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Editor (Star Weekend)

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"God is the most beautiful, and beauty is the expression of God. If you can't appreciate beauty in the world how can you understand God?"
– Amit Ray, author and spiritual master.

SNAPSHOT

HUMAN RIGHTS

It was just another afternoon for Nusrat and Alvi. After a busy day at school and then spending hours with their tutor, they wanted to take some rest and as usual, their mother lulled them to sleep. However, after several minutes, someone entered their room. With a piece of cloth, that person strangled Nusrat. As Nusrat resisted, the assailant pushed the fourteen year old girl to the floor from the bed. Being overpowered, Nusrat succumbed and was slowly asphyxiated to death. For sleeping Alvi, Nusrat's eight year old brother, the assailant did not have to struggle much. Alvi was also strangled and killed in cold blood. The killer was their own mother.

When their mother confessed to RAB officials that she had killed her own children as she used to feel frustrated and insecure of their future, everyone was shell shocked.

It is certain that a mother killing her own children is quite uncommon, but in Bangladesh killing of innocent, minor aged children has become terrifyingly frequent. Just months before this tragic incident, four children were strangled to death as a result of a family feud over village leadership. In July 2015, Rajon, a ten year old boy, was

THE SAGA OF A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE SOCIETY

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTOS: STAR FILE



When the bodies of the four missing children were found.

500 cases of child murders from the last four years are still waiting to be investigated and solved.

beaten to death for a trifling issue. The criminals who killed Rajon filmed the murder and posted the video on social media.

That gruesome murder caused widespread outrage in the country; however, the list of the victims did not end here. A month later, on August 5, 2015, Rakib, a ten year old boy was inhumanly tortured and killed by pumping air into his body. Just a day after Rakib's murder, a Madrasa student named Rabiul Awal was beaten to death as he was suspected of stealing fish. And the list stained with the blood of innocent children is gets longer and longer

According to Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, a child rights organisation, 261 children have been murdered in the ten months from January to October, 2015 and in 2014, 292 children have been murdered in Bangladesh.

Psychologists and sociologists have focused on the

issue of disparity between economic aspiration and real-life hurdles among the people of our society. Besides, they have also identified that absence of ethics, mass unemployment, falling human values and rise of cruel attitudes in the society are some of the key reasons behind these heinous crimes.

However, a report of BSAF suggests another significant and specific reason of increasing these crimes against children. According to the BSAF report, 500 cases of child murders from the last four years are still waiting to be investigated and solved. The indifference of the law enforcers about crimes against children was also evident in the recent incidents. One of the murderers of Rajon fled to Saudi Arabia safely, where he was found and caught by other Bangladeshi workers. In the 4-children murder case, the officer in charge of the local police station and the investigation officer did not pay heed to the parents of the children when they informed the police about them missing.

We often see news about Bangladesh being one of the most peaceful countries of South Asia, one of the happiest countries of the world. However the fact is that the number of murdered children in Bangladesh is rising every year and the ways of torturing children is becoming worse which gives us the ominous sign of unrest, unhappy and self-destructive society. When we see how inhumanely children are being treated in Bangladesh, how they are being killed and tortured, our hopes and aspirations about the nation's future get thwarted.



Nusrat and her brother Alvi.

MAILBOX

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Small Victories

The spotlight article titled "Small Victories" (published March 4, 2015) brought up an important issue which normally does not get focus in the newspaper. Personally I have seen my mother, being a housewife, do all the household chores starting from the very early in the morning till midnight while looking after the whole family with utmost care. Her contribution to the family goes unnoticed as the Bangladeshi typical patriarchal society does not pay much heed to the fact that women are always working whether be it in the family or outside in the corporate world. There was a time when it was not permissible for women to work outside once they are married off. But now the scenario is changing rapidly as women can smoothly juggle family and work. The writer proved it very well with some real life examples mentioned in the article. Recently the government has recognised the female farmers' contribution to the agriculture in the country. In the same way, the government should recognise women's contribution to the family too which is also a huge part of our economic growth.

Samiul Rajjui
London, United Kingdom

Road Accidents and Children

Death toll due to road accidents has reached an alarming rate in Bangladesh. Most of the road accidents in our country are caused by unfit, ramshackle trucks. Heavily loaded trucks fitted with illegal body armour cause most of the fatal accidents in the highways. Several days ago one of my neighbours who was a school going boy was hit by a truck and both of his legs got fractured severely. In Satkhira, these kinds of accidents occur frequently and the most appalling fact is the main victims of these accidents are the school going children, as they often have to use highways to reach their schools. In the last two months of this year, two school children have died in the road accidents. I would like to request the appropriate authority to think about this issue and give us a pragmatic and effective solution.

Md Muhibbullah
Kaligonj, Satkhira

As Magnificent as a Mughal

I would like to thank the writer of the article titled "As Magnificent as Mughal" published in Star Weekend on March 4, 2015. I really appreciate the writer's effort to preserve a historic Mughal architecture. Besides old Dhaka, there are many historic Mughal relics in the other parts of the city too. In Mohammadpur area we can see Sat Gambuj Mosque, in Dhanmondi there is Shahee Eidgah etc. But it is a matter of great regret that our new generation knows very little about these heritage sites. How many of us know where is the Sat Gambuj Mosque situated? How does it look and who built it? As it is situated at an important location in Dhaka, a lot of people pass by this heritage site every day without knowing its history and significance. A few days ago I noticed a dilapidated signboard beside the road adjacent to the mosque which is the only way to know about this important relic. It is our duty to preserve our heritage and history and I would like to mention that we should take special care of the Mughal relics as these are the witnesses of our rich, prosperous history.

Md Sayedur Rahman
Jatrabari, Dhaka



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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



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