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CELEBRATION



PHOTO: FERDOUSI BEGUM

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.

— Henry Ford, Industrialist

SNAPSHOT

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Where is Home?

As I read the cover story titled "Where is Home?" published on April 8, 2016 I noticed a photo depicting a child reading a Bengali language book with the picture of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman shown on it. To me, this is an indication that some people, although are being called Bihari, want to be citizens of Bangladesh. As it has been more than four decades for these Urdu-speaking people living in our country, most of them reluctantly or willingly, want to be citizens of this country because of their pragmatic view of having a standard lifestyle here. Speaking a different language, be it Urdu, does not necessarily make anyone illegible to be a citizen of Bangladesh. These destitute people, living a pathetic lifestyle, should be given a good chance so that they become Bangladeshi by soul and heart, just not for availing the advantages of being Bangladeshi. Their decade long ordeal of being stranded people should be put to an end. Government can take the first step by allowing them to take education and jobs. Relocating or technically evicting them might not be a good idea as they are living here for a long time. Also the process of issuing national ID card for them should be accelerated as part of a holistic method of making them Bangladeshi citizens. The *Star Weekend* deserves a good acclaim for writing on this unheard issue.

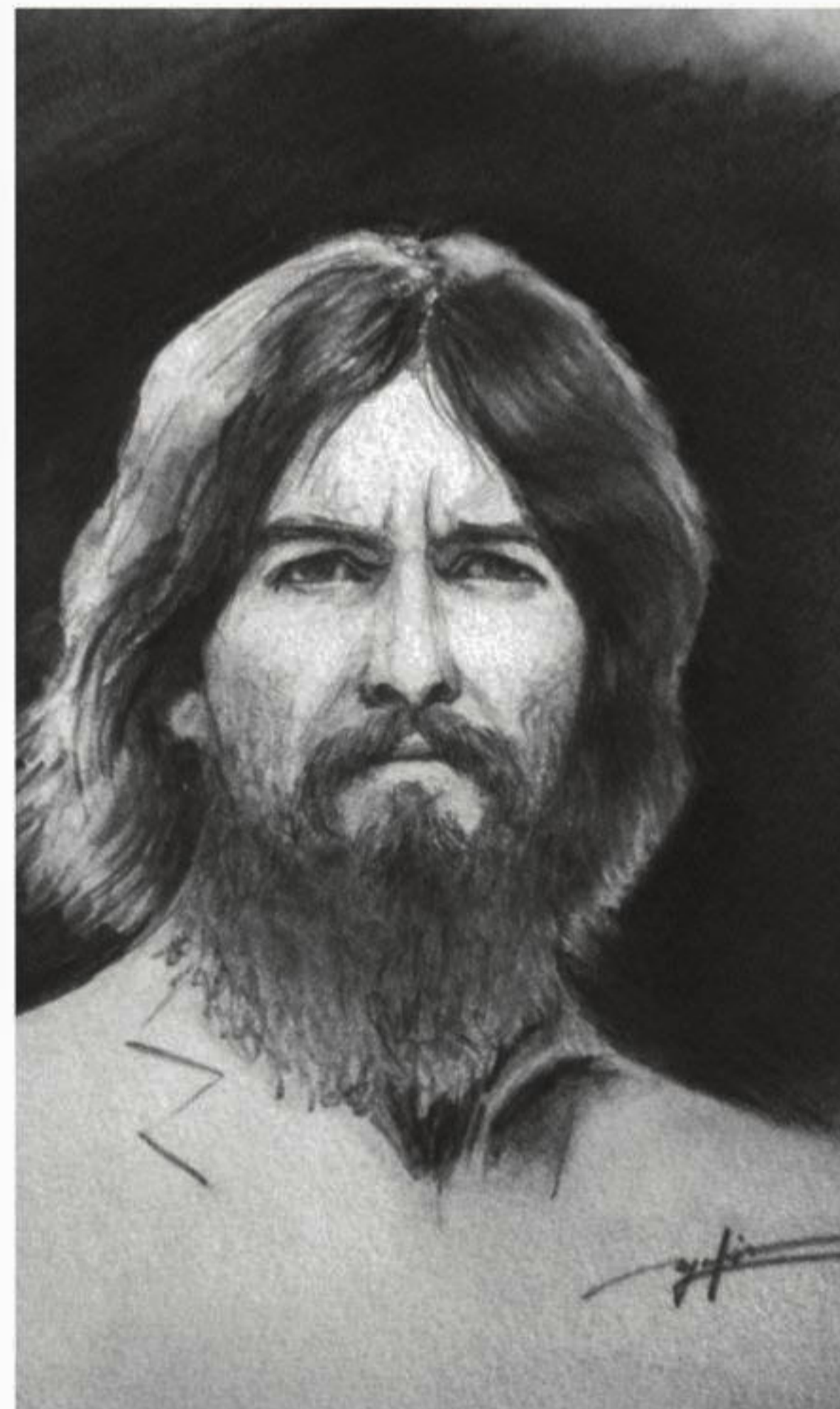
Samiul Rajjul
North South University, Dhaka



A Tribute to George Harrison

Thanks to the *Star Weekend* for a small but precious write up about George Harrison in the *Star Weekend*'s regular Mad Genius section published on April 01, 2016. At the time of Bangladesh's struggle for independence, we got help from some foreign nationals too. George Harrison is one of them. His great contribution for us was The Concert for Bangladesh jointly organised by him and Pundit Ravi Shankar. The concert held was on 1 August 1971, playing to a total of 40,000 people at Madison Square Garden in New York City. It does not require an explanation of how important the show was for us, especially when the international community did not know what was happening in Bangladesh. It raised international awareness and helped collect a pretty good amount of money (US\$250,000) that was very important for the refugees of a war-ravaged Bangladesh. We shall never forget Harrison and those who helped us at the time of distress.

Md Sayedur Rahman
Jatrabari, Dhaka



SKETCH: YATIZ SIDDIQUI

Displaced in Dystopia

Thanks to Osama Rahman for his important article titled "Displaced in Dystopia" published on April 1, 2016. The writer has depicted the life of the Urdu speaking minority community known as the Biharis in his article excellently. Although he told the dire conditions of the people in Geneva camp, but the reality is

that the conditions of Biharis in other camps are no exception. I would like to thank the writer because he attracted our attention to the plight of this people and raised the voice to start not only rehabilitation, but also reconstruction of their ramshackle dwellings which are at the high risk.

Enamul Hasan
Madaninagar, Narayanganj

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

To welcome the good, this year the 'Mongol Shobhajatra' was conducted with great zeal and festivity. Starting off in 1989, the traditional colourful procession, organised by the students of the Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA), University of Dhaka, has been regarded as one of the most joyous arrangements to celebrate the Pahela Baishakh every year.

The theme this year for 1423, was "Ontor Momo Bikoshito Koro Ontorotoro Hey", (Let me thrive and enhance my core, oh my innermost one), a famous quote by Rabindranath Tagore. "All the individuals need to develop a conscience and do the right thing," says Professor Nisar Hossain, the Dean of FFA. "Mere laws and law enforcers will not be able to correct a wrong and help run a country. "We have chosen this theme because we need to promote the development of own thoughts, interests, and morality to make a better Bangladesh."

On the day of Pahela Baishakh 1423, the 'Mongol Shobhajatra' took over the streets of Dhaka University with giant replicas of mother and child, sampan boats, oxen, horses, tepa putul (indigenous clay doll), birds, elephants, colourful masks of royalty, tigers, owls

and many more folk motifs as well as symbols from current events. The students, alumni and teachers of the FFA, University of Dhaka, and other festival goers from all walks of life joined the colourful procession, hoping for prosperity in the New Year.

This year, the preparation for the *Mongol Shobhajatra* started from March 17. Eminent artists like Rafiqun Nabi (Ronobi), Monirul Islam and Nisar Hossain inaugurated the preparation. The 17th batch of FFA leads the enormous



A PROCESSION FOR HOPE

NILIMA JAHAN

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

job to make the event a successful one.

It is not so easy to make the giant replicas of the elements of nature from different shapes and designs. They usually take longer to prepare than the masks. At first the frame is made with bamboo, often straw is used for wrapping the structure, and then, it is covered with papers. Finally, after attaching separate parts of the structure, for example- wings, tails and many other essential components, the frame is

covered with colourful papers or painted on.

Even though every year, the arrangements require plenty of funds, the Fine Arts students never go for corporate sponsorship. This way, they preserve their talents as well. Instead, the students raise funds by selling artworks, different kinds of motifs, masks, jewellery and much more. Many buy these artworks, not only because the artworks are made

by the students themselves and are absolutely unique, but it is also a way to support the whole event.

This year, everyone hoped to strike a better balance between nature and mankind. People from all religions, backgrounds and walks of life were expected to raise their voice against violence against women, children, fundamentalism and all the negativities around.



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