

Will Guterres' visit

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the brightest example who had to spend much of her time in between 1989 to 2010 in some form of detention.

The junta's misrule has bred corruption, spread drug across the globe and, as this article is focused on, and led to dehumanisation of the Rohingyas as some mere animals whose only future is relegated to persecution.

Years of global pressure could not make Myanmar to reform its political door, which it slightly opened in 2010 with a shadow of an election. But its character has not changed, or rather has hardened with the newly found friends in Russia and India to add with its age-old ally, China.

Whenever a move is taken in the UN to pass a resolution against Myanmar on the Rohingya issue, China and Russia -- two permanent members of the Security Council -- torpedo the efforts, for which the UN could not play any effective role in forcing Myanmar to stop the pogrom on the Rohingyas.

India remained silent in condemning Myanmar's monstrous actions although it sent some humanitarian aid to Bangladesh and its External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj avowed that India stands beside Bangladesh. It did not actually weigh in on Myanmar with its regional super-power aura.

Before the visit of UN Secretary General António Guterres, the UN Security Council had sent a mission to the Rohingya camps. The team went back but nothing happened in last two months.

Guterres has said a UN fact finding mission will submit its report "very soon".

But the fact that ten months have elapsed since Myanmar has driven away more than seven lakh Rohingya bares the urgency of the matter in the mind of the UN bureaucracy. That reminds us the UN failure in tackling the Rwanda genocide because of delays in UN decision.

Against this Wall of silence, Guterres today looks like a forlorn warrior.

In September, he had issued an unprecedented letter in the last 28 years since the 1989 Lebanon conflict to the Security Council for its action on Myanmar that went unheeded.

Guterres is an extraordinary leader who always stood for causes. He did not hesitate to resign as the prime minister of Portugal in his second term when his government was floundering.

Then the socialist man did something unprecedented for a prime minister; he went to the slums of Lisbon and taught math to malnourished children.

He did not do it for its show value; he did not allow any photographer or journalist to cover his slum endeavour. He always worked with "heart and reason" as his political campaign slogan was in 1995.

So when he says the Rohingya children in Cox's Bazar camps reminded him of his grandchildren, we believe he will try his best to save these doomed souls.

He will put in his best to move the Wall and make it animated into action. Nobody in his right mind would want to see Guterres fail as his predecessors had in the cases of Rwanda and Bosnia.

We still can hear a frustrated Boutros Boutros-Ghali's lament about the failure in Rwanda at a press conference: "It is a failure not only for the United Nations; it is a failure for the international Community."

And now we hear Guterres' urgent call: "My appeal to the international community is to step up support."

We don't want his voice break into a lament just like his predecessors'. After all, Dag Hammarskjöld, the second UN secretary general whom everybody holds in dear esteem, had described the role of the UN in clear terms as: "the UN was created not to lead mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell."

So, let the Wall move and save these souls.

Drug dealer

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their presence, the drug peddlers threw bricks and fired several rounds of gunshots at them. The law enforcers retaliated, leading to the "gunfight", he added.

Bachchu Mia sustained bullet wounds during the "gunfight", said the OC, adding, he was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Police recovered 200 pieces of yaba

and four used bullets from the spot.

Bachchu was wanted in some 15 cases related to narcotics, the OC added.

Rupbanu, mother of Bachchu, however, said his son gave up drug trading one year ago, but he used to take drugs sometimes.

Police picked up Bachchu, father of five children, from adjacent Kumuriakanda village on Sunday night and he was traceless since then, his mother added.

Love this

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time by football pundits and fans.

What a surprise Japan had saved for their match against Belgium after qualifying for the third time to the knockout phase of a World Cup! It was supposed to be a contest between underdogs and hot favourites. But in reality, it was Japan who played like hot favourites and almost knocked fancied Belgium out of the World Cup.

Japan eventually lost the match but won millions of hearts.

Like any Asian country competing against the world's superpowers from Europe, America or Africa, Japan had all the odds stacked against them. They fell short in size, stamina, skill, experience and footballing culture. But they were no less than their opponents in two areas -- intelligence and the desire to excel.

In terms of physical stature, the Japanese were the Davids and the Belgians Goliaths. Goliaths had the distinct edge in aerial football, with two of their goals coming from head-

moves that resulted in two spectacular goals.

In my view, a bold tactical decision by Belgium coach Roberto Martinez threw a spanner into Japan's works and put the match on a reverse course. His double substitution in the 65th minute proved to be decisive, and Belgium instantly came back firing. Within four minutes, the nation of less than 12 million people scored the first goal from a lofted header through Jan Vertonghen from just inside the box and the second one -- also off a headed strike five minutes later -- from substitute Marouane Fellaini. And the other substitute Nacer Chadli drove the last nail into Japan's coffin in the final minute following a substitution by Japan.

In came veteran celebrity footballer Keisuke Honda as a substitute 10 minutes from the end of regulation time, and he nearly shot Japan into the quarterfinals from a perfect free-kick in the last minute of play. Ironically, within seconds of that free-kick, the



Students of Dhaka University, under the banner of *Students against Torture*, form a human chain in the university's TSC area yesterday protesting the attack on the quota reform movement leaders and activists by Chhatra League men.

PHOTO: STAR

Merciless beating

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legitimate demand. The detainees -- a former Jahangirnagar University teacher and a former leftist student leader -- were later released. But the question is: Is peacefully expressing concerns for our children not acceptable anymore?

Primarily, as a conscientious citizen and a human being and then as a former student of Dhaka University, a freedom fighter, a student political activist of the sixties and an inheritor of the splendid, enviable and proud legacy of student politics of the DU, I am filled with sorrow and revulsion at the inhuman, uncivilised and horrible treatment being meted out to the students of DU and other universities by the pro-ruling party student activists.

There are many famous student leaders of my days in the current cabinet. During their glory days, they themselves were victimised for their activism. Shouldn't they be concerned to see such denigration of DU students?

They should know better than to allow this mayhem to continue. They know from their own experience that such brutal treatment only hardens the resolve of protesters.

May be there had been similar oppressive actions on students during military or other regimes or governments' tenure. May be BCL activists themselves were at the receiving end of such violence.

But to repeat it in today's world, especially when, under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, Bangladesh is not only making a whole new image for itself but forcing the world to recognise it, is nothing less than throwing dirt on our own face.

Under what law, by what right, is the BCL beating up the students? Why are the police a mere spectator in all this? On Monday, police were seen leaving the Shaheed Minar just as they saw the BCL men coming to attack the protesters. Reportedly, a number of female students were also manhandled and even kicked. Was it a case of law enforcers leaving the ground so the law breakers could have their way?

Just arrest

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Rahnuma Ahmed, and former student leader Baki Billah -- were released later.

Outraged, the organisers now demand investigation into the police action, judicial inquiry into the attacks on quota reform campaigners and punishment of the perpetrators.

To press these demands, there will be a rally on the same venue at 4:00pm on Friday, said Supreme Court lawyer Hasnat Quaiyum, one of the organisers.

Under the banner of "Udbigno Obhibhabok O Nagorik" (worried guardians and citizens), parents, rights activists, teachers and eminent citizens were scheduled to hold the protest rally at 4:00pm.

Before the event started, around a hundred policemen gathered on the venue with armoured personnel carriers and prison vans.

"Just arrest whoever tries to take position here," Azimul Haque, additional deputy commissioner of police (Ramna Division), told his men as the demonstrators tried to assemble in front of the press club around 4:10am yesterday.

The ADC was leading the police team there.

The law enforcers drove away some protesters including Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon, and Saiful Haque, general secretary of Revolutionary Workers' Party of Bangladesh.

At one point, police tried to force a demonstrator into a prison van but

However, isn't it a fact that:

To attack someone and physically harm him/her is a crime?

To take the law into one's own hands is a crime?

To interfere in police work is a crime?

To abuse someone is a crime?

So what are the police, the home ministry and the government as a whole doing about it?

On the other hand:

Peaceful gathering is a political right;

Holding a protest is a democratic right;

Physical safety is a human right;

Freedom of movement is a civic right.

All of these are our FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS guaranteed by the constitution and upheld by all the legal instruments applicable nationally and internationally.

To deny any individual or group their constitutional rights is to violate the constitution, and it is the duty of a democratic government, which takes its oath on the constitution, to uphold every principle enshrined in it.

That is of course if we have rule of law in the country. We would like to still believe that we have. We also would like to believe that the ruling party will do everything in its power to end the present disgraceful behaviour by the pro-Awami League student body and that the government will ensure fundamental rights of all.

However, our belief rests on a very weak foundation because:

This is not the first time that the BCL activists have taken the law into their own hands;

This is not the first time that the ruling party activists have physically assaulted those with whom they differ;

This is not the first time peaceful gatherings have been attacked by people claiming to be ruling party supporters;

This is not the first time that peaceful dissent has been silenced through physical assault.

Were the quota reformists breaking the law? No.

Did they resort to violence? No.

Would their holding a press briefing harm the country in any way? No.

Were they indulging in any anti-state activities? No.

Were the issues raised by them contrary to our constitution, democracy or ideals of our Liberation War? No.

Are they citizens of Bangladesh and entitled to basic political and human rights? Yes.

Do our students have a right to raise questions on issues that affect them? Yes.

Did they have a legitimate point to make? Yes.

Why then, we ask again, are they being attacked and arrested?

Is it because the ruling party activists feel that they are above the law?

Is it that breaking the law seldom leads to punishment and sometimes even to rewards?

Is there a deep-seated disregard for legal rights of others, especially if one is a "dissenter"?

The quota reform demand is three months old. The PM responded sympathetically and a committee has been formed to examine what could be done, though initially she wanted to abolish the system altogether.

The issue is extremely important and lies at the core of the quality of our future bureaucracy. There is a fairness issue that tilts us towards affirmative action for the special/disadvantaged groups, and then there is the quality issue that takes merit as the most important criterion.

Policymakers all over the developing world are grappling with this complex problem. But nowhere are the exponents of contrarian views being physically assaulted for days.

The agitating students could have been informed that it will take some more time and that they need to wait for a while. But instead, the BCL activists went on a rampage on them.

We conclude by asking if a nonpartisan students' group agitating for their future job prospects can be attacked so brutally, then what will happen when the opposition tries to hold a public rally to criticise the government?

Can this be the state of our

ATTACK BY BCL

Students seek punishment of attackers

STAR REPORT

A group of Dhaka University students, under the banner of "Students against Repression", formed a human chain at the foot of Raju Memorial Sculpture yesterday protesting the recent BCL attack on quota reformists.

The protesters demanded punishment of the attackers.

Another human chain was formed on the campus under the banner of "Sadharan Shikharthi", in which BCL leaders and activists took part.

Speaking at the programme at the foot of Raju Memorial Sculpture, Nur Arafat, a second-year honours student of DU, said no actions would be taken if anyone was assaulted on the campus.

"The proctor is saying that he will take steps if anyone files a complaint. Will my body file a complaint if I die today?" he said.

At the other human chain programme, presidents and general secretaries of some BCL hall units were

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KHALEDA'S SENTENCE

HC defers hearing on 4 appeals till July 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday deferred until July 8 the hearing on four appeals in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case in which BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman fixed July 8 for starting the hearing on the appeals. The bench was scheduled to start the hearing yesterday.

It passed the deferment order after Khaleda had filed a petition seeking adjournment of the hearing.

In the petition, the BNP chief said she had earlier submitted a petition to

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MPO a bad system

Says Muhith in House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday came down heavily on the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) system in educational institutions, saying that the system is a bad one due to the amount of forgery involved in it.

"The Monthly Pay Order system is a bad system, which is still being continued," Muhith told the House while responding to a question of Tariqat Federation MP Najibul Bashar Maizbhandari.

The finance minister said the MPO system does not play any role in improving the quality of education.

"Rather stipends and school feeding programmes play special roles for the improvement of the quality of the education system. Instead of making

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ers. But the Blue Samurai more than made it up by giving the imposing Romelu Lukaku and Co no space to operate in their defence, at least not in the first 70 minutes of play.

To overcome the odds, Japan's footballers moved in a group on the ball like a well-oiled machine. While defending or attacking, a group of three-four players were always on the ball. And that is why Japan looked so intensely fluent in their counter-attacks that produced two goals.

The first half was barren, with Japan busy thwarting Belgian attacks with moves in a small group. But it was a pulsating, raucous, tense and brilliant second half, with Japan going more onto the offensive right from the start. High quality stuff was demonstrated at both ends of the pitch. But the first 25 minutes belonged to Japan, with Genki Haraguchi and Takashi Inui striking a goal apiece within a span of four minutes. You have to love those

Red Devils hit back on the counter with the last kick of the game. It happened in less than 10 seconds: a diagonal pass to Thomas Meunier, then a low cross left by Lukaku following a perfect dummy and finally a jab into the net by Chadli.

And, with that Belgium became the second team after Portugal to come back from 2-0 down and win a World Cup knockout round match. In 1966, Portuguese legend Eusebio starred in a dramatic 5-3 win over North Korea, with his four breathtaking goals helping Portugal come back from 3-0 down. Well done, Belgium!

Japan, however, emerged as the lighthouse of hope for Asian lightweights. They can head home as champions, with their footballers being winners in fair play and fans being model spectators.

Salute to Japan!
The writer is former Sports Editor of The Daily Star