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PHOTO: ASMA BEETHE

“My portraits are more about me than
they are about the people I photograph.”
— Richard Avedon

SNAPSHOT

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Many Melodies, One Platform

For several weeks we, the Bangladeshis are pretty disenchanted with repeated news of assassinations and red alerts for probable terrorist attacks. In this doomed, suffocating situation, the *Star Weekend's* spotlight article titled Many Melodies, One Platform (published on November 13, 2015) on Bangladesh Music Week really gave me space to breathe. After reading the article, I really appreciated the skills and integrity of the organizers for coming up with such an enchanting initiative for the Dhakaites. The recently held folk fest was also a remarkable display of our commitment to spread the message of cultural harmony and peace. Thanks a lot Star Weekend for telling the story of Bangladesh Music Week as a spotlight article.

Aslam Murad

Kafrul, Dhaka



PHOTO COURTESY: LIVESQUARE

A Conversation with Meera Sanyal

The interview of renowned banker and emerging politician Meera Sanyal was a very resourceful piece in the last issue of the *Star Weekend* (published on November 13, 2015). Bangladesh and Indian politics have many common adverse characteristics. However, winning all these obstacles, the unstoppable journey of Meera Sanyal really inspired me. Her party, the famous Aam Admy Pary (AAP) has also revived the culture of progressiveness and harmony in Indian politics. I wish all the best for this inspirational figure. I hope she will be an example for the new generation of political leaders who really want to work for their people with honesty and integrity.

Sarah Farzana
Bhaluka, Mymensingh

Respect for Talent

This is referred to the write-up titled “Respect for Talent” published in the *Star Weekend* on November 8, 2015. I found the article really impressive. It is a very good initiative aimed to ensure the rights of the unprivileged, talented students. Usually we see some foreign charity organisations do these kinds of activities in Bangladesh or some local NGOs take such initiatives with the help of foreign donations. However, it is very hopeful that like this initiative, nowadays, Bangladeshi corporate

houses, banks and even many solvent people are coming forward to take part in these kinds of exemplary social works with their own resources. In fact, the best way to contribute to the society is to take step to ensure quality education for all children. Following the footsteps of this initiative, corporate houses, social organisations and every solvent people, whatever their capacity is, should start their own initiative to spread the light of education in our society.
Md Zillur Rahman
Kalapara, Patuakhali

The opinions expressed in these letters do not necessarily represent the views of the *Star Weekend*.

OPINION

November 3, 1975. At around 4 am some soldiers with full combat postures demanded entrance into Dhaka Central Jail. Seeing the armed men, the baffled jail officials, called the then Deputy Inspector General of Prisons (DIG, Prison) Abdul Awal. Abdul became horrified when he came to know about the demand of the soldiers. They demanded the four national leaders; Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain Mansur Ali and A H M Quamruzzaman be handed over to them. However, Abdul refused their demand as it was against prison regulations, but the soldiers insisted. After some heated conversations, the DIG phoned Bangabhaban to get clarification directly from the then President Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed and received the fateful permission.

In designing the six points. After the crackdown in March 25, 1971, Tajuddin managed to go to India and took the historic responsibility of the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh government. After the liberation, Tajuddin became the minister of finance and planning. However, in 1974 due to internal feud in Awami League, he lost his cabinet post but he remained loyal to Bangabandhu till the very end.

Captain Mansur Ali was also one of the key organisers of Bangladesh liberation war. He was the finance and planning minister of Mujibnagar government and held many important ministries after the liberation of the country. In 1975 he became the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. He was also the general secretary of BAKSAL and one of the key organisers of Jatiyo Rakkhi Bahini, a

militia formed by Bangabandhu himself.

A H M Quamruzzaman was a senior leader of Awami League and contributed significantly during the liberation war as the minister of relief and rehabilitation of the Mujibnagar government. He elected three times as the member of national assembly consecutively in 1962, 1965 and 1970. He was also an executive member of BAKSAL.

Therefore, after the assassination of Bangabandhu and his family members, the rebellious army officers and the usurper Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed soon identified these leaders as their potential threats. At that time, Bangladesh's politico-military situation was very volatile. Bangabhaban was occupied by the rebellious junior army officers and the then President was nothing but a puppet

BANGLADESH'S DAY OF INFAMY

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN



in their hands. Discipline in the armed forces was shattered and possibility of a counter coup led by Major General Khaled Mosharraf to overthrow Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed was growing stronger and stronger. In this situation, the renegade officers and political leaders apprehended that any of these four national leaders could easily challenge their heinous acts and took control of the restive government.

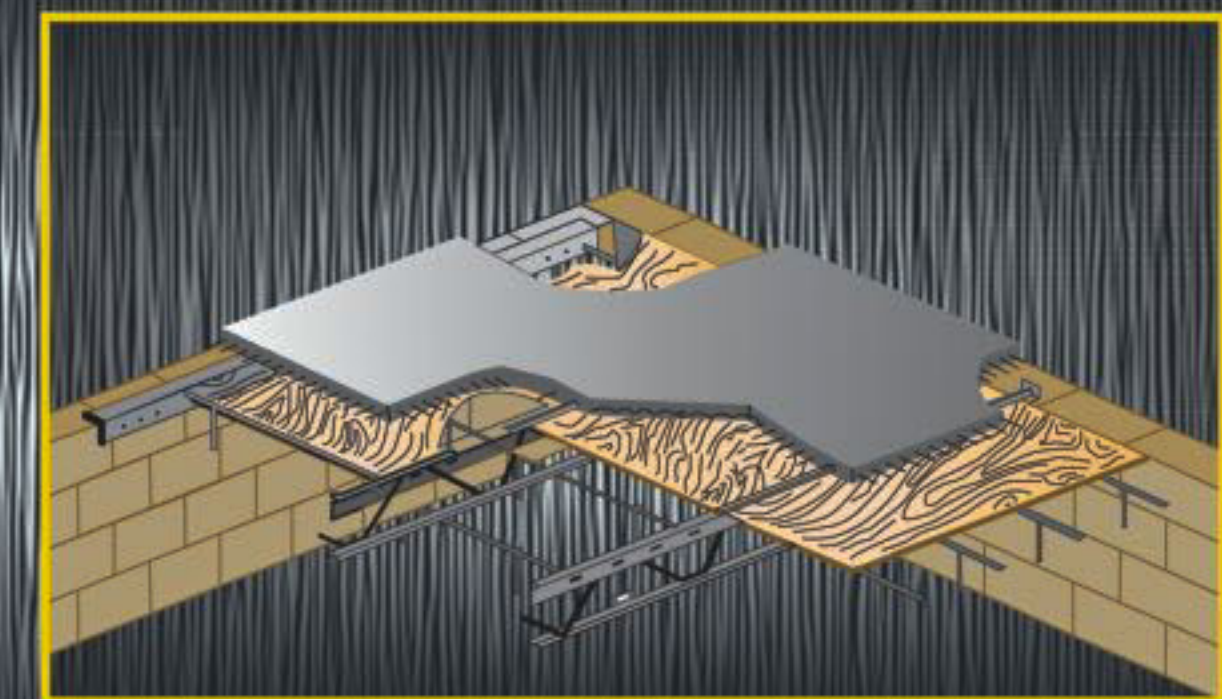
Considering the threat and under the cover of this severe unrest, they arrested all the four leaders on August 22, 1975 and imprisoned them in Dhaka Central Jail. Then after months of negotiations with the army officers and political leaders, the key organisers of Bangabandhu's assassination managed to get indemnity and a safe exit to Bangkok. Just on the eve of their departure, the four national leaders were brutally killed and the legacy of Bangabandhu's government was erased permanently.

November 3, this day of infamy made way for decades long undemocratic military dictators in Bangladesh. Bangladesh's secular and socialist constitution was changed several times, all the political parties were restored and with growing discontent against the dictatorial rule, Bangladesh entered into an eternal phase of political instability.

In 2009, a few of the plotters of the infamous jail killing were executed in 2009 for their involvement in the assassination of Bangabandhu and his family members. However, the government has failed to bring the main perpetrators of the jail killing to justice. November 3 is the day when Bangladesh had lost the leaders who could lead the country with solidarity towards progress. Intense leadership crisis in Bangladesh, ideological confusion, and politics of corruption and self interest remind us of the fact that still Bangladesh could not recover from the loss of these great leaders.

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