



United for Peace

"The taking of one innocent life
is like taking all of Mankind."

(Holy Quran, 5:31).



I once went to Dhaka in 2012 with two of my foreign colleagues for professional purpose. Before leaving when I was looking to book hotel rooms for them, I surprisingly noticed there was no room available in any of five star hotels in Dhaka!

After lot of searching, I could manage last available rooms at one of four star hotels. When we reached the hotel, we found many foreigners there. I never thought so many foreigners were travelling to Dhaka at that time.

I realized it was the growth of the garments sector that attracted all these foreign tourists into the country. I thought if this trend sustains, then Bangladesh's tourism sector would grow very quickly.

After witnessing this trend, I felt an urge to write a policy paper on Tourism. It was our realization that tourism would be the next big thing in Bangladesh.

Our thinking materialized in January 2015 when we published our paper on tourism titled "**Myths of Bangladesh's Tourism**". This paper reflects our

thoughts on how to make Bangladesh a super power in the tourism industry even after protecting the local culture. We spent a lot of time to write this paper; we had to read a lot of materials.

Our efforts did not fail. Many of our readers have read our paper. We won't be surprised if we find some of our policy recommendations were also discussed within the Government. But we believe our greatest achievement is that we have been able to create greater awareness within the country about the potentials of the country's tourism sector.

But everything became upside down on the night of 1st of July. This lone event has delayed our progress in the sector for at least a decade.

If somebody wants to abuse the knowledge of Economics, he first needs to understand the basics of Economics. Similarly, if somebody wishes to develop a weapon of mass destruction using Physics, he first needs to know what Physics is. Likewise we can say the people who have thrown these young minds into despair using Religion are well aware of the details of what Religion is.

So in order to fight against them, we need to be first equipped with religious knowledge. We have said it before that Religion, in one hand, can be used for positive activities, and on the other hand, it can also be abused. So if we stay indifferent about Religion, if we stay away from religious knowledge by considering it outdated, then we would be easy victims of these intellectual corrupts.

This age has seen a revolution in spreading religious knowledge with the help of Internet. We can see the impact everywhere. People in general are becoming more religious; they are becoming more affluent with religious rituals. But this is only one side of the coin.

Scrupulous groups are utilizing this powerful tool of Internet for abusing Religion as well. They are taking the young minds to the wrong path. These groups are actually very few in numbers compared to the billions of Muslims worldwide.

But despite their few numbers, their negative activities have created a sensation all over the world. This is because the definition of news says, any negative event is a news. Billions of Muslims worldwide including Bangladeshis are actually paying the price of such a definition.

The world does not know that Bangladeshi student who has struggled throughout his life, got admission in the best University in the world, and has published papers in reputed journals one after another.

But the whole world knows that back bencher Bangladeshi student who has taken Kalashnikov in hand and became involved in cold blood killing. If this is the definition of news, then why won't young people of under-developed world become involved with terrorism for having quick fame?

In one of our previous papers, we stated that **“The Crisis of Independent Thinking”** would become a severe problem in the future¹. We said people would be highly dependent on media. People would believe what media says.

Now besides Print and Electronic media, the Social Media is also growing tremendously. However, there is no filter mechanism in this open platform. Now when a teenager suffering from the crisis of independent thinking is watching a particular video, he becomes readily influenced. However, he doesn't feel any urge to cross check whether the claims made in the video are true.

But there are enormous amount of lectures all around Internet carrying the right message of Islam from various renowned Islamic scholars. The

¹ Please read to our Special Article 4, Title **“Two Years and 33 Days of IFD”**, Page 31. You can find the article in our website at <http://www.ideasfd.org/assets/SpecialArticle4.pdf>

fact that Islam doesn't support killing innocent Non-Muslims is being told over and over again. But these misguided youths don't know anything about it. They also don't know it is required to read the Holy Quran first before giving life for Islam.

We have been repeatedly saying that excessive oppression over the opposition, intervention in free speech, reckless arrests, abduction and disappearance, etc. are creating anger at various levels in the society. These looming anger are being reflected in different terrorist activities. Many are having incentives to break the law.

Under these circumstances when some people are bringing specific ideology in front of the youths, they are becoming easy victims of such ideology. We have witnessed such trends in the past as well when youths were misguided with arms.

Countless youths sacrificed their lives in the past by waging war against rulers for establishing Communism. Many youths sacrificed their lives for establishing Democracy as well. There is hardly any student in Bangladesh who studied in the Public Universities during 80s and 90s and still don't remember the roar of cut-rifles.

But now we are becoming surprised after observing the same trend in case of Private Universities. But there is nothing to be surprised of. Abusing the minds of youths happened in the past as well.

We have taken a new initiative to create a general awareness on religious issues. The name of the initiative in English is "**United for Peace**". With this Facebook-based campaign, we will try to highlight different aspects of Islam. Posts will be uploaded in both Bangla and English and these will be circulated all over Bangladesh and different countries of the world.

The address of this campaign is www.facebook.com/United-For-Peace

If you like our posts, then please Like it and Share it with others. This is our new Jihad to spread the knowledge of Islam to both Muslims and Non-Muslims in order to counter extremism.

IDEAS FOR DEVELOPMENT (IFD)

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