

# Arguments you cannot brush aside

*The operative words are extremism and terrorism; so what's in a name, terrorism is terrorism. The threats have always been there and to be fair to ourselves some of the major terrorist acts have not seen handing out of convictions to the perpetrators.*

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

**Y**OU know the speed of light, but has this question ever occurred to you: "Okay, what is the speed of dark?" This bizarre issue has been raised by

Wright Stevens, a Hollywood movie director. But he may have made a scientific point that could bear a philosophical relevance to a real life situation.

When light cannot penetrate an obstacle, a shadow forms on the other side. That way, light and darkness appear as instantaneous phenomena having equal speed, if you will.

Whilst light is welcomed, shadow is not. The former with the tool of transparency shines the path to solution; the latter is part of the problem and not of solution.

Signaling no material change in the investigative narrative on Cesare Tavella's murder, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal has retracted from a previous statement on BNP leader Quayum. The allegation that 'he was behind the September 28 Italian citizen's murder' has been rephrased into his being 'one of the top suspects'. But the minister later thought he was wrongly quoted by the media on this issue.

The reason behind the change of emphasis apparently resides in the disclosure under the *borobhai* category: 'Not only Quayum, others are also on the list, according to information available to us', the minister added with a hint of retaining operational flexibility.

Quayum's family has claimed that he had been away from the country in Malaysia for six months, a claim that is



clearly verifiable as an extenuating circumstance, other things remaining the same.

The police were obviously under pressure to come out with results in their investigation. The detectives paraded four accused killers, the trigger having been pulled at Travella by Rubel who made a confessional statement in this respect.

The police are yet to recover the weapon used in the murder, though the ballistic report on the bullet they had found is in the hands of investigators. Criminologists tend to emphasize synchronization between ballistic

report on the weapon and that of the bullet which we believe the police would regard as key element in solving the case.

In parallel, Humayun Kabir Hira arrested in connection with the killing of Japanese citizen Kunio Hoshi in Rangpur too made a confessional statement before a senior judicial magistrate on Wednesday.

Going by a BBC report, Sohel, one of the suspected accused in the Kunio case is hiding in Britain.

Let's face up to a customary practice of falling in a denial trap as though hesitating to own up to the

embarrassment of failing to avert a nefarious design. Even in countries where governance is rated high, the government does not shy away from addressing an untoward incident lest it bring it to a greater disrepute.

More to the point, no sooner had an investigation begun people in high places started voicing opinions and engaging in name calling. It is no rocket science to grasp that these tend to influence the course of investigation and consequently, its outcome.

In all, however, we take the position that the investigations are far from being done and dusted. And, that these

will continue in earnest to get to the heart of the matter. Keep an open mind to plausible options so that when the prosecution is prepared it is foolproof, credible and unassailable by standard legal yardsticks.

SITE Intelligence Group, stands by its reports on IS claims to both the foreigners' killings as well as the Hossaini Dalan grenade attack on the eve of Ashura, linking the latter to 'soldiers of Khalifa'. The for-profit organisation, understandably finicky about its reliability, asserted that the claims have been authenticated and found credible by its 'rigorous verification process'.

The home minister is equally assertive debunking the claims saying that these were not uploaded on IS' official website. Meanwhile, the US State Department spokesperson has said that US was not 'certain' about the presence of Islamic State (IS) in Bangladesh.

Such debates are like dancing around semantics and nomenclatures. The operative words are extremism and terrorism; so what's in a name, terrorism is terrorism. The threats have always been there and to be fair to ourselves some of the major terrorist acts have not seen handing out of convictions to the perpetrators.

Let us not even unwittingly convey a sense that we are stuck with a set piece narrative, whatever its apparent merit to the exclusion of other possibilities. Disgruntled elements are there and who knows what façade they may be using to hide behind as they carry out their lethal agenda.

To end on a Wright Steven's quote again, 'The severity of the itch is proportional to the reach.'

The writer is Associate Editor, *The Daily Star*.

# Sharing the grief of a mother

ABDUL MANNAN

**I** have never met Aman but could feel the silent tears of a bereaved mother. Yes, I am talking about the column by Hasna Jasimuddin Moudud titled *Aman's Ordeal* published in *The Daily Star* last Saturday. I have met the writer once and that was years back in different circumstances. She is the daughter of an illustrious son of the soil, *Palli Kabi* Jasimuddin, and wife of BNP politician Barrister Moudud Ahmed. She recently lost her son Aman. When Aman breathed his last, I was in Europe but managed to read the news. Hasna's write-up gives details, along with names of the doctors and hospitals whose careless handling of the ailing Aman led to a tragedy. Whether Aman would survive or not is not in the hands of any human being, but doctors are supposed to exhaust their ability, and hospitals are supposed to facilitate the efforts of the doctors to save a patient. In the case of Aman, this did not happen.

Availability of proper healthcare is a birthright of all human beings. However, many countries of the world, including Bangladesh, deny this right to their citizens or international patients. Recently, I was abroad, leading a high powered delegation of government bureaucrats and UGC senior officials. One of our team members was an asthma patient. Due to the falling temperature, his condition suddenly deteriorated. One of our hosts, from a renowned university,

took my colleague to the university health care centre to administer an inhaler. The healthcare centre asked for an insurance card which my colleague did not have. The centre informed him that if they administered the inhaler, he would have to pay \$800! The poor fellow had to return to the hotel where he had his own inhaler.

Aman, when admitted to a renowned hospital in the capital, was diagnosed to be suffering from dengue. From the description of Aman's mother, it seemed like the hospital was experimenting on Aman, disregarding the fact that they were endangering his life. Aman's parents were seriously worried about the deteriorating health of their son. They took their son to Singapore in an air ambulance to get better treatment in the well-known Mount Elizabeth Hospital. However, due to the negligence of the concerned authorities there, the young man breathed his last on a foreign soil. In fact, even after death, Aman could not rest in peace, as his body lay in the Singapore General Hospital morgue for hours, while the hospital and law enforcement authorities indulged in lengthy bureaucratic processes with the bereaved parents.

Before receiving their degree, doctors have had to take the Hippocrates Oath, named after the celebrated Greek physician. The oath stated: "Life is short, and the Art long; the occasion fleeting; experience fallacious, and judgment difficult. The physician must not only be

prepared to do what is right himself, but also to make the patient, the attendants, the external cooperate." Doctors also had to promise that they would "follow that system of regimen which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients,

to the clinic owned and run by people we knew well. For no apparent reason, the clinic staff took her to the ICU and began administering oxygen (I cannot tell for sure if there was any oxygen in the mask). One of the doctors, whom I knew for ages, told the duty doctor

nutritious liquid food, administered through a rice tube. However, an unnecessary four-member "medical board" would visit her every day, only to inflate their bills. After 19 days, my mother was finally released, and we had to dish out a fat bill.

patient; he or she will have his or her sad story to share, as did Hasna Moudud. The parents of Aman will not get back their beloved son, but the bereaved mother should be thanked for sharing not only her son's ordeal but also for exposing the misdeeds of some of our

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and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous." Doctors are still required to take the oath, but I doubt that they use it in their professional life.

When my 90-year old mother was suffering from malnutrition, we admitted her

that if necessary, my mother should be given life support. I was not only surprised but alarmed by the greed shown by the staff of the clinic. After seven days, on our insistence, my mother was shifted to a cabin. She just needed

Unfortunately, healthcare in Bangladesh, and in many other countries, no longer serves the purpose of the patients but only the pockets of the doctors and the coffers of the owners who run these hospitals or clinics. Ask every

high profile hospitals, and the systemic problems that prevail even in countries like Singapore. May Aman's soul rest in peace.

The writer is Chairman, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh.

## QUOTABLE Quote



MARTHA GELLHORN

DO NOT SEE MYSELF AS A FOOTNOTE TO SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE.

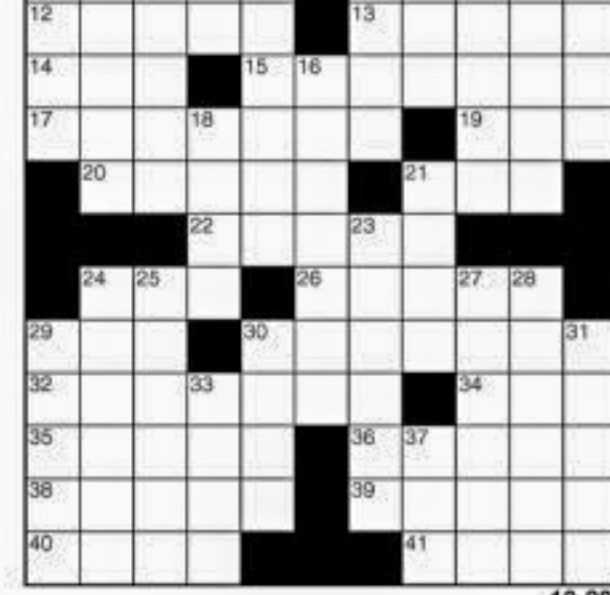
## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- High pair
  - Bit of smoke
  - Vestige
  - Blitzen's boss
  - Blenders setting
  - As a follower
  - Greek vowel
  - Disappointment
  - Challenging tennis play
  - "...folly to be wise"
  - Spa room
  - Very popular
  - Librarian's bane
  - Bible boat
  - Tale tellers
  - Lanka
  - Part of a space-walker's gear
  - Mixing sites
  - Part of many German names
  - Mink's cousin
  - Speculate
  - Birds of the pampas
  - Time being
  - Poorly lit

- DOWN**
- Casual tops
  - Colorado resort
  - Skydiving needs
  - Book boo-boos
  - Glimpse
  - Prop for Potter
  - All told
  - "Be quiet!"
  - Half of a chess set
  - Presidential middle name
  - Locale
  - Online correspondent
  - Sticky stuff
  - Pile
  - Squelches
  - Singer Franklin
  - John of "Three's Company"
  - Deep gorge
  - Torch holder
  - Fencing need
  - Jelly buys
  - Leg joints
  - Bill
  - Poker prize

## BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

JOSHES TOAD  
ORIENT UNDO  
GENETIC CODE  
HEROS  
SCAR VOLT  
THAW DENIAL  
AIR BAT VIA  
BETRAY BEND  
SEEN BENT  
ATSEA  
PRODUCT CODE  
HAFT ATTAIN  
INTO NESTED

## BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott

