

Petty causes, demonic crimes, a way out

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

THE surge in sadistic crimes before and after the Eid has given us some bone-chilling realisations about where our society is headed. There were two contradictions in the overall scenario: One, the tranquil rural settings to the barbarities unleashed, apparently quite out of step with the surroundings; and two, they were committed at the closing days of Ramadan peaking up to Eid-ul-Fitr. This has been mindlessly in contrast to the auspicious time-span marked by religious fervour, tolerance and fellow-feeling.

As for the irony of the crimes in idyllic rural environ, the explanation is, the law enforcement outreach falls way short of it. But there is a deeper analytical reason as follows: The process of urbanisation, mobile communication and multiple TV channels have had effects on the rural psyche, both good and bad. Depending on their dispositions, users pick up messages and imagery that best suits their optical lenses, so to speak.

Ramadan and Eid have traditionally offered windows of opportunity for ceasefires in Middle Eastern wars and even initiation of talks to bridge differences between contending parties. Although they would relapse into their old mould downstream, at least there was a welcome reprieve. Even this is changing during the holy month with the IS bombings unabated and interminable counter onslaughts from the defending side. So that bit of changing scenario couldn't go



unnoticed in the rest of the world. The plethora of recent crimes shows a devilish pattern: Gouging out the eyes of a woman, hacking sleeping victims to death,

bruising them with bricks, decapitating the elbows of a person, an adolescent being beaten and dumped into the river with limbs tied up, even an annoyed mother hurling a child on the floor causing her death. The picture of tying up children with a tree is the height of child right abuse. Even so, the media could only perhaps capture a fractionated picture of the whole.

The causes are identifiable but the motives do not apparently relate to the grievousness of crimes being committed over petty matters like, for instance, suspected stealing of a pigeon.

The barbaric punch on the vulnerable stems from the unshakable belief that they can do as they please without having to be answerable to anyone. Then there is the fear of the villain that dulls the obligation of any conscionable person to approach any community leader or policeman for intervention. Any thug with scowling eyes will have some people around him lending hands in the nefarious act.

The values are so distorted; they make minced meat of the weak and vulnerable perhaps out of frustration that they couldn't do the same with their equals. They are walking delusions of heroics on cowards' legs.

What over two centuries ago, Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman philosopher and political theorist said holds true even to this day, "The greatest incitement to crime is the hope of escaping punishment."

The other thing that emboldens criminals is that people in high places themselves flout laws with impunity as something of a VIP prerogative. The smaller people by a demonstration effect too, crave for a feel of power.

And Aristotle aptly summed it all

up: "Separated from law and justice he (man) is the worst."

When social scientists, psychiatrists and legal minds are trying to fathom the roots of man's inhumanity against man, we have a rather superficial analysis by a high police official. A DMP spokesman day before yesterday termed the crimes as isolated incidents and not any reflection on a deteriorating law and order situation. This denial mode cannot bring about a proactive approach replacing what is a reactive one.

In this context, we cannot but help cite the example of AIGP Nazrul Islam who struck up an effective idea to combat the curse of child marriage. He talked to the potential victims, formed a team amongst them, picked seven villages and formed groups of adolescent girls. The girls were given police phone numbers to notify whenever they saw any child marriage.

Then they collected addresses of teachers, doctors, mosque imams, union parishad chairmen and other influential people and corresponded with them for their cooperation in the fight. The simple strategy worked bringing down child marriage drastically in the working areas. This inspiring example can be replicated widely, particularly the second part of convincing the local influential to join the endeavour. Even the agenda of crimes against women, children and other vulnerable folks can be addressed through this medium.

George Bernard Shaw has the final words: "We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it."

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CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS		24	Extinct bird	42	Electronics	9	Engraved
1	Tent anchor	25	'And I Still Rise'		piece	10	Old auto
6	Invited		poet	43	Send in	17	Misbehaved
11	Debussy suite	27	Dune makeup	44	Fills up	23	Wrap up
12	Three-card game	29	Criss of "Glee"	45	Flair	24	France's Cote-
		32	Parisian pal			26	Cavalry soldiers
13	Last letter	33	Campaign	DOWN		27	Light lunches
14	Voting groups	34	Punk rock	1	Decelerated	28	Activist
15	Hawk's love		offshoot	2	Steamed snack		Bloomer
16	Pitcher Maglie	35	Was ahead	3	Green Day	30	Chef Lagasse
18	Comic first	36	Bars for		song	31	Thumbs down
	baseman		scanning	4	Beer bash need	33	Tricks
19	Yale player	37	Ariz neighbor	5	Cleaning	39	Sports drink
20	Rink makeup	38	Rap Sheet	6	Stroll		suffix
21	By now		info	7	Musical note	41	Badminton
22	Suitably dressed	40	Madrid month	8	Green Day song		need

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

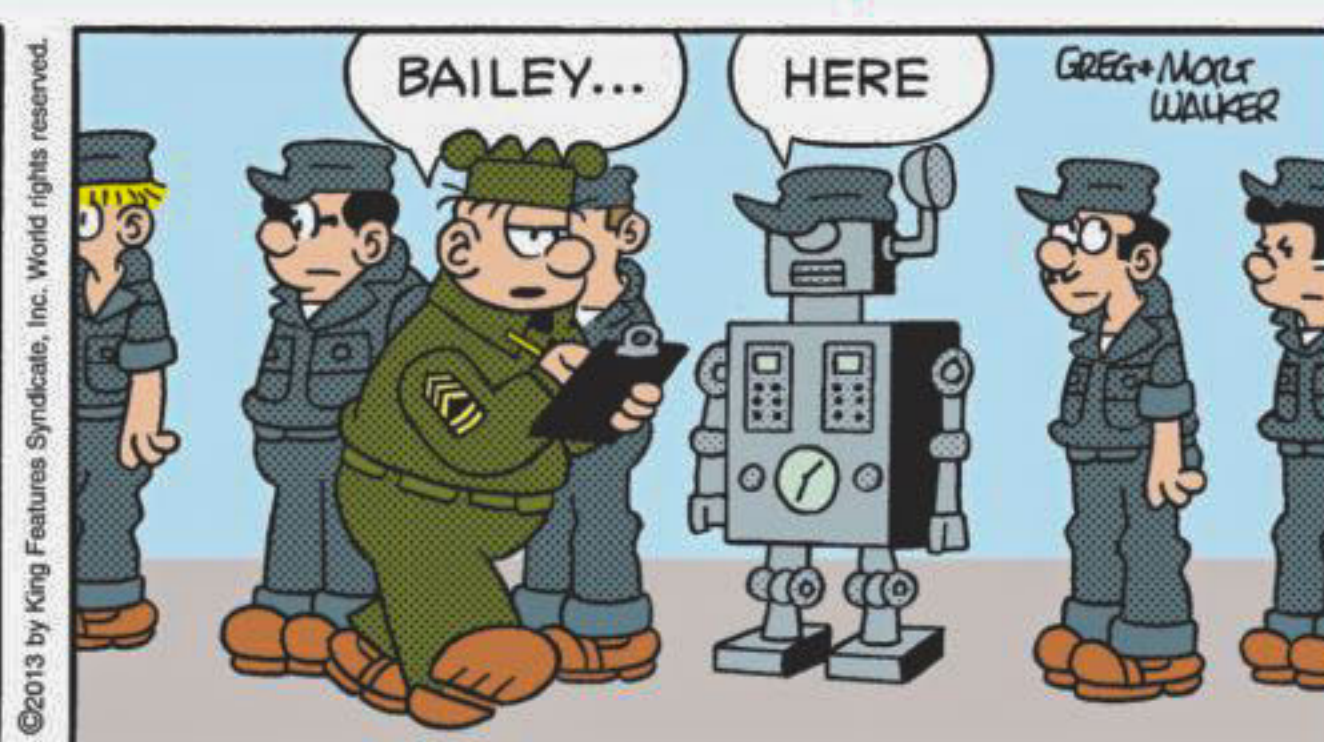
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7-24

BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott



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