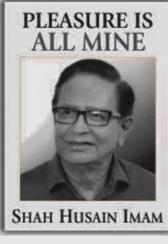


Who's taking the brunt of the backlash?



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE
WITH full respect for the description of the IS' carnage in Paris 'as war against humanity' and in affirmation of the universal commitment to fight it, we cannot help notice though, the eye of the storm is rushing towards the

township in Brussels sounded nery saying that some mosques had been closed down earlier on while most were considered 'noble' and therefore functioning.

The IS nicknamed Daesh, an Arabic word meaning a group of bigots imposing their will on others not only killed innocents but also put majority of Muslims on the harm's way by giving Islam a bad name. They do not rest content with orchestrating a catastrophe, they even courted backlash as an apparently favoured agenda. The extremists want division and alienation between communities, disenfranchisement of the Muslims and application of Draconian laws against them; for there is a mileage to be

against the monster. They would be stoking with fire if they didn't.

IS has vaulted to the top of a greasy pole and strange associations are linked to its origin. A desperate organisation like the IS can have strange bedfellows, perhaps not excluding an Israeli connection, with the objective of dividing and weakening the Muslim world.

The IS threat perception is spreading: US, UK, Japan and India are on alert. In Bangladesh Italian priest and doctor Piero Parolari was the latest target of a blatant snipe shot few miles off the sleepy Dinajpur town. Thankfully, he has survived but not without reminding us of the foreigner killings in Bangladesh.

George Osborne, Conservative MP in Britain, has touched on a vital issue of an attempted cyber war against Western infrastructure, a capability that the IS is now far from acquiring but may try to get hold of. IS has used the social media for radicalisation through devious propaganda machinations. The British MP held up the possibility of suddenly unlighted hospitals, immobilised metro rail or stoppage of civic services. He has asked for a huge budgetary allocation to build up cyber technology defense mechanisms.

We would do well to take a leaf or two from a book titled *The Accidental Guerrilla* with the subtitle *Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* by David Kilcullen. The book has an anthropologist's sense of social dynamics and a reporter's eye for telling detail.

His argument pivots around two observations: a) Our current focus is far too narrow, for it tends to emphasise one geographical region and one state; b) While there is a 'global enemy', it amounts to 'only two percent to five percent of the people we have been fighting since 9/11.' Many of the others are 'Accidental Terrorists' provoked into retaliation by intrusion into their territory or disputes.

The Times recommends, 'His (Kilcullen) strength is in knowledge of the different enemies and their motivation, and it is his case that without understanding those subtleties, the battle is lost.'

The writer is Associate Editor, The Daily Star.

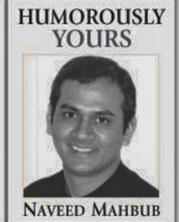
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made from their plight.

At the top of the Western response, France has invoked collective clause of EU whereby attack on one member is dealt with as an attack on other members of the community. Thus a coalitional approach has already got underway. There is also talk of invoking Article (5) of NATO which barring in the case of September 11 has not been invoked thus far. A coalition of the willing is in place already.

The IS is territorially cornered; that's why it is ramping up extraterritorial misadventures. But experts think that they can be overpowered in amazingly quick time if Putin, Rohani, Obama and King Salman of KSA make a common cause of their fight

Russian Roulette



NAVEED MAHBUB

HUMOROUSLY YOURS
DHAKA to Bangkok and back to Dhaka on Air Asia - Taka 5,000? Wow! So, we click the 'purchase' button online. One small question, almost as an

I repeat the exercise at London's Heathrow Airport where you're held up for 45 minutes if the scanner alarm goes off. No, there is no young, attractive security agent there. On the contrary, it is invariably a run-of-the-mill, middle-aged, out-of-shape, grumpy, English man. I smilingly stretch out my hand, again, before the alarm goes off. This is payback time - getting an English man on Her Royal Majesty's payroll, to give me a free 45 minute massage for his 190 years of presence in this part of the world. Oh, let's not even bring up the Kohinoor.

afterthought, before finalising the transaction:
"Would you like a seat belt?"
"Huh?"
Ok, that's a click on the 'Yes' button. Taka 15,000.
"Would you like oxygen?"
"Yes!"
Taka 22,000.
"Would you like an aircraft?"
"Yes!!!"
Taka 27,000.
"Would you like a co-pilot?"
After a quick cost-benefit analysis, "No!!!!"
"Are you sure?"
"Yes!!!"
"Congratulations! We are pleased to say that your flight will be commanded by Captain Mahattanakul, who has just successfully completed his quadruple bypass surgery. Would you like a co-pilot?"
"Hell, yes!!!!"
Taka 42,000...

And so, air travel has become a commodity, a welcome far cry from the exclusive rides on the zeppelins (don't think about the Hindenberg).

But as with anything with easy access, comes the evil of those who exploit it. Hence, the 9/11 tragedy and the subsequent birth of US's Transportation Security Administration (TSA) warranting the arrival at airports two...days prior to departure and with every passenger doing a strip dance (minus tips).

Taipei Airport is no less strict. However, I deliberately leave my keys in my pocket as it is invariably an attractive young lady who ends up frisking me (I stretch out my arms with a smile even before the scanner yells a beep).

Lucky that Biman is still allowed to fly into Heathrow. Not so lucky with the Americans - Biman is deemed not safe enough to touch down at any US airport. Not because of Biman itself, but for the airport that is its home. What do you really expect, when a half asleep, bored man puts a shocking pink sticker on your exploding suitcase as it comes out through the security scanner. Choice of a wrong word - I mean the suitcase exploding with personal belongings - in the case of trans-Atlantic flights, with oil laden mango pickle jars.

That's it? What if I pilfer with the suitcase as I carry it with the security scanner all the way to the check-in counter? Sure, there is another check point prior to boarding (an additional third one, just three feet away, for Indian carriers), but my suitcase is well on its way to the aircraft cargo hold.

Yet, with all these varying levels of security, there is still 9/11, Lockerbie, the Shoe Bomber and perhaps most recently a Russian Airbus over the Sinai. So, why are we surprised that a concert hall, a Japanese restaurant, a soccer stadium, a train station, the streets of Karachi or Baghdad or Kabul or Rangpur or Gulshan are all a summer breeze. Oh, and of course, the average Joe and Jane, of all colour, creed, race and religion, are in abundant supply as sacrificial goats in the game of Russian Roulette....

The writer is an engineer at Ford & Qualcomm USA and CEO of IBM & Nokia Siemens Networks Bangladesh turned comedian (by choice), the host of ABC Radio's Good Morning Bangladesh and the founder of Naveed's Comedy Club. E-mail: naveed@naveedmahbub.com

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

And what of the dignity of the child?



AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

NO STRINGS ATTACHED
FOR sceptics, observance of certain 'days' is seen as little more than a grand PR initiative to promote certain organisations working in the particular field or for governments to pay lip service to UN mandates. But going beyond the cynicism it

Bangladesh has done impressively well in major areas such as immunisation against major diseases, reducing infant mortality, and increasing primary education enrolment, that too with more girls in school than ever before and free primary education. But we have not made much progress when it comes to upholding the dignity of the child.

The starkest examples of this are instances of barbaric torture inflicted on children, often leading to grievous injury or death. The widely publicised brutal murders of Rajon who was tied up and ruthlessly beaten to death and Rakib whose former employer inserted a pump nozzle through the child's rectum to fill his abdomen with air until he died are enough to make us realise how far behind we are in terms of meeting the expectations of the Convention.

Article 19 highlights the child's right to be protected from all kinds of violence - from being mistreated physically or mentally. It stipulates that governments must ensure that all children be protected from abuse, neglect by parents or guardians, that any form of discipline involving violence is unacceptable. Put this against the news of seven-year-old Md Siam Hossain who was confined to a room with his feet tied because he kept running away from the madrasa to be with his parents. Other news stories have reported madrasa students being tied up, caned mercilessly, hung upside down from a ceiling and starved in order to discipline them. There have been reports of teachers and headmasters of regular schools inflicting cruel punishments on children. These horrible incidents are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the actual number of children being



The Child Bill 2013 is supposed to be in harmony with the CRC and recognises that an individual below 18 is a child. Why then do we still have child marriages? Why then do we have little children working in homes, in biri factories, in garbage dumps and tanneries?

subjected to degrading, physically injurious, torture within the schools, madrasas, orphanages and homes. And all this is happening despite a law that prohibits corporal punishment and Article 37 (of CRC) that prohibits anyone from punishing children in 'a cruel and harmful way'.

Now let's come to the issue of child labour, which basically violates quite a number of the Articles in the Convention. The right of all children, irrespective of race, religion, family background, nationality, etc. to free primary education, to a standard of

living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs, the right to relax and play, to be a part of artistic activities, to be protected from hazardous work that harms their health and education - these are only a few of the rights that are blatantly violated with respect to child labour. Now think of the 1.3 million children working in hazardous jobs and 420,000 child domestic workers who are deprived of education, time for play, proper nutrition, adequate rest and health care. Many of these children are routinely punished and treated harshly with

contempt and disrespect from the adults who employ them and their family members.

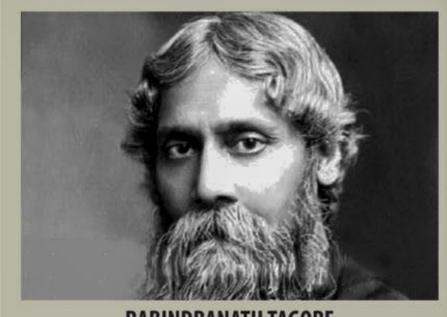
If it is the dignity of the child we are talking about nothing is more in contradiction to such a concept than child marriage - around 66 percent of girls are married off before they reach adulthood with one third of them being less than 15. By law, child marriage is prohibited as is the demand for dowry. Child marriage grossly contradicts the Convention for it legitimises sexual abuse, deprives the child of an education and adversely affects her health. Attempts to lower the legal age of marriage from 18 to 16 (for girls) indicate the complete disregard for the dignity of the child.

The Child Bill 2013 is supposed to be in harmony with the CRC and recognises that an individual below 18 is a child. Why then do we still have child marriages? Why then do we have little children working in homes, in biri factories, in garbage dumps and tanneries? Why then do we have little girls and boys being tortured to death by sadistic employers?

Thus while we may celebrate Universal Children's Day to honour those individuals who are our most precious treasures and who will shape the future of our nation, as the grownups, whether we are parents, policymakers or leaders - who are responsible for protecting them, providing them with a minimally decent life and respecting them as human beings - how well have we been doing our job? That probably should be the overriding theme of this day.

The writer is Deputy Editor, Editorial & Opinion, The Daily Star.

QUOTABLE Quote



RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Let us not pray to be sheltered from dangers but to be fearless when facing them.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- Downhill coaster
 - Clothing brand
 - Treasure with needles
 - Baghdad native
 - Excited
 - Clock numeral
 - Lilliputian
 - Brief drop
 - Like Russian dolls
 - Rational
 - Tempest
 - Trees that include the Autumn Flame
 - Grammar topic
 - Rating unit
 - Of the highest quality
 - Upper limits
 - Hidden
 - 2016 Olympics site
 - Energy
 - Commotion
 - A complete failure
 - From the Arctic
 - Put away
 - Undermine
 - Really impressed
- DOWN**
- Andorra neighbor
 - Easter flowers
 - Sign up
 - Grass moisture
 - Similar to
 - "You -- Here"
 - Question from a bartender
 - Horse-related
 - Uttered softly
 - Planters
 - Trees that include the Autumn Flame
 - Sight-seeing trips
 - "Now you --, now you don't"
 - Presentation aids
 - Abrade
 - Suit worker
 - Twin of Artemis
 - Grazing site
 - Bear
 - Drank to excess
 - Whittle down
 - Hunk of gum
 - Greek vowel

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

S	C	O	W	G	R	A	S
L	A	N	A	R	I	F	L
O	P	E	R	E	N	T	I
T	R	A	M	P	E	D	P
S	A	L	M	O	N	S	S
I	R	S	C	U	L	L	
S	M	I	L	E	T	O	P
H	O	N	K	P	R	O	
O	U	T	M	A	I	L	C
U	S	E	I	W	O	J	I
T	I	N	M	A	N	A	L
S	E	S	A	M	E	Z	I
R	E	D	I	D	Z	A	G

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott

