

# Why you should speak up for slain blogger

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Marc Randazza

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Third blogger hacked to death in Bangladesh

02:05 - Source: [CNN](#)

**Editor's Note:** Marc J. Randazza is a Las Vegas-based First Amendment attorney and managing partner of the Randazza Legal Group. He is licensed to practice in Arizona, California, Florida, Massachusetts and Nevada. The opinions expressed in this commentary are his.

*CNN* —

Some people in Bangladesh murdered another blogger, because he advocated for secular government and rationalism. If you have not taken a side in this growing global fight for free speech, the time has come.

[Ananta Bijoy Das was attacked](#) by four assailants in the northeastern Bangladeshi city of Sylhet Tuesday morning, police officials said.

He was a writer for the blog, "[Mukto Mona](#)." The website's name means "free mind." It was founded by [Avijit Roy](#), an American-Bangladeshi writer who promoted secular and scientific views, and was similarly hacked to death in February – his wife badly injured in the same attack. They were on a visit to Bangladesh.

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People murdered Das, and Roy – and, in March, another blogger – who advocated secular government and opposed religious fundamentalism in Bangladesh. But this is not a Bangladeshi problem. This is your problem.

Free speech is a global human rights issue. It is the sadly waning and fragile flame of the Enlightenment – a flame that America was tasked with protecting. We chose to do so with the First Amendment, and we have done a relatively good job of it. We could do better. We fancy ourselves as the bastion of freedom? Step up and prove it.





The suspect, Farabi Shaifur Rahman, had called for Roy's death in numerous Facebook posts.

Facebook







Bangladesh blogger murder: The prime suspect  
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Remember the literary cowards who refused to participate in honoring Charlie Hebdo? The free speech organization PEN had chosen to honor the Charlie Hebdo survivors in a ceremony last week, because, said PEN executive director Suzanne Nossel, “in paying the ultimate price for the exercise of their freedom, and then soldiering on amid devastating loss, Charlie Hebdo deserves to be recognised for its dauntlessness in the face of one of the most noxious assaults on expression in recent memory.”

Meanwhile, six authors withdrew from the organization. Why? Because Charlie Hebdo’s expression made them a little uncomfortable. In doing this, these writers – these free expression Vichys – gave aid and comfort to the enemies of speech.



Attacks like the one on Das are what happen when you show cowardice in the face of terrorism. I'm talking to you, too, Garry Trudeau. In remarks he made as he accepted a Polk award last month, Trudeau, long a voice of counterculture dissent, warned that the Charlie Hebdo cartoonists had "wandered into the realm of hate speech." My lifelong admiration of Doonesbury turned to revulsion.

Trudeau and his ilk skirt close to blaming the victims. Where Voltaire would have risked his life for others' right to speak, despite despising their message, a cadre of PEN writers opposed the Hebdo award, one denouncing the magazine's "cultural intolerance," another questioning rewarding its "brainlessly reckless" satire of Islam, and so on, as if to say: "What do you expect?"



video

Related video Blogger hacked to death

I say: "What do you expect when you do NOT resist or defy terrorism in the name of freedom?"



There is no peace to be made with those who would use murder as debate. You are either part of the solution or you are part of the problem. Those who murder to promote their views only do so because they believe that the fear will eventually silence us all.

When the Nazis marched into France, some realized that it would be much easier to simply say "I, for one, welcome our new masters." But some chose to endure incredible difficulty in the name of freedom. And so it has gone, in every struggle where that freedom was threatened.

If you ever find yourself responding to violence inflicted on those who speak freely by asking "What did they expect?" then you may identify more with the Vichy collaborators in that story. Go along to get along.

video

## Related video U.S. Blogger Hacked To Death In Bangladesh

I wasn't raised that way. If you're an American, neither were you. There was a time when the rest of the world still looked to the U.S. for leadership at times like this. America might not export as much as it once did, but can we still export our noble ideas?



We must. When people are attacked for their views, as were the cartoonists at Charlie Hebdo and Mr. Das, it is our responsibility to amplify their silenced voices. We must re-post their views on social media, or just discuss them with friends the old fashioned way. We need not agree with their ideas to agree that we must not let them die in vain

Whenever they try to blow out that candle of free speech, we should protect it. Spread that fire. Let its light illuminate everything. Because everything is precisely what is at stake.

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