

## Poem written in late May 1973 by Janet Jagan after a visit to Bangladesh

Men ceased to be men  
Men forgot they were humans (their humanity)  
And became animals (Barbarians)  
When my sisters in Bangladesh  
Were thrown into pits of hell

How many rains will it take  
To wash away their shame and sorrow?  
How many suns will set  
Before their innocence is forgiven?

“What is my fault  
What have I done”  
Their cries will haunt mankind  
And the men who could not forgive  
The innocent their torturers.

Lift up your heads, my sisters  
Bow not to ignorance and a dark past  
A new life begins – the gates are wide open  
Walk proudly through!

An empty playground  
In the heart of Dacca  
Empty because  
Hungry children cannot play

With swollen bellies  
And upturned hands  
Dacca's children  
Are no longer children  
Childhood has been stolen  
From Dacca's children

The world sorrow  
Can be seen in their  
Darkened eyes,  
Their pale, .....? faces - [not sure what this word is](#)  
These children who never learned to play.

And worries thunder at the many borders  
And nations test nuclear weapons  
While our children need peace  
To fill the playgrounds

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Men ceased to be men  
Men forgot they were humans (then humanity)  
And ~~became animals~~ (Beastians)  
When my sisters in Bangladesh  
Were thrown into the pits of hell.

How many rains will it take  
To wash away their shame and sorrow?  
How many suns will ~~be~~ set  
Before their innocence is forgiven?

"What is my fault  
What have I done?"  
Their cries will ~~forever~~ <sup>haunt mankind</sup> ~~haunt mankind~~  
~~and the world~~  
Women who loved not forgive  
The crime what the innocent endured.  
The innocent their torturers.

Lift up your heads, my sisters  
Bow not to the ignorance and the dark part  
A new life <sup>begins</sup> ~~begins~~ - the gates around open  
Walk proudly through!

An empty playground  
In the heart of Dacca  
Empty because  
Hungry children cannot play

With swollen bellies  
And a pained hands  
Dacca's children | Childhood has been  
Are no longer children | stolen  
From Dacca's children

The world's sorrow  
Can be seen in their  
Darkened eyes,  
Their pale, drawn faces  
These children who never learnt to play.

And <sup>(thunder)</sup> warrens threaten at the borders  
And nations test their nuclear weapons  
While <sup>but</sup> our children need peace  
So they can fill the <sup>to</sup> ~~vacant~~ playgrounds  
And ~~ring their happiness~~ and become children  
age