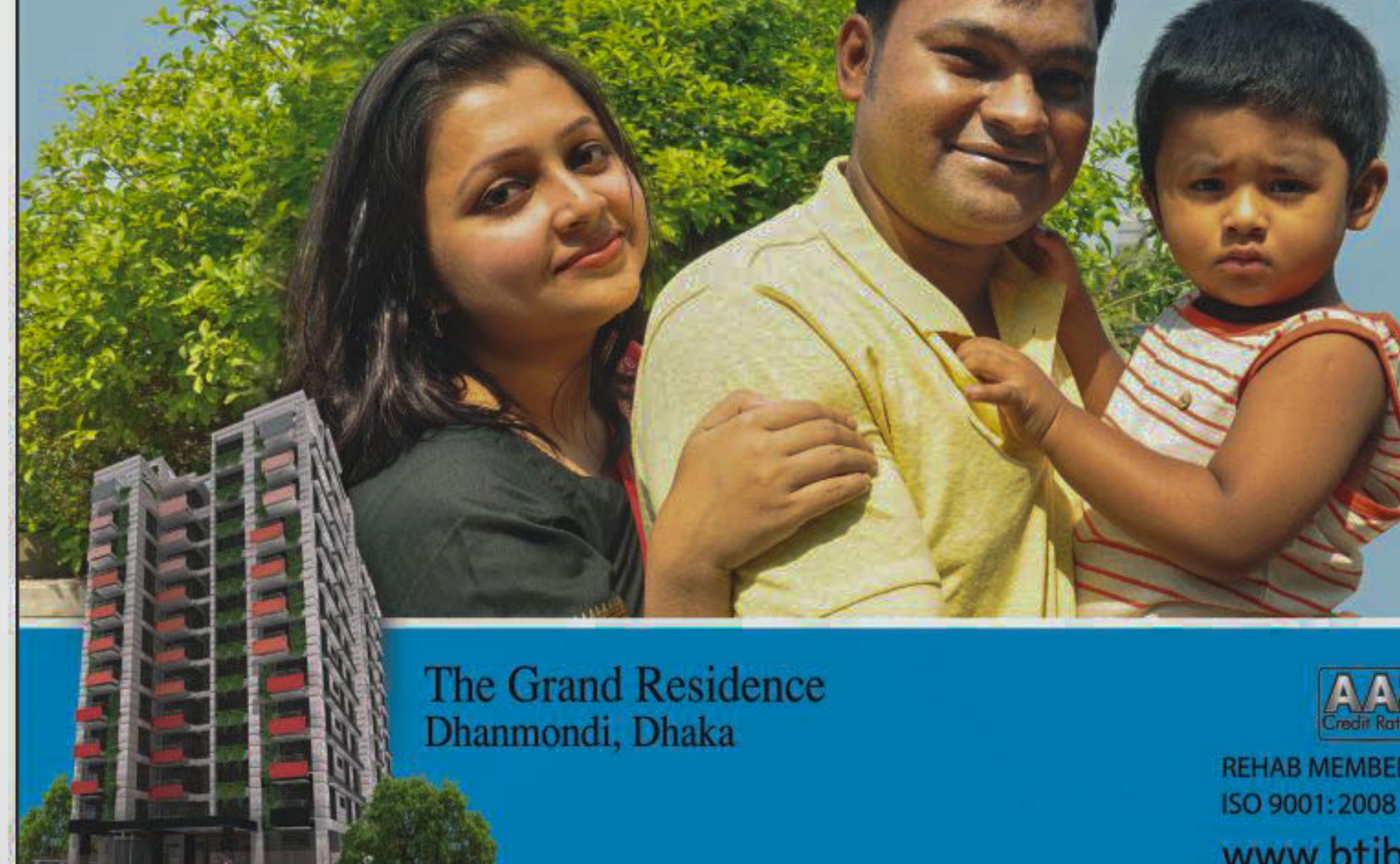
by Don Tranche

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Fragrant wood
6 Book of maps
11 Sports setting
12 Hard to see
13 Hit for Jennifer Lopez
15 Court divider
16 Look upon
17 Price addition
18 Hoisting device
20 Lucifer
23 Become narrower
27 Wildly excited
28 Zilch
29 Train stop
32 Fleet-related
34 Buck's mate
37 Buddy
38 Deli meat
41 Hit for George Harrison
44 Mayflower name
45 Billiards shot
46 Finishes last
47 Foe
DOWN
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