

A Hil(l)arious reality show in the "unbelievable company" of Trump

HISHAM M NAZER

WOULD it be so wrong if anyone rephrased Marx, and said: America determines everything? To some extent we cannot deny the truth of such a statement. And when their foreign policies have sure effects on us—the people who live in the "third world" countries, waiting, demanding, and often crying to be defined, labeled, commissioned and represented by them—for the responsibility towards my "people", I, a single layman who perhaps does not even have the right to write about politics, am forced to have something to say at last. A novus ordo seclorum is about to emerge, and this extraordinary advent is going to be brought upon the earth by two intriguing candidates. One, a businessman—who frequently refers to Mexico and China with utter derision; who has so little to talk about other than the "unbelievable company" he owns; who inflicts personal slurs without any qualms; who is bent on using, if necessary, as much brutal force as certain religious extremists strike on others with, and who almost always talks about stopping American companies from leaving America and finding money-growing, easily exploitable "promised lands" whenever he is asked about his future policies regarding the increase of job opportunities under his presidency. The other is a former first lady, a "former" in so many political capacities, and a social activist. Hillary Clinton has been breathing politics for a long time and the



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added adventures of being a social-rights activist have plastered a smile on her face which is often, to be honest, a little disconcerting. While on the one hand Trump seems extreme when it comes to border-policy or his hatred for those who steal "American jobs", Hillary, on the other hand, seems a little too quiet about the Middle-eastern projects that she advocated and perhaps even sanctioned. But let's go back to the job issue first. Although a self-proclaimed "genius", is Trump

unknowingly implying that others, and mostly Asians and Mexicans, are actually "stealing" American jobs, may be because Americans are not efficient in doing them? One is curious to know in a dialogue, if possible, with a less excited Trump, what he thinks is the reason of this job-theft? Maybe less taxation on the wealthy will give them the opportunity to provide schools with better facilities, and into establishing, besides empires and Taj Mahals, other such facilities that aim at

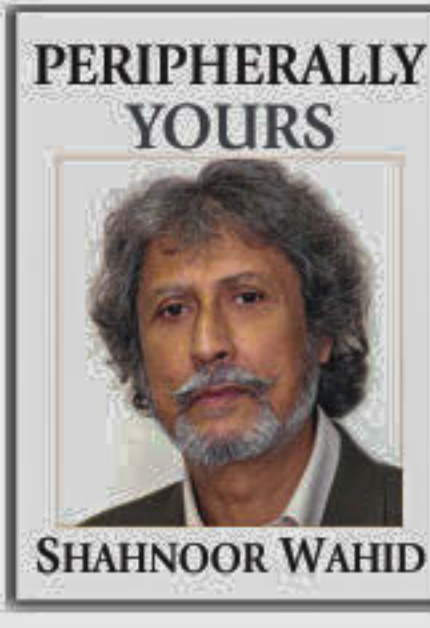
discovering and developing the skills of "real American people"? But how long are people really going to buy these commercial-promises of a wealthy man, who single-handedly wants to do something about the American debt (in trillions of dollars!)? One needs guts to take up a huge project like that but a government that has too much faith in its own strength may accomplish three things- it may either become a good government, or it may collapse for not knowing its own loopholes or

it may turn into an organisation, fueled by racial pride and over-confidence, posing threats for others. Trump's trump-card might prove to be the last little push towards the unknown abyss of possible threats. Hillary, on the other hand, to some extent, has already realised Edward Said's worst nightmare: postorientalism, the actualisation of the "Western conceptions of the Orient" through brutal force in the name of law and order and democracy, on the pretext of saving the people from declining middle-eastern countries. A conflict was situated, as surprisingly but aptly put by Trump, by the Democrats. And it is all just natural. Although the name of Marx (the supreme advocate of democracy) sounds archaic now, we cannot deny the dangerous 'elitist' thesis that he had put forward, about revolution being the only possible way to usher the era of a prosperous society and about how it is even justified to situate the conflict that might ignite the "necessary revolution". Hillary being a Democrat already knows that, does that, supports that, but Trump too, although he belongs to the Republican side, wants to do the same as a safety measure. This is exactly where both, with their apparent differences, are very similar, and this is what is frightening, because both thrive on conflicts and oppositions and offences and defenses, without at any time detailing their "visions" to the public. If we put both our heroes on a scale - trump is easily excitable, distractible (he stops abruptly while talking and switches to another

topic); Hillary is always prepared, sometimes so prepared that she seems more artificial than spontaneous. Trump remains aloof, literary aloof, after the presidential debate in his typical "hot-shot" pose and thumbs up; Hillary comes "down" to people and shakes hands from a height, as if trying to prove something by portraying a contrast between her and Trump. But, excuse me! What does all this have to do with Bangladesh and a Bangladeshi like you? I am prepared, not too prepared though, to answer the question. The impact of American politico-economic torrent is tremendous on our shores, and we cannot deny how much we owe to America, financially, politically and academically. Now can we really approach someone with a serious issue who looks at the camera and requests for votes like an amateur star in a reality show, or someone who probably has already started building the "great American wall" in his dreams? Does it really make any difference, if we have to choose between cunning and cruel? Therefore, we need plans and we need to take calculated measures in order to act diplomatically with America in the future. Otherwise America's new imperial strategies may either shut us off from entering their "first world" or it may, by the virtue of their diplomacy, help them enter into ours, without any resistance.

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No grave for Gulshan attackers



PERIPHERALLY YOURS SHAHNOOR WAHID

IT was the last act in the bleak drama. And it was written by none other than Providence. The young men who had unleashed mayhem in a restaurant in Gulshan in July this year in the name of Islam and subsequently were killed in the hands of the law enforcers now lie in their eternal sleep in some unidentified graves in the city. Their mortal remains were kept in the hospital freezer since their death and now they exist as numbers only, in the graveyard. Media reports say that the authorities concerned had offered the dead bodies of the jihadists to the respective families for burial but possibly their conscience did not permit them to show any respect or sympathy to their wayward sons for their evil deeds in life. They feel they have been wantonly wronged and disgraced by their sons who had kept them totally in the dark about their whereabouts.

We understand the families took the decision on their own and were under no threat from any state agency whatsoever. Some family members have already offered their apology to the nation for the unparalleled acts of barbarity of their sons that resulted in the deaths of so many innocent, unarmed human beings that included a good number of foreigners and some Bangladeshis. Neither the family members of the victims nor the nation have forgiven the killers or given any credence to what they did on July 1. The same is the case with the families of jihadists who died during police raids in Kalayanpur and Narayanganj. The refusal of the family members of the dead jihadists to take delivery of their dead bodies from the morgue clearly sends a message to other young men out there who are still pursuing the distorted mission of establishing Islam through the bloody path of violence. The message says that the people of the country in general and their families in particular, do not approve of the religious dogma, and the methods of implementation that they want to impose by force on the people. The message further says that Islam is well rooted



in this country and there is no need for guns and knives to establish it. The jihadists knew that they would not be able to convince their own family members about the rationale

of their mission hence they left their homes without informing them. But the history of Islam and the history of Crusade and Jihad of the eleventh century tell us that in real jihad fam-

ily members encourage their sons and daughters to go and defend their faith till the last drop of blood. They return like heroes to their families and a dead jihadist gets a hero's wel-

come with an honourable burial. But nothing can be more painful when parents cannot follow the rituals as per their religious belief and give their dead son a decent burial. The pain is exacerbated when they know they would not be able to identify the son's grave. And this is precisely what has happened with the Gulshan jihadists. The brainwashed young men who now lie in unmarked graves had all the opportunities in the world to lead a normal life and contribute to society and religion in various constructive ways but they opted to script their own violent end following instructions of some motivators. We believe there are many more young people in Bangladesh who are unnecessarily going rogue in a society where everyone enjoys the freedom to practice and preach religion in a peaceful manner. And yet, these young men and women are going against the mainstream to implement their own brands of Islam with the help of guns and grenades. Will they be successful or will they also end up in unmarked graves in the near future?

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ACROSS

- Block
- Easy wins
- DVR option
- Not oblivious
- Magic Johnson, once
- Comic strip worker
- Census question
- Apr. 15 org.
- Lamb's mother
- Casual greetings
- Word on a bill
- Juan
- Easily attachable
- Foal's mother
- View from Mount Vernon
- Gloomy atmosphere
- Chapel figures
- glance
- Golfer Hogan
- Part of a match
- Singer Orbison
- Vein contents
- H lookalike
- Surmise
- Crumpet's cousin

DOWN

- Love, to Luigi
- Grazing groups
- Tackle box items
- Holds up
- Barcelona's region
- Tries to attain
- Wield
- Green gem
- Job reward
- Hold title to
- Justifies
- From the '30s, say
- Placid
- Go too long
- Campaign pro
- Buddy
- 26 20 Questions category
- Parson's domain
- Without delay
- Stop working
- Declares
- Tedious folks
- Purpose
- Aussie runner

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

GOTON SCALE
ALIVE TOXIN
BEGET AMEND
ENIGMA
JAR ZAP TAP
APYEMEN LIRA
FLYING TIGER
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