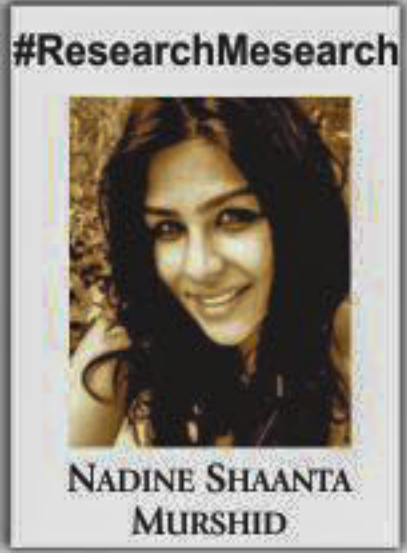


Has the world gone mad?



#ResearchResearch
HAS the world gone mad? No. Violence is a part of our history, as mankind – we've known it all our lives. But, never before have we been exposed to

successful model because of social media and networking capabilities that are enhanced via the internet, the mascot, if you will, of the globalised world.
 The UN had declared in 2011 that internet-access is also a human right (for reasons such as freedom of expression). And countries have

world, to aggressively push last mile internet connectivity for deeper reach to the "Bottom of the Pyramid" to garner more consumers. So, we have a situation in which we have populations that do not have decent healthcare facilities or schools, but have internet-enabled smartphones.
 In some ways, this can be seen as

It is, thus, fairly easy and profitable to recruit foot soldiers in a system that has produced enough disenfranchised individuals, primarily youth, looking for meaning. Indeed, meaning-making for young people has become a challenge in a system where even universities are in the business of producing skilled labour for the

social and cultural barriers, youth who find "brotherhood" in a "cause" that they can get behind, it has also created inequality and injustice. Together, isolation, disenfranchisement, inequality, and injustice form a potent pill that breaks people. So much so that they have nothing left to lose. Such spaces can easily become hotbeds for terrorist recruitment, given the high supply of broken people to cash-in on. That some private universities in countries like Bangladesh have become such hotbeds is not a coincidence.

To understand the violent world in which we live today, it is important to understand that with neoliberal policies came rapid globalisation (that fostered international trade, privatisation of national institutions, deregulation, and competition) and that includes, as we can see, globalisation of terror and acts of terror.

violence in the manner that we are now, because of cable news coverage and social media. Before this age of rapid transfer of information, it took us much longer to learn about acts of violence in far away lands.

[One example is Cambodia – its people experienced genocide while the world had no clue. It wasn't until much later that people started to learn about what was happening, about Pol Pot's Red Army of children, the plan to start from "zero." There is genocide going on today as well – but we are clued in much earlier than used to be the case (for example, the Rohingyas in Myanmar), because they make headlines and because "civilians" report from the ground.]

So, while we are experiencing huge exposure to violence, there is little understanding of the reasons for the production of violence.

To understand the violent world in which we live today, it is important to understand that with neoliberal policies came rapid globalisation (that fostered international trade, privatisation of national institutions, deregulation, and competition) and that includes, as we can see, globalisation of terror and acts of terror. An excellent example is ISIS. Their "franchise system" that allows group membership to anyone willing to commit an act of terror in any part of the world – which ISIS can then claim responsibility for – has been a



PHOTO: WWW.TAPWIRE.COM

responded well – but, for many underdeveloped and developing nations of the world, the internet has been an easier "upgrading" of infrastructure in the absence of real ones: roads, railways, institutions. This nod from the UN has allowed neoliberal policymakers, hand in hand with the Facebooks and the Googles of the

"development" (indeed, some pluses include mobile banking services for the poor that fosters financial inclusion). But, this also highlights the old concept of uneven and combined development that doesn't keep par with economic growth, that in turn makes way for a class-based structure, in which many are left behind, disenfranchised.

neoliberal regimes of the world, which isolates them as they strive to take personal responsibility for structural problems that they did not create; fighting in a system that's rigged against them.

So, if neoliberalism and its neoliberal education systems have created isolation among youth across

An appeal to those 'jihadists' who seek 'shahadat'

A CONCERNED CITIZEN

AS the nation grieves for the slain hostages in the July 1 Gulshan attack, somehow I find myself also thinking about the young attackers as well. So young, so impressionable, coming from good families. They could have contributed so much to the nation through their education, their abilities. I also grieve for their parents, their families and friends, so helpless, so shocked. The society must think about what happened to these youngsters; remember they could have been your children...

What made these boys commit this kind of barbaric act? Where did they learn to handle firearms and explosives? Who trained them? Who brainwashed these kids into this deviant cult which they mistook for true Islam? Those are the real devils behind these young men who I believe may have been, patsies, unwittingly carrying out this macabre drama as if in a trance. Were they under some drugs? Could it be mind control? Who knows?

As news filter in, we are informed that all of them had earlier 'disappeared' to suddenly reappear in the guise of these Mad Murderers; what transformed them in such a short time from normal kids leading normal lives to this state? We hear hundreds of such youths have already gone missing at this point. I shudder to think what evil designs are being cooked up by their evil minded trainers.

Our authorities with the active help of people need to act quickly to get to the root of all this and bust the masterminds and save our youth as well as our society from this *azaab* that has suddenly descended upon us.

Now we need to reach out to these so-called jihadists and dreamers of *Shahadat*, for whom I make the following appeal.

Believe me you are being led to a fool's paradise, you are being used to fulfill the objects of a bloodthirsty group drunk for usurping power. They do not care who they send on such

missions of death and destruction. And who lives and who dies.

Wake up; don't be trapped into throwing away your lives at the commands of these half baked so called Islamists. Go to real *ulama e haqqani* and find out the true meaning of jihad and when and where it becomes incumbent and upon whom.

You cannot take the life of another human being, be he or she a Muslim or a non Muslim. You cannot take your own lives which is suicide and is *haram* in Islam.

Islam never allows the killing of innocent non-Muslims. Neither does it advocate conversion by force.

Islam does not allow killing of women and children even in combat (war situation).

Don't be so ungrateful to your parents, who have raised you with so much pain and love and care. Do you realise how devastated, shocked and bewildered your family has become due to your own error of judgement? How awkward their position has become in society?

Where will they go? Where will they hide? Is this how you repay their love and kindness?

If you really love Allah and Rasul (PBUH) then prove it by your actions in obeying every command of Allah and following the footstep of the holy Prophet of Islam.

If you really want to make jihad then first show us by making jihad against your *nafs* (baser self).

Please don't follow these people who are brainwashing you and do not really care whether you live or die.

Come back to the loving arms of your families.

Don't throw away your precious lives. Don't be someone else's slaves. Don't listen to their crazy talk. Please, we beg you to come back to your senses. There is still time. Before you harm yourself and the country.

The writer is an Islamic thinker. (Name withheld on request)

A Teacher Remembers



Abinta Kabir



Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain



Tarishi Jain

ALEX KEEFE & ANNIE RUSSELL

RUSSELL Williams, a teacher at the American International School of Dhaka, remembers three of his students – Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, Abinta Kabir and Tarishi Jain - who fell victim to one the deadliest terror attacks in the country that took the lives of 22 people. Williams spoke with VPR from California about his experiences over the past week. Here is the text of his interview.

On the students lost in the attack
 "I'm dreading hearing an American here say something about Muslims, because — and this is from accounts that I've read on a bunch of different sites and also with talking with a few people — [the attackers] went in and said, 'We are here to kill the foreigners. If you're a Bangladeshi, you don't have to

worry.' They started separating people, and the determining factor was whether or not they could recite prayers from the Quran.

"There were three kids from our school, two girls and one boy. All three of them studied in the States and the one boy — Faraaz [Hossain] was a good Muslim boy. My friend told me that he used to see him at the mosque every Friday.

"And when the attackers quizzed him on his verses he passed and they told him he could go and he asked about his friends, the two young women that he was with. They were in western clothes and [the attackers] said no, they had to stay. And so Faraaz said that he was going to stay with them because he didn't want to leave his friends.

"And he did that because he's a good Muslim boy, because that's what his culture tells him, that's what his religion tells him. And I just can't handle hearing people

talk about Muslims in that negative way because that's why he stayed."

On returning to Dhaka:
 "I am apprehensive, but I'll tell you something else: Two days after the attack when I went out I was on my way to the American Club and I stopped at an ATM. A guy came in and he started doing his business in the machine next to mine. We finished at the same time and he stopped as he went out and he just touched me on the shoulder, and he just looked at me and said, 'I am so sorry,' and almost looked like he was going to cry. And he said, 'This is not Bangladesh. Please forgive us.' And I feel like he represents the people that I've come to know there."

To listen the interview please visit: <http://www.thedailystar.net/dhaka-attack/teacher-3-dhaka-attack-victims-remembers-his-students-1256098>

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QUOTABLE Quote

BENJAMIN DISRAELI
The palace is not safe when the cottage is not happy.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- Current unit
- Highlands girl
- Tiled art
- River to the Mississippi
- Old operator's place
- Loafers, e.g.
- Sky shade
- Headed out
- Openhanded hit
- "Lord Jim" author
- Vitality
- Twist in the sky
- Exploit
- Copier part
- Flying toy
- Entreaty
- Metropolis
- Coffee add-in
- Gymnast's aid
- Parched
- Sushi accompanier
- Capitol top
- Peanut pouch

DOWN

- Mornings: Abbr.
- Do a yard job
- Letter before omega
- Relishes
- Nouveau --
- Canyon sound
- Untie, perhaps
- Cry of insight
- Army address
- Turf
- Sub-merged
- Censor's sound
- Jacket flap
- Produce section
- Flavorful
- Suntan lotion letters
- Sedan or compact
- Scottish river
- Long
- Act the judge
- Geisha garb
- Rustic home
- Quiche base
- Feeling down
- Expert
- Crater part
- In the past
- Gym unit
- Desertlike

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

S	C	U	B	A	G	R	A	D	S
P	A	R	E	R	L	O	C	A	L
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		T	O	S		D	A	D	
D	I	M	I	N	I	S	H		
O	V	E	N		S	E	E	S	A
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T	O	T		P	E	E	N		
A	M	A	Z	E		A	G	A	P
R	A	N	O	N		T	U	R	I
A	R	G	O	T		S	P	E	E

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott