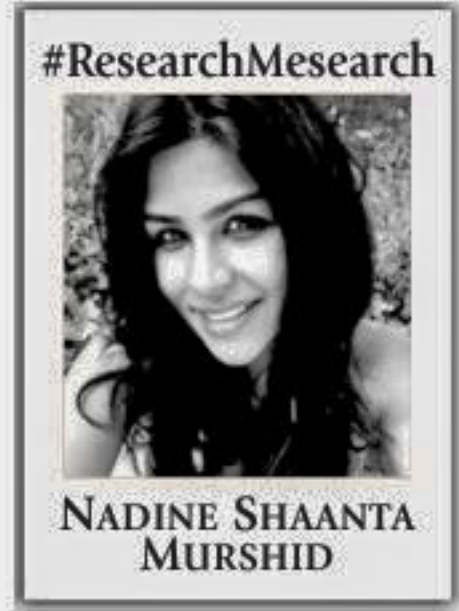


Oh Pakistan!



WHAT do you make of Pakistan's claim that they didn't commit war crimes? I asked my father. They mean they killed people but it wasn't criminal to do so, he laughed. And so did I. But we both knew that even though it sounded like a joke, and it was delivered like a joke, and we laughed like it was a joke, it really was not a joke.

Recall the stories that were told by Pakistani soldiers, Alam and Amin, who Yasmin Saikia interviewed for her book. Recall two ideas that the interviews revealed: 1) that "they refused to accept that what happened in East Pakistan was wrong, and even worse, still pretend that violence never happened there" even when narrating their own involvement in ordering mass killings, such as the killing in Santahar railway station; and 2) "...they made violence during war look like it was a normal thing... they talked about violence in a normal, matter-of-fact way to explain they performed duty that was required of them as military administrators" (p.220).

Recall Bina D'Costa's paper where she revealed that the Pakistan Army men felt justified in raping Bengali women to create pure Muslims by impregnating the women they raped.

Recall Tareq Fatah's comment: "The day Pakistan surrendered, 6 of us cried because we lost our brothers in Bangladesh, but everyone else [in Pakistan] laughed saying 'Bhuka Bangali Maar Gaya'." Recall how he expressed disdain towards Pakistan, being a Pakistani, for justifying rape and killing of uncountable Bengali men and women in 1971.

It is really not a surprise that Pakistan would make a statement which pretty much echoes what the research has been revealing

all along: that Pakistan justifies the war crimes; that Pakistan will not take responsibility for the harm they inflicted on an entire people in 1971. Part of the reason is, perhaps, pride interlaced with guilt.

But there is another reason for which Pakistan may never apologise, and that is: they conceptualise those events in 1971 very differently from us. To us, in Bangladesh, it was our war of independence. To them, it was a war waged by secessionists. To us, they killed our men and raped our women. To them, they killed and raped men and women who were against the Pakistani state. To us, they were oppressors. To them, we were an inferior race. If you ask a randomly selected citizen of Bangladesh, s/he is mostly likely to tell you that the entirety of West Pakistan was complicit in the genocide of the Bangali people in 1971. If you randomly selected a citizen of Pakistan, s/he is most likely to say that in 1971 the Army was dealing with an external threat from India. Just the way textbooks in Bangladesh change every time a new Head of State takes power, textbooks in Pakistan have changed over and again revealing versions of the 1971 war that was far removed from what actually happened in 1971. So, now, some forty odd years later, we have a generation of Bangladeshis who still would like an apology from Pakistan, and a generation of Pakistanis who still don't know why (and have perhaps stopped caring).

But do we really want an apology? And if we ever get one, will we be able to forgive? One might argue that there has been a shift in the climate for forgiveness given the withdrawal, if you will, of the institutionalised support that local war criminals have received in the past. With legal resolution, one might argue, comes a space in which forgiveness may occur. But are we willing?

Three considerations: One. I think it would be a different story if war criminals, including the ones in Pakistan, accepted their role in the genocide that they planned and executed. It's only when perpetrators accept what they have done and take responsibility for the atrocities they have committed that there can be a legitimate space for forgiveness.

Two, it may depend on the extent to which the trauma of the war has been dealt with. Based on interviews I conducted with genocide survivors in Bangladesh, I can say that most people still bear marks of the trauma that they experienced, they still get angry and upset when reminded of the war and the oppression they experienced. And thanks to the lack of support for individuals experiencing such trauma, both individually and institutionally, we have a generation that experienced first-hand trauma, and a second generation that experienced second-hand trauma as a result of their parents' trauma experiences. And so the question arises: When remnants of trauma remain, is forgiveness a viable option?

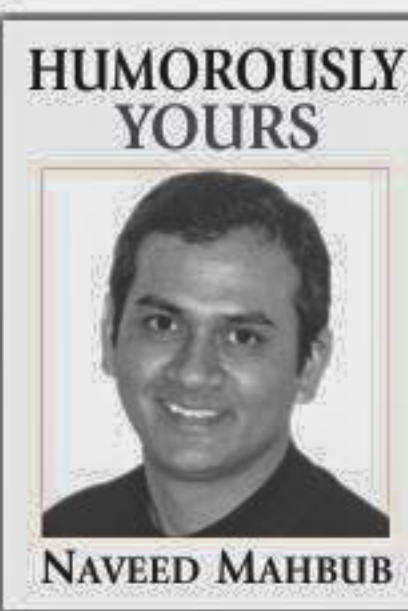
Finally, it depends on how we conceptualise our war of independence. Do we think of it as an act against humanity (i.e. it's not personal) or do we think of it as atrocities committed against Bengalis (i.e. it is personal). Research by Wohl and colleagues suggest that personal atrocities are harder to forgive, even when an apology is made, and my personal opinion is that we in Bangladesh have conceptualised the war as a personal affront, which means, we will probably never be able to forgive Pakistan for the atrocities.

But it is still worth trying. For our own sake than anyone else's.

As for Pakistan, I just have one question, because I'm not sure they completely understand what "war crimes" mean and because it's perhaps worth knowing: *What exactly are you denying?*

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T&T



WITH the influx of illegal aliens in the US, Donald Trump says, "My ancestors from Germany didn't come [immigrate] to America to see this land taken over by immigrants." Right. Illegal immigration in the US should have been nipped in the bud in 1492.

After Paris, Donald Trump advocates that Muslims in the US be registered. Finally, Muslims are elevated to the status of the industrious Japanese Americans who were interned after Pearl Harbor.

With San Bernardino, Trump attempts to trump the Presidential bid by saying that not only will Muslims not be allowed to enter the US, but also that Muslim Americans, who are now abroad, will not be allowed back in. As a result, Air Force One stays put at Andrews Air Force Base lest Barack 'Hussein' Obama accidentally ventures outside of US airspace for just 17 seconds and faces the electoral equivalent of the fate of the Russian Sukhoi jet inside Turkish airspace.

What goes unnoticed though is that a tiny player in world politics influences a giant. Bangladesh, *The Apprentice*, takes a stance on Facebook which inspires *The Master*, Donald Trump, to want to block the internet altogether. The latter believes that the internet is responsible for Americans 'self-radicalising' themselves. Mr. Trump reaches the conclusion from following the developments in San Bernardino on the internet.

Trump is trumping up the hillbilly votes to one day enact tough DUI laws – Driving Under the Influence of Islam. For now, he will have to be content with cops pulling one over for the possession of drugs, just as in Bangladesh, one gets pulled over for the possession of a VPN (Virtual Private Network) client on his smartphone.

Don't drink and drive. Don't click and drive. The T&T, aka, Trump and Tarana Doctrines, with the former delivered through bellicose fervour and the latter through rational humility and even apology, state that the world is safer without the internet and Facebook respectively. Opponents argue that with the window opened for sunshine, some flies will enter.

Arguments are valid on both sides. After all, China, minus Facebook, Gmail and a Guantanamo-like internet, still manages to build a smart car that runs on brain power. Oh, by the way, Mr. Trump is unable to start, let alone drive this car.

Understanding and appreciating both sides of the argument, the Government in Bangladesh meets with Facebook and requests it to set up an office in Bangladesh to monitor and filter harmful content. I thought at least to monitor, there already was such an office, called the Government.

After blocking Facebook there perhaps is a lull in crimes, if we discount the stabbing of two Indian Sikh gentlemen in Chittagong, the shooting deaths of two brothers in Cox's Bazaar, a Comilla woman being hit by a bullet entering through her kitchen, the rape and murder of a 7-year-old in Kumarkhali Upazila, the strangling of an octogenarian in Dinajpur and a housewife in Dhunat Upazila... But if the net gain is still even one life saved, then many, including myself, who rely on Facebook for their livelihoods, will gladly give it up for good and go back to the good old days of seeing the real faces of real friends rather than the surreal faces of virtual friends (limited to 5,000) on the real Facebook (or someone's face on the moon).

Patience. After all, being a VPN-Facebooker means that the account may get hacked and being a blogger means getting hacked.

So, what gives? Just like the movies *The Day After* being about the aftermath of a nuclear war and *The Day After Tomorrow* being about a post-catastrophic storm, are we going to see another movie *The Day After the Day After Tomorrow* about life after the internet and Facebook?

The answer is an emphatic no. Facebook is a genie that is out of the bottle. In Bangladesh, Facebook's face is merely getting an extreme makeover. All on both sides of the camp are ready to press the collective 'Like' button as soon as there shall be a new birth of Facebook – and that this Facebook of the people, by the people, for the people, (ok, ok, from THE Zuckerberg) shall not perish from the internet.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Big lessons from a small country

ANNETTE DIXON

THE mountain kingdom of Bhutan may not seem an obvious place to look for lessons on addressing climate change. But on a recent visit there, I was impressed with how much this small country has achieved and also with its ambition. Bhutan has much to teach Bangladesh, South Asia and the wider world.



Bhutan has committed to maintain its forest cover by 60 percent.

PHOTO: HELVETAS.ORG

These lessons are especially relevant as the world negotiates in Paris a new pact on climate change at the International Climate Change Summit, known as COP21, which we all hope will move the global economy towards a low carbon and more resilient path.

The talks aim to agree on a way to keep global warming a maximum of 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial era levels. There is widespread agreement that going above this threshold would have serious consequences.

South Asia is among the regions of the world that is likely to be most affected by climate change. We are already experiencing this. There is increasing variability of the monsoon rainfall, more heavy rainfalls such as those that caused the recent flooding in India and an increase in the number of droughts.

A World Bank report in 2013 predicted that even if the temperature increase was kept at 2 degrees, it could still threaten the lives of the millions of people in South Asia. The report cited Bangladesh, already threatened by frequent floods and extreme weather, as just one of more "potential impact hotspots" threatened by "extreme river floods, more intense tropical cyclones, rising sea levels and very high temperatures".

world from warming too much, climate experts estimate that global greenhouse gas emissions must be cut by up to 70 percent by 2050. Carbon neutrality (zero emissions) must be achieved within this century.

Bhutan declared in 2009 that it would remain carbon neutral and has made the most ambitious pledges on cutting emissions at COP21, according to Britain's Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit think tank. It is carbon neutral already because of its vast forests absorbing carbon emissions. But staying neutral will not be easy as emissions from industry and transport rise rapidly. It will require aggressive maintenance of its tree cover and finding of ways to grow economically in a carbon neutral or reduced way. To achieve this, the Royal Government of Bhutan has embedded its commitment to maintain its forest cover at more than 60 percent.

decades, over 50 percent of South Asians (more than 800 million people) have been affected by at least one natural disaster. South Asian countries can gain from cooperating on disasters that stem from shared climate change-related challenges.

When I was in Bhutan, I announced a new weather and disaster improvement project to expand weather forecasting and natural disaster early warning in Bhutan and the South Asia region. I also announced a pilot programme for climate resilience that has the potential for considerable expansion.

Climate change is the defining challenge of our era. But an approach that includes a commitment to ambitious goals, mainstreaming climate change measures, and cooperating with neighbours, could lead to real progress.

The writer is Vice President for the South Asia Region at the World Bank.

QUOTABLE Quote

MALCOLM X

You show me a capitalist, and I'll show you a bloodsucker.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Ballpark feat
- 6 Dropped tomato sound
- 11 Make blank
- 12 Macbeth, for one
- 13 Washer cycle
- 14 Roof feature
- 15 Cattle call
- 16 Recent: Prefix
- 18 So far
- 19 Pole worker
- 20 Keg need
- 21 Spanning cheer
- 22 Hunting dog
- 24 Miles off
- 25 "Dune" writer
- 27 Prayer ender
- 29 Corsage flower
- 32 Immediately
- 33 Walllet bill
- 34 Misstep
- 35 Swearingin vow
- 36 Singer Tillis
- 37 Singer Reed
- 38 Highway sign
- 40 Muscat native
- 42 Patriot Ethan

DOWN

- 1 Messenger of the gods
- 2 Jim Palmer, once
- 3 Urbane chap
- 4 Twisty turn
- 5 Type in again
- 6 Barber's aid
- 7 Letter after upsilon
- 8 Excalibur's bestower
- 9 Germany's Market
- 10 Wobble
- 17 Anvil, e.g.
- 23 Walllet bill
- 24 Rainbow shape
- 26 Soon, in sonnets
- 27 Muppet drummer
- 28 Early Ford
- 30 Laundry worker
- 31 Celtic priests
- 33 Some signs
- 39 Ingenious cry
- 41 Chinese chairman

BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker

GET UP AND GET DOING STUFF, BEETLE!

WHEN I JOINED THE ARMY, THEY TOLD ME "BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE"

I GUESS THIS IS ALL I EVER WANTED TO BE

GREG & MORT WALKER

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

A	M	B	E	R	A	C	T	U	P	
M	A	L	L	E	G	U	I	S	E	
S	C	O	L	D	R	E	N	E	W	
W	A	F	T	E	D					
U	R	N	C	L	A	P	E			
M	A	D	C	A	P					
B	R	O	U	G	H	T	D	O	W	
L	E	W	D		O	U	S	T	E	
E	R	N		F	O	R		E	L	
F	E	L	I	X		A	L	O	H	
A	T	O	N	E		N	O	W	I	
T	A	P	E	D		S	E	N	D	S

BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott

OW!

I COULDN'T SLEEP.

THANKS FOR RESTING THE REST OF US WITH THAT.