

Aftershocks of a failed coup

PLEASURE IS ALL MINE



SHAH HUSAIN IMAM

TURKEY in the aborted coup scenario looks like it will never be the same again! A crack-down of 'cultural revolution' proportions has got underway.

Purges have swept through judiciary, armed forces educational institutions, among others.

As many as 2,700 judges and 100 plus officers of the rank of General or Admiral constituting one-third of the top military hierarchy were eased off to probe their conduct. Fifteen thousand education staff have been suspended for 'siding with the coup'; 1500 university deans ordered to resign; and around ten thousand others were picked up.

Erdogan in no time waged a broadside against Fetullah Gulen, the Pennsylvania-based Islamic cleric accusing him of plotting the coup. Gulen has reacted by saying, "I have stated this 50 times that I am against military coups and interventions. I cannot change course after reaching the age of 77 years". In self-imposed exile in the USA since 1999, he promotes the Hizmet Islam movement that advocates democracy and secular institutions.

In typical opposition parlance, Gulen has attributed the coup to Erdogan implying that he may have courted it so as to embark on a planned crackdown.

The Turkish government has sent a Gulen dossier to the US government asking for his extradition. In case of a negative response from the USA he has threatened reciprocity in regard to US request for extradition.

Turkey, steeped in a history of military interventions suddenly found



Where will Turkey go from here?

PHOTO: DAILYSIGNAL.COM

itself with the military having feet of clay. Citizens threw themselves onto the path of tanks blocking their passage as the personnel on armoured vehicles bowed out. People's will prevailed.

The truth of the matter is that military intervention in politics or attempted usurpation of power is an imposition on the people and is never supported by them.

Turkish army liked to perceive itself in the role of protecting Kemal Ataturk's legacy of modernity and secularism. But after last week's debacle the military is put on notice that it

should not even unwittingly try to topple an elected government or be deluded into playing a kingmaker's role.

As a fuller picture unfolds, we are in a position to make a coherent sense of it all. Three big factors combined to save an elected government: Providence saving president Recep Tayyip Erdogan's life; prompt use of social media to galvanize public opinion in his favour and rank follies by the anonymous coup leaders.

Erdogan had left the Marmas resort 20 minutes before the attackers came

knocking at his door. The pilot of the jet chasing the aircraft that the president was flying in would be told off by a clever message that it was a Turkish Airliner on his radar.

The coup attempted outside the chain of command stood no chance and the bombing of parliament was considered key to its failure. Moreover, the president's call was complemented by those of the religious affair Diyanet ministry and imams of mosques. Then, opposition leaders and top military officers disavowed the coup, sealing its fate.

Power equations in the Turkey's

well-developed pluralistic political party system make the parties highly competitive and adversarial. In the November, 2015 elections, AK Parti, translated into Justice and Development Party, led Erdogan won 49.9 percent of the votes. With a little more than half of the electorate arrayed against him, Erdogan may have felt politically insecure.

CHP, meaning pro-Ataturk Secular Republican People's Party secured 25.4 percent, followed MHP adhering to Turkish nationalism and Euroskepticism bagging 11.9 percent and pro-Kurdish HDP tallying 10.7 percent.

Let's not forget, the coup was thwarted at great cost to human lives and limbs, let alone causing people to suffer, families to be divided. It was by no means a bloodless coup. As if that is not enough, witch-hunting and vendetta exactions may be the stuff of which the so-called crackdowns are made.

Turkey's image on human rights and rule of law is likely to face erosion. This is one sign of the country distancing itself from Europe. She may be turning her back to the EU of which she tried to become a member for the last 40 years. This is indicated by the Turkish president's desire to revive the death penalty. He is trying to cash in on the coup attempt. The EU has made it abundantly clear that a country allowing capital punishment is not entitled to its membership.

Turkey may have to rest content with its link to NATO on the eastern flank of the European continent and its 5 billion sterling pounds worth of a deal with the EU to hold back Syrian crisis-induced refugees from migrating to Europe.

The writer is a contributor to The Daily Star. He can be reached at shahhusainimam@gmail.com

The truth of the matter is that military intervention in politics or attempted usurpation of power is an imposition on the people and is never supported by them.

Not Heard but not Silent

MOURNFULLY YOURS



NAVEED MAHBUB

1 1:30 am, Saturday, July 2, 2016. After a sleepless night, I learn that Ishrat Akhond was at Holey Artisan Bakery. I immediately call her, only to

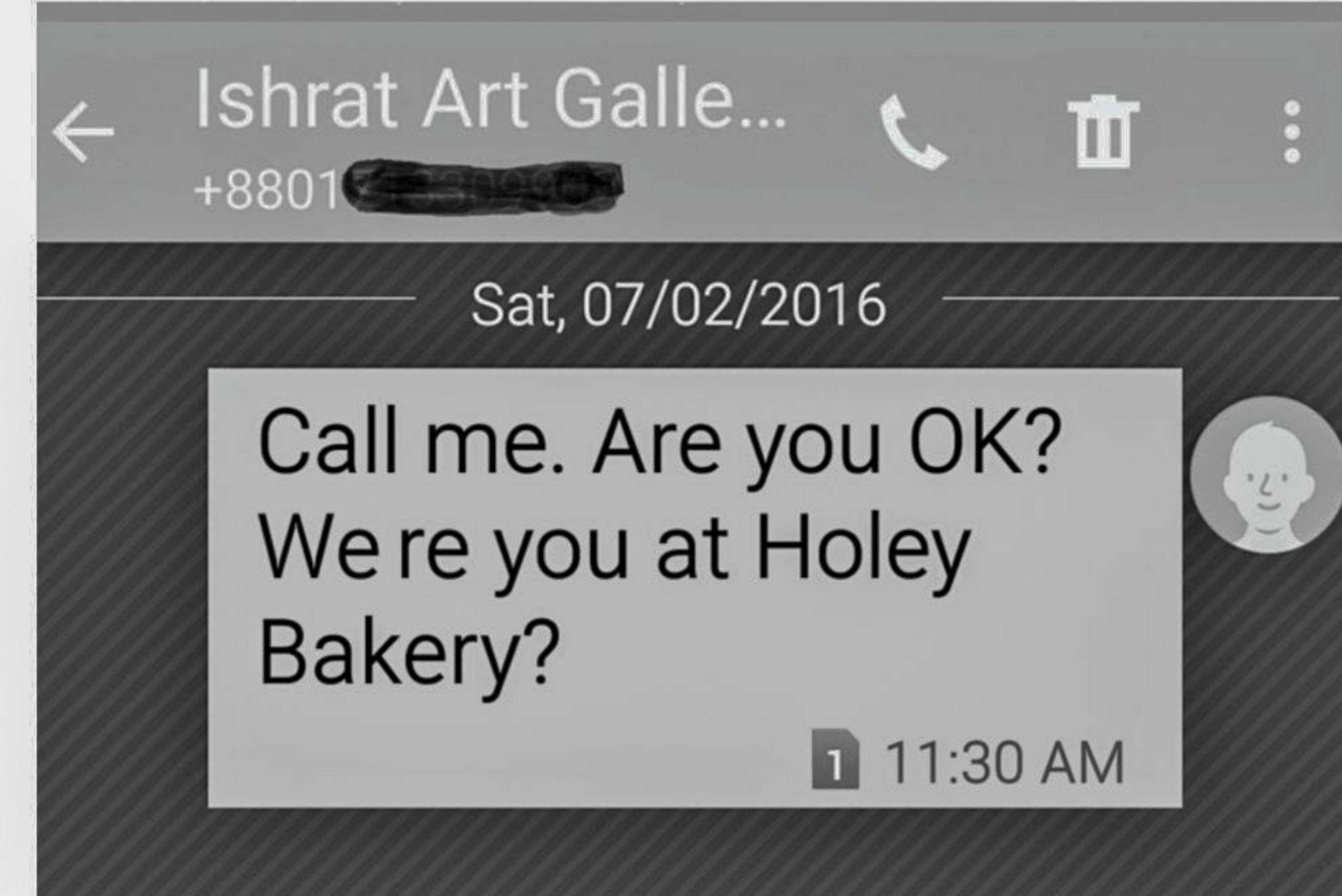
find out that the phone is disconnected. And then my last SMS to her... It's all over by then.

Bangladesh is on the map for all the wrong reasons. #HoleyArtisanBakery, #Gulshan, #Bangladesh are all trending on Twitter. For once, I wished these were all nondescript words.

Within 72 hours of the Holey Artisan Bakery tragedy, we, the social media warriors, reach solid conclusions covering the whole gamut of our imaginations, based on our unquestionable expertise on counter terrorism, intelligence gathering, operational planning, multi-dimensional force deployment, commando operations, post operations debriefing, video analysis, facial/pattern recognition, forensics, postmortem, criminal psychology, hostage negotiations, investigative journalism and comparative religion. I am optimistic that within a week, we will successfully conclude the investigations of the BDR mutiny, the murders of Sagor, Runi, Tonu, Avijit, ... all the way to the assassination of JFK, who shot JR and last but not the least, find out Who Framed Roger Rabbit.

Meanwhile, there is the expected rhetoric on whether it is an incident that is isolated, foreign controlled or home grown.

The word 'isolated' gives a sense of



security. Then again isolated planets make a solar system and isolated solar systems make a galaxy which when we look up into the sky to observe, we see clear, defined shapes. And that clear shape consisting of isolated events is the ideology of intolerance, hate and violence. That is perhaps the more important thing to take note of.

And so all of a sudden, even the Columbine High School, Virginia Tech and so many other school shootings in the US also don't seem to be isolated incidents. The perpetrators are young, but more so, very, very angry from

being lonely, shunned or being an outcast. And then, somewhere, somehow they find solace and meaning, either through solitary 'soul searching', or through the 'comforting' yet highly organised beckoning of a highly organised force.

If the latter is so successful in luring the confused, impressionable minds sitting on the fence, then there surely can be a force a thousand times stronger, fueled by a populace a million times larger, pulling the same solitary figure on the fence in the other direction.

So, to wake up the already woken

up silent majority, let us start with us parents. The Holey Artisan Bakery tragedy is another reminder of the fact that it is not money that our kids seek, but it is our love, attention and most importantly, our time and friendship (yes, that's right, friendship) that they crave for when they're young. It is exactly the same things that they desperately need, but may not necessarily seek, once they are young adults. Giving an iPad to the kid keeps him distracted and happy while we, the parents, are free to pursue our own needs and pleasures, not knowing where our children end up getting

(probably through that same iPad) that very love, attention, time and friendship that we, as parents have selfishly deprived them of.

When the Nazis were beefing up their arsenals, there was a silent majority in Germany. When the Japanese imperialism was brewing up, there was a silent majority in the Land of the Rising Sun. Even when George W. Bush and cronies decided to storm into Iraq (and in essence give birth to ISIS), there was a silent majority, who, according to Mr. Bush himself, were 'with them' by default from not being 'with us'.

The deviation from peaceful Islam, as in all these major upheavals in history, is once again engineered by a few. But one slight difference this time is that the one billion plus peace loving Muslims are not quite that silent a majority anymore, but working away in disparate pockets around the world to address this cancer called radical terrorism. Being unheard, thanks to global media's disinterest in reporting on this as opposed to the mayhem, is not the same as being silent.

After I come out of the Janaaza prayers of the Holey Artisan Bakery victims, a person comes and tells me, "Naveed, do NOT stop making us laugh. In fact, you need to do it all the more now to show how resilient we are." Maybe - that is part of the exercise of not remaining silent.

But after this unthinkable tragedy that happened less than a mile from my home, who will cheer ME up?

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.

QUOTABLE Quote

IMMANUEL KANT

In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Take turns
- 5 Ice skate part
- 10 Soothing plant
- 11 Mideast region
- 12 Locale
- 13 Bemoan
- 14 Story topper
- 16 Star's part
- 20 Poplar trees
- 23 Collins base
- 24 Forays
- 25 Nametag word
- 27 Office-holders
- 28 Astronomical sightings
- 29 Site for spy messages
- 32 Study
- 36 Pine products
- 39 Use a sponge
- 40 Spies
- 41 Malevolent
- 42 Makes fun of
- 43 Suggestive

DOWN

- 1 Window
- 2 Ballet bend
- 3 Tiny amount
- 4 Pestered
- 5 Steer marking
- 6 Debussy work
- 7 Japanese prime minister
- 8 Big racket
- 9 Have a bite
- 11 Fake name
- 15 Camera part
- 17 Lusty look
- 18 Bouncy tune
- 19 Son of Seth
- 20 Dry
- 21 Reasonable
- 22 Tuscany city
- 25 Parka part
- 26 Authorize
- 28 Boorish
- 30 Bar order
- 31 Body shop challenges
- 33 "-- Las Vegas"
- 34 Big-scale movie
- 35 Depend
- 36 Farm father
- 37 Swelled head
- 38 Brief time

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

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