

And the Nobel Prize for Violence Goes to...



OF MAGIC
& MADNESS

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

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NO, silly, there is no such prize for violence. That's just a conversation starter. After all, what better way to invoke the mighty Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) than with a nod to violence? But, believe it or not, there was a time when we came very close to having a Nobel Prize for Violence. It was in 2009 when Barack Obama got the Nobel Peace Prize for – wait for it – not being George W. Bush. He really wasn't. He dropped more bombs in one year than Bush did during his entire presidency. Or think of when the European Union got the prize despite being one of the biggest producers of weapons in the world.

It takes a Megamindian sense of humour to have violence double as peace. But if there is a universe in which this headline will make sense, BCL will surely love to be in it.

After all, who doesn't love awards? In a basic sense, an award is a recognition of the hard work you put into something. When Benjamin Franklin said, "Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing about," he wasn't just raising the bar for us scribes, but also for BCL activists, who as "students" can't seem to do either. So they're doing what they do best, and with all the fists and feet they can master. We have respectable-sounding prizes for crappy achievements and crappy-sounding prizes for respectable achievements. But none for violence. How is this fair?

Violence, especially organised violence, is hard work. It takes discipline, commitment and a practised apathy to pursue an unpopular course to conflict resolution. And, contrary to popular belief, it requires both brain and brawn. You need both to commit violence, to mobilise support for it, and to dodge repercussions in case things go haywire. Ask anyone who has ever been involved in a war, revolution, genocide or terrorism.



ILLUSTRATION:
BIPLOB
CHAKROBORTY

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But in Bangladesh, the peril of political showmanship is that nothing you do, however egregious, for your party is worth a dime unless it reaches the intended eyes and ears. With so many competitors around, it's hard for the average muscle to get the message of his "contributions" across to senior party leaders. Anonymity does not maketh political careers, nor is the satisfaction of beating the daylight out of a rival meant to last long. Violence, after all, is not its own reward.

To BCL's credit, it knows this all too well. So after the recent series of violent attacks on the rival activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), many hard-hitting men and women of the organisation made no secret of their complicity. Some of them were luckier than others. They managed to get their photos and strangely revealing defences published in the media. Others, not to be outdone, came stampeding out of their social media closet to announce their "contributions," subtlety be damned.

While neither group will get any award for that, they certainly hope it will get them noticed in the right quarter and a better position when the organisation's next council is held in a few months.

But then, as always, like night follows day, comes the righteous pushback: What gives BCL the right to attack JCD? Why would its leaders give excuses that no one in the four hemispheres can believe? Why would anyone openly admit complicity in violence? Or why be so unrepentant about it?

Violence, defence, righteous pushback – rinse and repeat. This has been a trademark BCL outrage cycle for so long. What this shows to me is that, for all its dedication and hard work in violence and its seemingly inexhaustible ability to "keep at it," BCL sucks at public relations.

Let me explain. In director Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's 2007 drama series "420" – perhaps the most scathing portrayal of grassroots politics in Bangladesh – two wannabe politicians celebrate by treating

people to sweets after a photo showing the older one wielding a gun is published in a newspaper. In another scene, the younger one forces a girl into marriage and tries to settle into a comfortable life. Hardly anyone felt put off by these scenes.

But BCL doing the same is a problem. Its violence, with helmet or without, in Dhaka or Rajshahi, is always frowned upon. Its defences are always met with incredulous reactions. Even its choice of weapons – machetes, bamboos and iron rods – is mercilessly derided. It's like whenever it goes full pistols at dawn at JCD, the enemy is somehow replaced by the public. Somehow, what is thoroughly unforgettable for BCL becomes thoroughly unforgivable for them. What is necessary to it is excessive to them. What it finds desirable, they find repulsive. The public seems to have a problem with everything that BCL does. And this, justifiably, confuses the more sober section of the organisation.

The question is, having put every other enemy in their place, can BCL change the prevailing public perception about it, or at least nudge it in a slightly different direction? At the risk of drawing both righteous and lefteous flak, let me offer a few suggestions.

I think the BCL leadership should, first and foremost, recognise the importance of public relations in today's world. If Barack Obama can beguile the Nobel committee into giving him an award, and bemused Americans into giving him a second term in office, there is no reason why BCL cannot do the same and win a few hearts in the process. Once it has realised that, there is a lot that it can do. It can hire a PR firm to rebrand its public image. It can fund news/views outlets to present its violent activities dressed in a suit of peace, or at least buff away a pesky fact or two here and there. It can subject all its members to mandatory training, not just in the art of violence, but also in the art of guile, charm, subtlety and political spin.

The goal should be to improve its image by refining its engagement with the public. The public, as it is, has a rich history of selective mutism. The BCL just has to tap into that resource and make them mute or feel unperturbed about it. Knowing how forgiving we can be or how susceptible to suggestions, I'm sure we will not mind it.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Knave

7 Do origami

11 Rio Grande city

12 Lake near Buffalo

13 Preserve immediately after harvesting

15 Rose part

16 Golf pegs

18 Suit piece

21 Munich mister

22 Sentence ender

24 Firefighter's tool

25 Gimlet base

26 Silent assent

27 Bit of strategy

29 Karate award

30 Asterisk

31 Uses oars

32 Sword metal

34 It's a 5 on the Beaufort scale

40 Part to play

41 Infertile

42 Shout

43 Was a noisy sleeper

DOWN

1 Game caller

2 Maximum amount

3 Relaxing retreat

4 Cartoon ghost

5 Fire remnants

6 Barn area

7 Tentative inquiry

8 Mine yield

9 Designer Claiborne

10 Ruby of films

14 Black bird

16 Alamo setting

17 Put up

19 Muscular power

20 Shop equipment

21 Bowler, for one

22 Snapshot

23 Banned pesticide

25 Circumference

28 Fez feature

29 Lively dance

31 Showed over

33 Wanes

34 Make temporary

35 Surgeon eggs

36 Building wing

37 Blunder

38 Last letter

39 Conclude

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

W	A	N	D	A	S	P	A	T	S
A	P	O	R	T	L	I	L	A	C
G	E	N	O	A	E	X	T	R	A
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N	A	S	A		F	O	R	U	M
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Q	U	E	S	T		O	N	E	N
U	N	D	E	R		O	T	T	E
A	K	I	T	A		P	S	A	T

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
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Memo No-25.36.8100.110.05.005.22/9247 Date- 06/06/2022.

e-GP Tender Notice 18/2021-2022 (OTM)

S.L	Tender ID No	Tender/Proposal Last selling Date and Time	Tender/Proposal Closing & Opening Date and Time
1.	705769	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 11:30
2.	705764	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 11:40
3.	705762	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 11:50
4.	705763	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 12:00
5.	707516	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 12:10

These are online Tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender Registration in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any schedule bank.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

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GD-1172

Government of The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Naogaon.
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No.: 46.02.6400.07.000.001.21-1996 Date: 07/06/2022 খ্রীষ্টাব্দ ২৪/০২/১৪২৯ বঙ্গাব্দ

e-Tender Notice No : 45/2021-22
Tendering Method (OTM/LTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following Packages :

Sl No	Description of Work & Package No.	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Estimated Cost (Tk./Remarks)
01	Construction of Executive Engineer's Administrative Building, Lged, Naogaon (Package No. RDRIDP/Naogaon/office building-01/21-22) (Tender ID No- 706681)	27-Jun-2022 17:00	28-Jun-2022 16:00	28-Jun-2022 16:00	OTM
02	Improvement of Baldaher Govt. Primary School Connecting road at ch.00-330.00m. Road ID 164793009, under Porsha Upazila (District: Naogaon. (School Code: 111060305) (Package No. RDRIDP/ Naogaon/Porsha/SC-42/21-22) (Tender ID No- 708443)	19-Jun-2022 17:00	20-Jun-2022 16:00	20-Jun-2022 16:00	LTM 22,73,952.00

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GD-1175

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
স্থানীয় সরকার প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর
উপজেলা প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়
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www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.3626.902.14.047.22.418 Date : 07.06.2022

e-Tender Notice No: 04/2021-22

e-Tender is hereby invited through National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Package No	Name of the Works	Date & Time of closing
01	702374	e-Tender/PEDP-4/HAB/CHU/2021-22/W1.02906	Construction of Additional Classroom at Jour Lalchand Govt. Primary School, Chunarughat, Habiganj Under PEDP-4	29 June, 2022 BST 13:00:00
02	702404	e-Tender/PEDP-4/HAB/CHU/2021-22/W1.02907	Construction of Additional Classroom at Chatpara Government Primary School, Chunarughat, Habiganj Under PEDP-4	29 June, 2022 BST 13:00:00
03	707681	e-Tender/PEDP-4/HAB/CHU/2021-22/W1.02826	Construction of Additional Classroom at Bhularjum Government Primary School, Chunarughat, Habiganj Under PEDP-4	29 June, 2022 BST 13:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies are allowed. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Any others conditions for this tender is stated in TDS. Interested Tenderers may communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

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GD-1174