



ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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An Article Series on Human Rights and Culture by the Asian Human Rights Commission

Poems, stories and reports

Welcome to the 6th issue of Vol. 3 of Human Rights & Culture. In this issue we have poems by several new contributors: Grin and Bear It, is by Jeri Caldwell, a mother of three from Gresham, Oregon, USA. Jeri has submitted several poems and we will be using more of them in the weeks to come. Another new contributor is Krishanthi Anandawansa from Sri Lanka who has submitted her poem, Checkpoint and we certainly hope to receive more of her work in the near future.

We are always pleased to receive poems from Mr. Jack Clancey and this week we have, The Disappeared--Two Perspectives and yet another new contributor, Gary Galloway has sent us, "Man of Glass".

The article Women without Borders--SAVE--Sisters against Violent Extremism contains a video which is well worth viewing. Last but by no means least we have a poem entitled, Slow Dance, written by a young girl who is dying of cancer. Please read the accompanying message.

As always, Human Rights & Culture is grateful to all of our contributors.

Human Rights & Culture welcomes contributions in the form of poems, articles or book reviews. All work will be acknowledged accordingly. Please forward your contributions to the addresses given below.

Publications--We are pleased to announce the release of the following publications: the latest issue of Ethics in Action is now available. Sri Lanka Impunity, Criminal Justice & Human Rights by Basil Fernando and the latest edition of Article 2 is now available.

You may view the previous issues and write your comments at: <http://hrculture.blog.humanrights.asia/>. Your contributions and comments for future issues may be sent to ahrc@ahrc.asia.

Checkpoint

Krishanthi Anandawansa

The usual formalities...
what will happen this time?
how will they scan this NIC of mine?

Such thoughts made me tremble and shiver,
however much I tried to control the quiver,
while standing in line amongst other passengers,
awaiting my turn.

Stern looks from top to bottom
scanning me.
Made me feel guilty than ever,
drained out the minutest spark of life.

But for what?
Why should I be guilty?
What have I done?
Born in one country residing in another territory
was my only sin.

Meanwhile, my luggage neatly packed before,
is now disorderedly scattered
upon a table in front of the barracks;
free show.
Books, notes, food, clothes
all in one messy heap.

Having satisfied their scrutiny,
they were kind enough to pack it all up back for me.
Eager to recommence the journey,
I humbly asked for my NIC.

But now I had to stand there
amidst the tall soldiers,
abhorred by the filthy jokes and comments
on my parents.

Felt like a clown...
The soldiers' laughs, winks, stares, glares,
the bewildered looks of the commuters
comfortably seated back through the glass.

I was almost in tears.
Seeing this, they gave my most precious NIC
with fears,
and shoved me back into the bus.

The rest of the journey
is just a blur in my memory.
I only recall that I managed to get home
feeling quite dizzy.
With patience my family listened
to the usual story.
All I could do was cry it out on my mother's shoulder.
She comforted me.
She said, "You are still our child. Don't worry."

Ms. Krishanthi Anandawansa is the Project Officer of the Kantha Shakthi Organization--Sri Lanka.

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