

## Cleaning our symbol of pride

“The sun was bright and the heat felt sweltering. Sweat collected on the face and the clefts of the forehead, and dripped down in tiny little droplets of salt-water. It was the first time when the tedious job of cleaning did not feel tiring, instead our hearts filled up with bliss.” This is how we, students of BRAC University, felt while cleaning our National



Memorial. On May 26 2015, students of Residential Semester 39th Batch of BRAC University, a group of fifty students, and our teachers went to clean the National Memorial. The honorable Vice Chancellor Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb came up with such a plan to remind us of our duty to preserve the purity of our national monuments and also directly participated in the cleaning endeavor.

As we started the project, we felt the eyes of the visitors on us, as if they were mocking us. Nevertheless in our hearts, we knew we were contributing to the country's welfare. As we cleaned, we were surprised by the amount of dust covering the basement and walls, the footprints on the seven symbolic walls and different items like plastic wrappers, packets of chips, ice cream sticks. By the end of the day, our buckets were overflowing with waste material while our hearts filled with sadness at the unscrupulous activities of the visitors. The lack of availability of waste bins made people litter everywhere. The garbage that we collected were mostly food brought from outside, therefore a food court built inside the premise would prevent people from bringing food inside. We also found visitors walking over the sacred places like the monument walls and graveyards due to the absence of cautionary signs.

We discovered that only eight people were assigned the job of cleaning the vast area without access to a proper water supply for drinking and cleaning.

Jokingly our VC challenged Jahangirnagar University students in a friendly manner to clean it even better. In fact, if different educational institutions and organizations arrange such programs periodically throughout the year our work can be simplified. This splendid initiative should not be limited to only cleaning the monuments;

we should all apply this sense in keeping our surroundings clean as well. Millions of people were sacrificed to earn our independence; we should not disrespect them by littering around the monuments upholding their sacrifices.



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