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PHOTO: KAMOL DAS

**"Sunssets, like childhood, are viewed with wonder not just because they are beautiful but because they are fleeting."**  
— Richard Paul Evans, Author

**SNAPSHOT**

**CHRONICLES**

The excerpts given here might seem like dialogues taken from an action movie, but they are actually snippets of real conversations between several groups of the Pakistani occupation forces on the black night of March 25. This exchange of words between the barbarous military force, which began at around 1.30 am and continued till 9 in the morning, brings different aspects of the terrifying 'Operation Searchlight' to the fore.

While this conversation took place over wireless sets, it was overheard through radio by the Bangladeshis. Dr M M Hussain, who used to work for the Atomic Energy Center, was able to record a part of the conversation, and this recording was later given to

# FLASHBACKS OF THE BLACK NIGHT

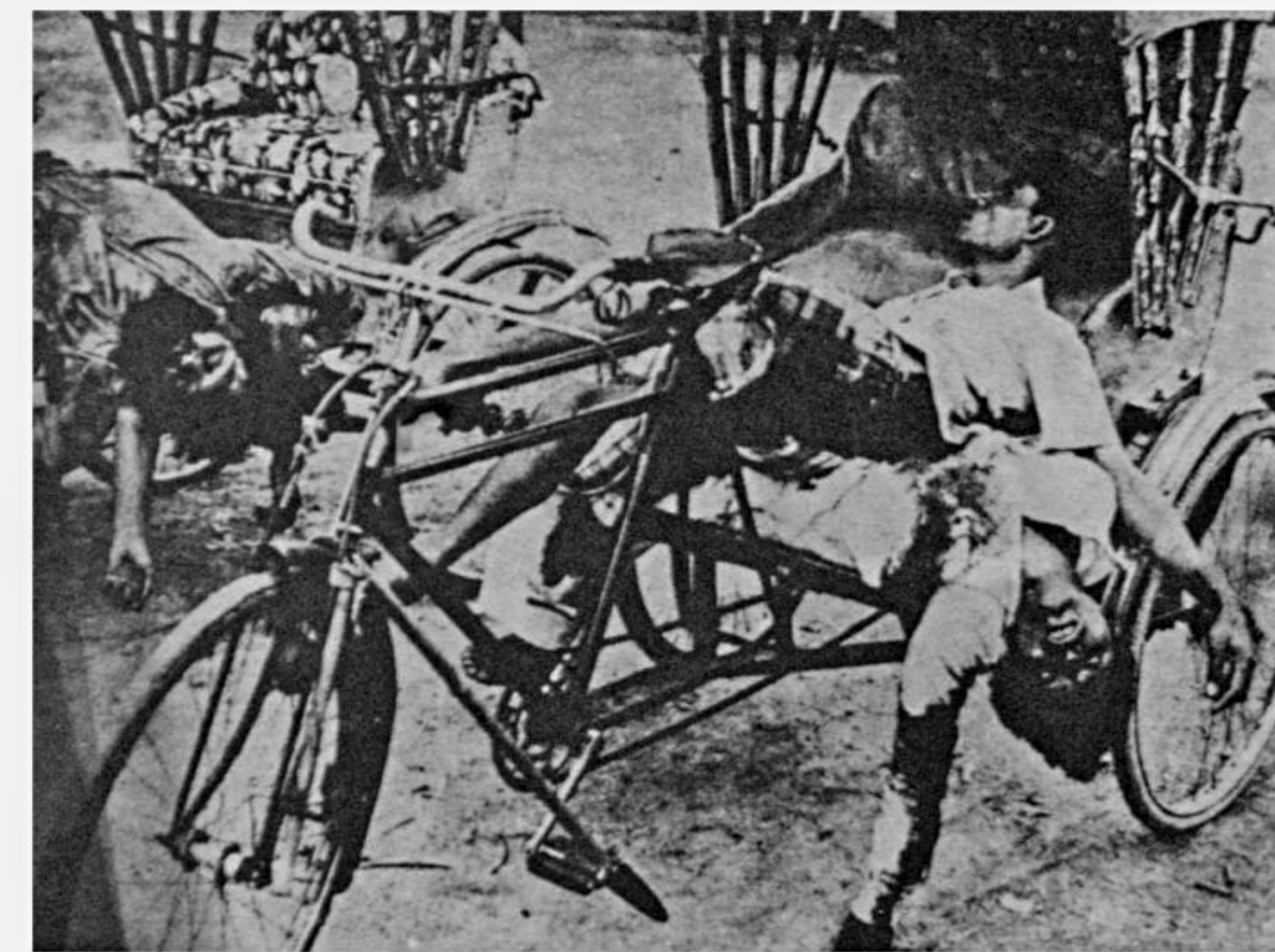
FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA

evidence from one of the most heinous planned attacks on civilian lives.

As the night advanced and the conversation kept unfolding, the recording exposed how the military pacification was carried out in a systematic and organised manner by the Pakistan Army.

and subsequent genocide of the Bangali people of East Pakistan, it will make you wonder how such a crime still goes unnoticed and unrecognised by a majority of the world's population.

*Source: Operation Search Light, 25 Marcher Ganhottar Dolil, published in Shaptahik 2000.*



### The codes that they used

Kawsar Chowdhury also deciphered the meaning of the signs that they used in the conversation. Each group had a code name of a two digit number and was assigned to a particular area.

- Eight Eight- South to campus, till the river
- Nine Nine- Commissioner Office. (present Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Probably they were the main coordinators of this operation)

### Codes used for particular areas

- Liakat- BUET Dormitory
- Iqbal- Dhaka University Dormitory, Jahurul Haque Hall (present)
- Jagannath- Dhaka University Non-Muslim hostels.
- Elaka 2000- Police Line (Rajarbag)
- Papa House- President House, Baily Road

### Codes used for the officials of the Pakistani Army

- Highest control- General Tikka Khan
- Imam- Captain
- Big Brothers- tank

### Codes used for Awami League

- The main bird- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
- Alpha lima- Awami League

– Eight Eight. Roadblock anywhere will be considered a punishable offense. People involved in this should be shot right away. All the buildings on both sides will be destroyed. Keep announcing this in the public address system through the roaming patrol.

– Nine Nine. We have caught a few people who were setting up roadblocks. Hindus are being used to remove the roadblocks. After finishing the work, should we send them to you, or should we make some other arrangement? Over.

– Eight Eight addressing Nine Nine. Highest Control wants to know what kind of obstacle did you face in Jagannath, Iqbal and Liaqat? Over.

– Nine Nine addressing Eight Eight- Bullets were fired at us especially at Jagannath and Iqbal. Roger so far. Over.

– Eight Eight. Imam has asked you to occupy the Shiddhirgonj Power Station. You have already appointed some armies there. After reaching your area, try occupying the power station. And make sure that the soldiers don't get tired. If they do feel tired, they can be given a temporary break. After taking rest for a few hours, they can get back to work. I want to congratulate you once again. Let Aziz know as well. You people have done a pretty good job in this area. I am very happy. Over.

– Seven Seven. The latest condition of 88... we are being informed that it is improving. But there are so many buildings on our way that we have to demolish them one by one.

– Seven Seven. Very good. Ask the Jawans to carry on with the curfew declaration - number one. Number two- keep announcing that all Bangladeshi flags have to be taken down from the buildings, otherwise the owners will suffer serious consequences. There should be no black flag or Bangladeshi flag visible anywhere. If any of these is found, the consequence will be severe. Roger so far. Over.

– Seven Seven. Roger... Seven Seven and secondly, we need to make announcements about roadblocks. If any person is found near any roadblock, he/she should be shot right there. And the people in charge of the roadblocks will be punished. They will be held responsible. All the buildings around the roadblocks will be destroyed. It needs to be announced so that the general people understand this fact clearly. This announcement should go on for tonight, tomorrow morning and the day after. Over. Out to you. Hello 41, you got it? Over.

– Eight Eight .... Good job! Approximately how many people died in the University?

– Around 300.

– Bravo! How many got injured and arrested? Over.

– Eight Eight I think only this is important. 300 died. Over.

– Yes I agree. That is very easy. We don't need to be accountable to anyone, and to inform anyone about our action. Congratulations, once again...

– Seven Seven addressing Eight Eight... Piling up the dead bodies will take some time

– Eight Eight Roger. Pile up the dead bodies at some point and call 26. Imam said that we can move the dead bodies later. For now, count them and keep them in two separate groups- Police and civilians...

*(translated from Operation Search Light, 25 Marcher Ganhottar Dolil, published in Shaptahik 2000)*

# MAILBOX

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PHOTO: STAR FILE

## The Saga of a Self-Destructive Society

This is really very shocking and alarming that in Bangladesh child murder and crimes against innocent, minor aged children are increasing day by day. To prevent it, the Government must take uncompromising steps like they have taken against the war criminals. Such barbaric and heinous criminals should be brought under speedy tribunal where they will get exemplary punishment so that the potential criminals will think at least a thousand times before committing such a crime. The punishment should be a lesson for others. It is a shame that we talk about child rights and child labour whereas, in the same society, children are being tortured and killed mercilessly. To build a healthy and wealthy nation, there is no alternative to taking utmost care of our children as they are our future flag bearers. Our children are blessings for us. We should take proper care of them and should be proud of them. My special thanks to Shahnawaz for writing about this issue in the *Star Weekend* on March 11, 2016.

Sharfuddin  
Agrabad, Chittagong



PHOTO: AFP

## The Battle between Man and Mosquito

I am an inhabitant of Banasree Area and here we have been facing terrible a mosquito infestation for long time. It has been very difficult for us to stay home at night. After a whole day of working, we have to spend the night playing hide and seek with mosquitoes. Mosquito breeding has become so pervasive in the area that all actions to repel them have become futile. Mosquito repellents like coils and sprays have been proved useless. Despite this perilous situation, we have not seen any action from the city corporation to control mosquito. It is our earnest appeal to the authority concerned to destroy the breeding ground of mosquitoes and rescue us from this unbearable condition.

Md. Zonaed Imran  
Banasree, Dhaka

## Towards a bigger dream

The star weekend deserves a big hand for the article titled "Towards a Bigger Dream" published last week (March 18, 2016). This is quite an inspiring and motivational piece for thousands of differently-abled people, who suffer from inferiority complex, considering themselves a burden of society. This article is a perfect example that nothing can stop us from achieving our target if we have willpower and strong determination. Moreover, disabled people don't need sympathy from us, rather they need a helping hand so that they can lead a normal life. Personally I have a very positive notion about CRP for its decade long humanitarian services in Bangladesh. The idea of forming a women's wheelchair basketball team by CRP, in association with ICRC, is really a commendable endeavour as this will be the first ever team of this kind in the country. I hope the corporate companies come forward to help building such teams, by providing logistic supports.

Samiul Rajjul  
North South University, Dhaka

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