

MARTYRED INTELLECTUALS DAY

The nation seeks official list of martyred intellectuals



SALEEM SAMAD

TO this day the nation does not have a list of intellectuals abducted and murdered by the marauding Pakistan army and their local henchmen who joined in the plunder, genocide, and rape during the brutal birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Last week Faruq Faisal, son of martyred journalist Mohsin Ali Dewan approached Mohammad Jahangir Hossain, director general of Jatiya Muktiyuddho Council (Jamuka) under the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs. He described that his father was abducted by the Pakistan army accompanied by armed militia, the Razakars, from his home in Bogura on June 3, 1971. He was the editor of weekly *Uttar Bongo Bulletin*, published from Bogura and was first elected president of Bogura Press Club. He was also principal of Sherpur Degree College and also established Bogura Law College, Shah Sultan College, and Joypruhat College. His body was never found. Faruq sought the Jamuka chief's advice regarding formalities to enlist Mohsin Ali Dewan's name in the official document of martyred intellectuals. He was surprised to hear that the government does not have any policy to list murdered intellectuals. Faruq Faisal, presently the regional director for Bangladesh and South

Asia of international media rights organisation Article 19, was shocked to learn this from the DG of Jamuka. The government has not published a gazette notification regarding the documentation and compilation of a list of intellectuals who were singled out by the Pakistan army and killed. Earlier, in a statement in the parliament on February 6, 2014, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq informed that a complete list would be published by June 2014. The list has not seen the light of the day. The intellectuals were abducted, tortured and killed by Pakistan army and their henchmen Al Badr, the secret death squad who were recruited from among the hardcore members of Islami Chhatra Sangha. The student outfit was rechristened as Islami Chhatra Shibir in 1977, with a similar ideology of Islami Chhatra Sangha. Most of the senior level Al Badr commanders were indicted for crimes against humanity and tried at the International Crimes Tribunal. The tribunal handed down the death penalty to the leaders of Islami Chhatra Sangha held responsible for the death of intellectuals. Thousands of intellectuals mostly university, college and school teachers, academics, politicians, filmmakers, physicians, poets, writers, journalists, engineers, sportsmen, lawyers, lyricists, singers, eminent personalities who had been deemed threats by the Pakistan army were abducted, tortured and executed. The Bangladesh Post Office has



Postal stamp in memory of martyred intellectuals. (From top left) Dr Harinath Dey, Dr Lt Col A F Z Rahman, Mamum Mahmud, Mohsin Ali Dewan; (from bottom left) Dr Lt Col N A M Jahangir, Shah Abdul Majid, Muhammad Akhter and Meherunnesa.

PHOTO: COURTESY

issued dozens of commemorative stamps valued at Taka 2 in the memory of the martyred intellectuals.

It is widely speculated that the killings of intellectuals were orchestrated by Major General Rao

Farman Ali. After the liberation of Bangladesh, a list of Bengali intellectuals (most of whom were executed on December 14) were found in pages of his diary, left behind at the Governor's House (now Bangabhaban). Various names of martyrs often appear in the media quoting different sources including Banglapedia, which listed 1,111 martyred intellectuals. Filmmaker Zahir Raihan, after going through General Ali's diary, documents, and daily newspapers, claimed to have found 20,000 names. Unfortunately, he was abducted and went missing without a trace since January 1972. The killing of the intellectuals virtually began following the army crackdown in Dhaka on the night of March 25. The Pakistan army during Operation Searchlight targeted victims and killed them systematically. An initiative was undertaken by the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs to prepare a countrywide list of the Razakars, Al Badr, Al Shams and other henchmen of Pakistan military, which we highly appreciate. Besides preparing a complete list of the collaborators of the Pakistan army for crimes against humanity during the birth of Bangladesh, the concerned authorities should have also taken the initiative to document the names of our martyred intellectuals as a national priority.

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PROJECT SYNDICATE

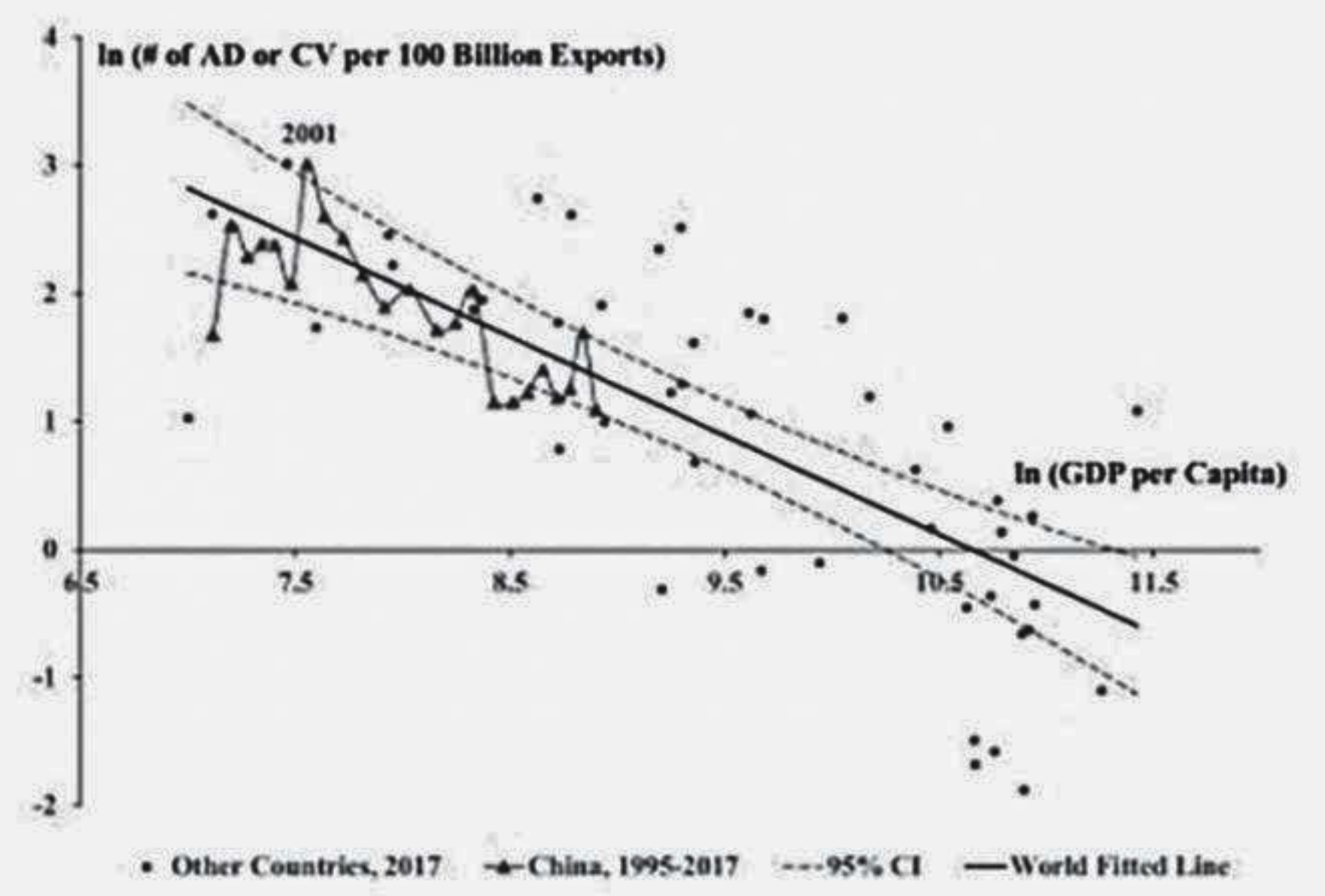
How to revive the WTO

SHANG-JIN WEI and XINDING YU

DECEMBER 11, 2019, was the 18th anniversary of China's accession to the World Trade Organisation. It also marks the start of an era in which the WTO no longer has a functioning appellate body to adjudicate trade disputes among member countries. Why is the WTO imploding, and can it be resuscitated before it's too late? Before China joined the WTO in 2001, many feared that its membership could doom the organisation in one of three ways. First, Chinese rule breaking might be so common, sceptics claimed, that it would trigger an explosion of cases against the country that would overwhelm the appellate body of seven judges. Second, China might express its grievances by bringing countless potentially frivolous cases against other countries, which would also exceed the organisation's capacity constraint. And, finally, China might ignore any WTO ruling against it, undermining the system's credibility and usefulness. None of that happened. Of the 349 trade disputes brought to the WTO for adjudication since the end of 2001, China has been a defendant in 44, or 12.6 percent of the total—in line with the country's 12.8 percent share of global exports in 2018. Interestingly, this number is fewer than the 99 brought against the United States and the 52 brought against the European Union during the same period. Part of the reason is that China has continued to reduce tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, and ease investment restrictions, in accordance with—and sometimes going beyond—the terms of its WTO accession agreement. In fact, few countries have reduced such barriers more than China has during this period. Likewise, China has not turned out

to be an overly aggressive complainant. Since December 2001, China has lodged 21 cases at the WTO, or 6 percent of the total—lower than its 10.8 percent share of global imports in 2018. Strikingly, this number also is substantially lower than the 55 cases lodged by the US, and the 46 filed by the EU. Large countries tend not to have a perfect record of complying with WTO rulings. But of the 44 cases against China since 2001, other countries have had to return to the WTO to secure better compliance only twice, compared to 15 times in the 99 cases against the US over the same period.

Each blue dot on the graph represents a WTO member economy, and the solid black line shows the international average (drawn from all member economies excluding China). The data pattern is fairly clear: as a country becomes richer, there are fewer anti-subsidy or anti-dumping cases



The WTO allows individual member countries to have their own national systems for enforcing trade rules, particularly regarding subsidies and dumping (selling below cost). This may be interpreted broadly as part of the rules-based global trade framework. Using data for 2017, we find that

against it. This could be because richer countries observe rules better, are less likely to attract complaints as their labour costs rise, or some combination of the two. Given this international pattern, we can check whether other countries have considered China to be a special

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problem. We do so by superimposing on the same graph the total number of anti-dumping and anti-subsidy cases lodged against Chinese exporters by all other WTO members from 1995 to 2017, relative to China's export volume. Since China's accession in 2001, the number of such cases relative to exports has declined as China's income has increased, much as the average international experience would have predicted. In other words, cross-country comparative data suggest nothing especially problematic about China. (Of course, China's size means that the absolute number of cases against China is large.) Until recently, no one would have thought that the US, a key architect of the rules governing the WTO, would choose to kill the organisation's appellate body. But that is what appears to be happening now. Since 2017, as the body's current judges have completed their four-year terms, the US has systematically rejected any proposed successor nominated by other countries, apparently with the aim of rendering the system inoperative until other countries agree to alter the rules to America's liking. Any WTO dispute-settlement panel is required to have at least three

judges. So, with two of the appellate body's three remaining judges having completed their terms on December 10, the organisation's "highest court" is now functionally dead. Since the WTO was established in 1995, global GDP has grown by about 250 percent on a cumulative basis, while global trade has increased by about 270 percent. A professional disinterested process for adjudicating trade disputes between countries has been key to this success. Because larger countries always have greater bargaining power than smaller ones in bilateral or regional trade negotiations, this process has helped to level the playing field in favour of the WTO's vast majority of small- and medium-size members. Resuscitating the WTO will require changing its rules. Perhaps appellate body judges should be appointed by a majority or supermajority vote, so that no single country can block a nominee. In addition, the body could be expanded to 15 judges, in line with growth in trade volumes, and appointees' terms could be lengthened. Or the terms of the last three judges could be extended temporarily. But none of these measures will be enough. The US, China, and other countries also have an interest in modernising WTO rules regarding state-owned firms, government procurement, anti-dumping cases, and digital trade. Whatever reforms these countries wish to see, killing the organisation's dispute-settlement system is not the solution. Shang-Jin Wei, a former chief economist at the Asian Development Bank, is Professor of Finance and Economics at Columbia Business School and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. Xinding Yu is Associate Professor of Economics at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2019. www.project-syndicate.org. Accompanying this commentary is a chart, which you can download here. (Exclusive to The Daily Star)

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

December 14, 1911
Roald Amundsen's arrival at the South Pole

One of the greatest figures in the history of polar exploration was Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, who left Norway for Antarctica in June 1910 and on this day in 1911 became the first person to reach the South Pole.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Taxi Part
- 6 Hooded snake
- 11 Clearly stunned
- 12 Wise saying
- 13 Moved a raft
- 14 "I Am Woman" singer
- 15 "The Apartment" actor
- 17 In the past
- 19 Slippery swimmer
- 20 Was inactive
- 23 Home of Duke
- 25 Clock reading
- 26 Custom
- 28 Singer Burl
- 29 Spends time at the mirror
- 30 Black goo

DOWN

- 1 Travel aid
- 2 Freud topic
- 3 Big undertaking
- 4 Fencing sword
- 5 Steakhouse specialty
- 6 Seasonal song
- 7 Farm team
- 8 Auction action
- 9 Retina part
- 10 Tan in the bookstore
- 16 Jotting spot
- 17 Let on
- 18 Tropical fruit
- 20 Fries, often
- 21 Add a change to
- 22 Hardly wordy
- 24 "— a Rebel!"
- 25 Uno plus due
- 27 Trials
- 31 Paper piece
- 33 Formerly
- 34 Stepped down
- 35 Chest muscle
- 36 Commotion
- 37 "This is tasty!"
- 39 LAX guess
- 40 Singer Orbison

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

CAN YOU HELP ME MANAGE MY MONEY, COSMO?
COSMO'S CORNER
SURE, WHAT'S YOUR NET WORTH?
FINANCIAL ADVICE
SNACKS
LOANS
I DON'T HAVE A NET, I HAVE MONEY

BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott

DA-AD, WILL YOU PLEASE PUT A SHIRT ON?
WHY?
WALKING AROUND SEMI-CLOTHED IS ONE OF MAN'S GREATEST SUMMERTIME JOYS!
ANOTHER HOT ONE, EH?
MOMMMM!