

MINISTRY OF CIVIL MOVEMENTS: THINK LIKE US, THINK FOR US

#RealTalk



OSAMA RAHMAN

Bangladesh took remarkable strides towards a fully fair and functioning democracy by officially inaugurating the brand new Ministry of Civil Movements. The scope of the Ministry is captured aptly by their catchy slogan: "Think Like Us, Think For Us". The government body was formed to approve, design and plan civil unrest movements in an efficient manner so as to preserve the ideals of democracy whilst ensuring that "terrorists" do not hijack or politicise such assemblies. Against the grim backdrop of the police brutally breaking up a number of peaceful protests, the government considers this to be a key step towards restoring normalcy in these chaotic times.

"Protesters are often seen to block streets, picket and cause damage to public property. Sometimes they go against the practices of a corporation that not only pays massive taxes but also buys us cars and flats. This forces us to go for brutal police action," Sweetboy Salam, the Minister for Civil Movements, explained. "What we plan to do is help identify the weaknesses in their reasons and ways of protesting and rectify their methodology so as to maximise their effect," he continued. To this end, the Ministry of Civil Movements' first step has been to designate a place for public protests. The new location boasts 750 square feet of "eco-touristically" developed forest that has been reserved in Savar and is the largest such space in South-East Asia's Bay of Bengal. Called the Revolutionary's Retreat, here, the protesters can congregate and protest whatever they wish, provided it does not go against the ideology of "the people".

"Sometimes, some people collectively abstain from work and vent their many frustrations on others. This is not a protest," Innocent Imad, the Minister for Public Sentiment, an office within the Ministry of Civil Movements, said. "For instance, last week, the transport workers, students and sex workers were not protesting. They were merely abstaining from their work and collectively discussing their various grievances. These are not protests," he said, adding that the new Ministry would help with legitimising real protests in tune with the sentiment of the people.

The new Ministry will additionally prepare the leaflets, designate spots where protesters can explain their points instead of unleash angry tirades to TV channels, instruct the many newspapers

on how to construct the nature of the discourse, align the motivations of the assemblies with the ethos of the party, and prepare points of demand. "The only form of democracy that works is the one that uses normal channels of political actions. As such, irrelevant movements such as those that can be defined as civil disobedience or violent, and those challenging hierarchal authorities, any dominant group or private property and institutions that

protect them will no longer be allowed. We aren't a basket-case," Innocent Imad said.

When asked how allowing only rosy government-sanctioned protests can foster a healthy democracy, the Minister uncharacteristically rebuked the journalists saying, "You journalists are always sensationalists; stop talking about Rampal and Sundarban all the time." The Ministry later clarified that it was a scripting error and would form a

committee to immediately look into it.

Protestors or agents, as they will now be known, will first file a written application explaining the purpose and intent of their movement. The Ministry will then choose whether or not to provide a no-objection certificate. Then, where a marketable leader is not found, the Ministry will either groom one within the movement or hire a seasoned veteran. Journalists will be invited to a new air-conditioned viewing corner in front of the Revolutionary's Retreat where they will be provided refreshments as they observe the proceedings. Each agent will pay Tk. 100 to be a member and the funds will go towards improving the services of the ministry. There will be a number of "Revolutionary Packages" to choose from, with prices depending on choice of refreshment, duration and exposure required.

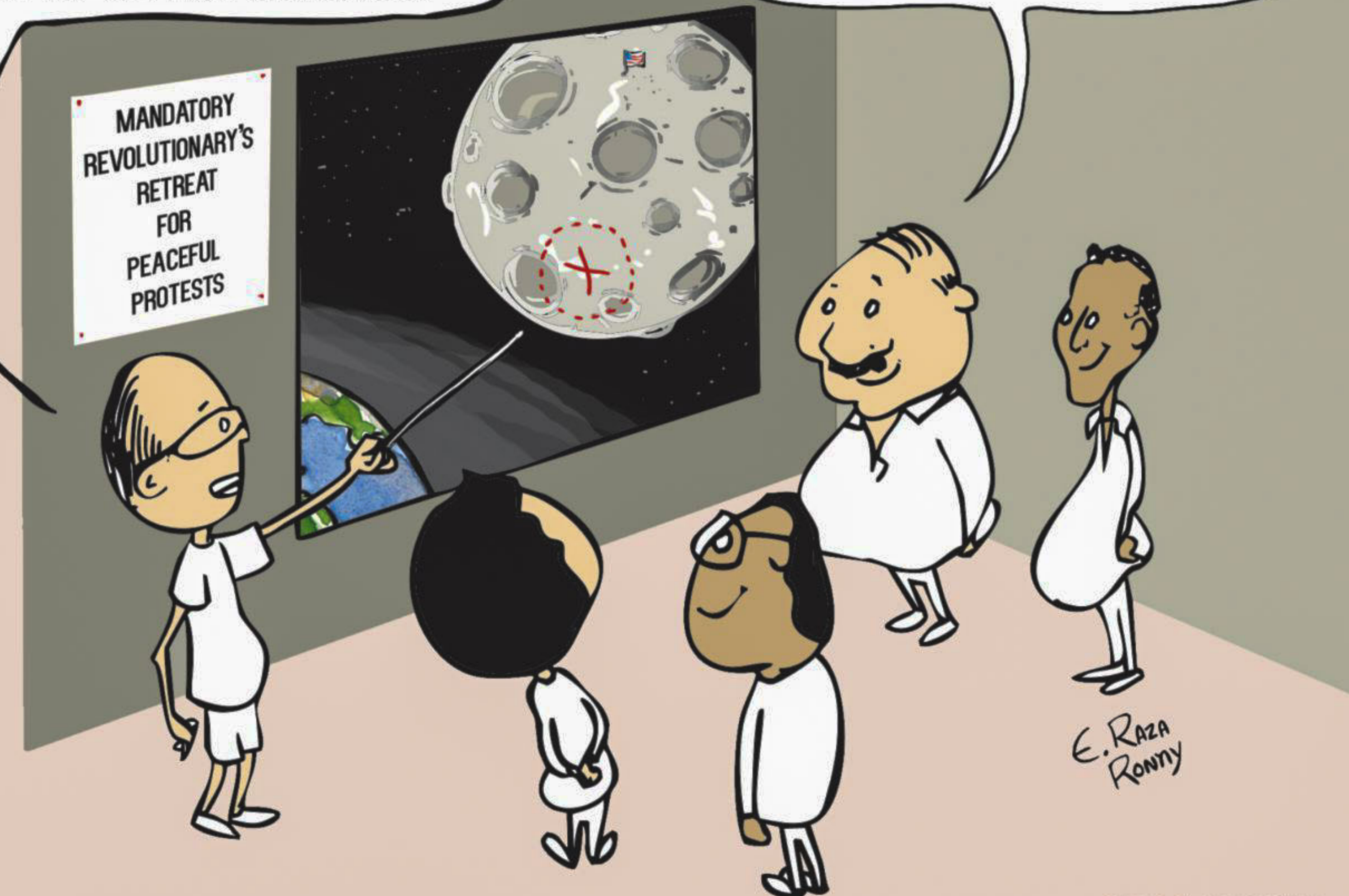
The ministry will go to operations later this year. As an added incentive, the first 50 approved applicants will be provided with Madrasa children as pickets for maximising effectiveness. ■

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| SATIRE |

BANGLADESH INHUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONCERNED ABOUT POOR US HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITION

SHARIER KHAN

Just a week after the US Department of State in its human rights report for 2016 expressed concerns about Bangladesh's human rights condition, Bangladesh Inhuman Rights Commission expressed concerns about the deplorable human rights condition in the US.

In its report, Bangladesh Inhuman Rights Commission chairman RI Khan noted that the most significant human rights problems in the USA were arbitrary or unlawful detentions of immigrants, undermining rights of women, indigenous people and minority groups.

"Immigrants and tourists from different countries are being detained at the airport on their arrival without valid reasons and even being picked up from their homes—creating a reign of terror in the minds of immigrant Americans and expatriate Bangladeshis," said RI Khan in the report. "We in Bangladesh do not harass Americans or other foreigners like that."

In Bangladesh people don't attack journalists on Twitter. We live in a real world. If we need to insult someone, we have them insulted via sychophants on TV talk shows.

"There were reports of widespread impunity for security force abuses," said the report, expressing deep concern at the deterioration of rights situation in the USA since Donald Duck took over the White House.

"We are also concerned that democracy in the US is in peril as its elections were rigged," said the report referring to Russia's controversial role—especially that of Russian President Vladimir's Natin-Putin—in last year's election.

Whereas Bangladeshi media is free to report or cover anything as they enjoy the world's highest freedom of



UM... WE... ARE CONCERNED ...ABOUT BANGLADESH HOUMAN RIGHTS!

CARTOON: SHARIER KHAN

expression, the President of the USA personally attacks media houses like *The New York Times* or *The Guardian* by tweeting mercilessly.

"In Bangladesh, this is unheard of. We don't attack *The New York Times*," said RI Khan, "In Bangladesh people don't attack journalists on Twitter. We live in a real world. If we need to insult someone, we have them insulted via sychophants on TV talk shows."

While America criticised forced disappearances and cross-fires in Bangladesh, Mr RI Khan said, "Oh yeah? How many Americans are killed daily in gun violence alone? Not less than 30. Not even our buses or minibuses could kill so many Bangladeshis on a daily basis! Stop gun violence. Use minibuses and buses instead. It's more

lawful to kill people by running over them."

"The USA has many things to learn from us. They want to build a wall in the 3145 km US Mexican border and demand Mexico pay for it. We have 4000 km border with India. We made India build barbed-wire fences in many parts and we already made India pay for it," he said.

"Americans have rightly realised that they need to make America great again—because it is no longer great. Today nobody cares what you think about our county. We know soon America will begin copying our style of governance because what Bangladesh thinks today, the USA thinks tomorrow," the Inhuman rights chief said.

The writer is Deputy Editor, *The Daily Star*.

ABOUT TOWN

First Puppet Show of DP at Theater In History Of Bangladesh

10 March, 2017 At Shilpakala Academy

Let the Child's Mind Develop in The World Of Pure Imagination

FIRST PUPPET SHOW OF DP THEATRE IN HISTORY OF BANGLADESH

March 10-11, 10:30am - 1.00pm

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Organiser: Puppet Show-Dhaka Puppet Theatre

CHILDREN FEST 2017

March 16-18, 5-8 pm

Bangla Academy

Organiser: Whiz Kid

WAKE UP CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

TIME: 10AM - 01PM | DATE: 11TH MARCH, 2017

WAKE-UP CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

March 11, 10am - 1pm

Bishwo Shahitto Kendro

Organiser: Durbin