



**A LIFE
LESS
ORDINARY
ALY ZAKER**

I managed to collect myself from the stupor that the immersion of the two 303 rifles handed over by the policemen had caused me and woke up to the present. The place was bereft of any human beings. It later transpired that there was a curfew on and, therefore, there was no one anywhere. Curfews were known to us from our childhood. For the Pakistani rulers' curfew was a very apposite tool to deter any popular movement. It started from the days of the language movement when I was eight and of which I had but a very faint memory. In recent times, however, the curfews were becoming less effective as their impact had grown weaker. A daring but befitting defiance to curfews first happened during the Ayub regime in the then East Pakistan in 1969. To quell the popular movement against the military regime Ayub's Governor Monem Khan was known to have deployed curfew as a weapon too frequently until, one-night, people could take it no more. They came out of their homes and gave the slogan 'Joy Bangla' that reverberated all over. But this time it was different. So I came back home that morning as if drained of all energies and went straight to bed.

Curfew was relaxed for a while and I decided to go to Moghbazar to enquire about the well being of my friends in that area. When I reached the Mouchak-Malibag intersection I saw four of them walking towards the direction I was com-

THE WAR (ONE)!

ing from. They were relieved to see me alive. All five of us got in to an auto rickshaw, called baby taxi in those days, and headed for the Jagannath Hall. We had to stop about five to six hundred yards before the hall as the Pakistan army did not allow us to proceed any further. Our experience was similar at Peelkhana. In fact, when I returned to my Rajarbag residence I had a tough time convincing the Pak Army sentries about the fact that I lived in that area. The concept of an army identity card for the inhabitants of East Pakistan had come about in those days. They, of course, called it "Dandy Card".

The next day, curfew was relaxed for a longer period of time. I was getting ready to go out when my cousin-in-law, an Awami Leaguer and elected member of the constituent assembly, came down to our place. He was looking for a sanctuary. The army had started a witch-hunt for all those that were associated with the politics of Awami League or were close to Bangabondhu. Apparently, he went to some of our relatives who were hesitant in giving him a safe refuge. He requested me to somehow reach him to his constituency in Gopalganj. I didn't think it would be very safe for him. Knowing my countrymen, I was convinced that some of his voters would quite easily hand him over to the army for little alimony. So I said, "You will go to our village." He was taken

aback. But later agreed, I am sure, on consideration of the rationale of the proposal. He stayed back at our home that night. And the following morning we started for our village in Brahmanbaria. We were quite a party. My cousin with her husband and three kids, my sister, brother-in-law and their daughter, my brother and his wife, eleven of us drove to the bank of Buriganga River behind the North Brook Hall. One of my friends drove us in my Beetle in two sorties. After the second trip he asked me what he should do with the car. I said that he could keep it for as long as he wanted and after that he could just leave it behind on the road for all I cared. At that time for me nothing mattered. I wanted to leave this enslaved country once and for all. We got a place to sleep in a house belonging to a distant relative in Zinjira across river Buriganga. They took good care of us. Fed us well at night, and helped us move on the following morning. We started walking towards the direction of the Dhaleshwari River. The idea was to travel by boat through to Meghna River, go upstream, and look for a launch station called Manik Nagar near Nabinagar, and we would not be far from our village Ratanpur. We started very early from Zinjira and reached a village named Rajapur close to the river by late evening. We had to walk miles, were really tired

and decided to stay overnight in that village. One thing that really got us emotional and ever so grateful to our freedom loving people is the fact that during the long walk between Zinjira and Rajapur we were very well looked after by men and women on either side of the road who gave us drinking water offered us snacks and enquired about our well being.

Before we reached the village we were told about the disrepute of it, infamously known as a village of dacoits. On reaching there we were welcomed and taken to a two storied house. They had heard about my cousin-in-law, the Member of the Parliament, and gave us the first floor of the house to spend the night. I assumed that his reputation as an MP preceded him.

We found, much to our discomfort, that old guns, swords and shields were displayed on the walls of that house. So I and a couple of others from our family spent a sleepless night with an apprehension that we may be attacked any time. However, nothing untoward happened that night. What is more, we were treated to a fabulous breakfast the next morning comprising Eggs, Chicken Curry and Paratha. The villagers even found us a spacious Dingy boat to ferry us across to Manik Nagar. The boat set sail stealthily at about eight in the morning. I lazily lay down at its front deck and went off to sleep.

TRIVIA & QUIZ

NAME THE MOVIE

HINT: IT IS A BIOPIC OF A FAMOUS SCIENTIST



1

NAME THE ACTOR

HINT: HE IS THE YOUNGEST OSCARS WINNER FOR BEST ACTOR



2

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES



3



Send "ALL FOUR" answers to
showbiz.tds@gmail.com

Winners will receive
QUEEN SPA ROOM GIFT VOUCHER

courtesy of **Que Bella**

**ALL 4 QUESTIONS MUST BE
ANSWERED CORRECTLY**

ANSWERS OF PREVIOUS ISSUE

1. Name the Movie: Catch Me If You Can
2. Name the Actor: Katharine Hepburn
3. Spot the Differences:
 - i. Badge
 - ii. Buttons
 - iii. Tear
 - iv. Dog-tag
 - v. Armband
4. Name the Movie with the famous quote: On the Waterfront

4 NAME THE MOVIE WITH THIS FAMOUS QUOTE:

**"THE FLOWER THAT
BLOOMS IN ADVERSITY IS
THE MOST RARE AND
BEAUTIFUL OF ALL."**

FIND FIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO PICTURES FROM
"WONDER WOMAN!"