

In the years that I have lived many things have happened right before my eyes. Some of these things are worth remembering owing to their moving nature. If I were to describe each and every incident, probably the narration will take a significant amount of time. Allow me to dig into a few years back and present an incident that was unique and still lingers in my mind all the time. The incident was particularly moving since it made me shed tears over what could have been averted. Many incidences have happened but not any one of them has come to surpass the weight of the unique experience that occurred to me in Bengal. Talk of car accidents, parachuting, accidents that occur during skiing, sporting incidences, among others. There is none which can be compared to the one that I encountered in Bengal, which off course is a significant experience that has ever occurred to me. Most folks have not experienced the real face of hunger. They only hear it over the media and are less concerned about those inflicted. I will admit that I have on several occasions heard about people sleeping without shelter over their heads, going to a makeshift bed on an empty stomach, and eating from trashes. The incidences are just but a few that I have heard time and again over the media. Poverty is a thorny issue which characterizes many countries over the decades. Poverty has made populace of these countries sink further into myriad challenges which ought to be addressed with employment of stringent measures. The assertion is informed by a scenario that I experienced in the recent past. The incident was moving in that it saddened me to see an old man devour a piece of onions with crumbs of bread with hot chilly for lunch. It was a scene that undoubtedly seared the heart and pricks self conscience. From the look in his face, the old man's state betrayed the wretchedness of abandonment and he appeared to have surrendered to his fate. His body was emaciated; bore a dry skin, cheeks sunken, brittle from what appeared to be thirst and dust, and his curly hair

literally falling off. He appeared to be in a firm grip of famine and living slow and painful life from hunger. One may ask what happened.

My sojourn in Dubai took almost half a decade. The stay there was enthralling owing to its economy that is stable, which made life easy because of the availability of jobs. If one compares the living standards there with any of the emerging economies, they will differ significantly. It was not until recently that I made a realization that the trend was true. I had gone to visit my hometown where they gave me a warm welcome after such a long time. The celebration resembled that of a prodigal son returning home after such a long time. The dress code which comprised of a black Khaki trouser, a white shirt, black polished shoes and sunglasses exhibited elegance. I thought myself a lucky person as I devoured a hearty meal in a local restaurant in the company of my parents. We chose a sitting place near the balcony where we could have a vantage view of what was happening around us. After taking the sumptuous meal, I took time to walk to the terraces to catch a view of the serene environment and of the green pants that lay on the quiet land. What caught my eyes will remain embedded in my brain for the rest of my life. On the right side of the balcony, there were two men fixing the walls of a building. One was a young man of about 40 and the others one appeared as old as 60 years. It was very hot outside which made the two men sweat profusely. Nevertheless, the temperatures never stopped the two men from working hard. However, it was not long before catching a glimpse of the old man staggering to a shade under one of the unfinished buildings. He chose a spot where he sat down comfortably and unwrapped a piece of clothe which I learnt that it contained his lunch. I saw what he was going to take for lunch since I was standing just above him. His meal comprised of a piece of onion, two small pieces of bread, and green chilly. He took the meal with a smile on his face which suggested a sense of satisfaction. However, each

time he took a bite of the hot chilly and raw onions, I felt a sense of bitterness inside me. That particular scene was really frustrating and it brought tears to my eyes, tears of empathy, tears of bitterness, as well as tears of sorrow. For one, it was sad to see an old man of about sixty working in a scorching sun in an effort to eke a living instead he could be home enjoying his retirement benefits. The other sad thing was that the old man could hardly afford enough food to feed. It is sad that such a vulnerable group experience such challenges.

The incident of two men working under the harsh conditions made me promise myself that when I come of age and become successful, I will come back home and help the poor in the ways that I possibly could. The old man's image devouring what was a meal to him left an indelible mark in my life. It remains an incident which is not only worth remembrance but action.