

## VOICES ... Young People Speak Out

### Tutors for Hire Even a generation ago, nobody thought of private coaching, writes Tanvir Ahmed, looking at the changed attitude of today

PRIVATE coaching has become one of the commonest trends nowadays. Specially to the students this is an undeniable necessity. However, this way of teaching is only practised in our school and college levels. Interestingly enough, private teaching is regarded as shameful among the professors of the universities and the person (student) who is receiving education in such a way is criticised heavily. Even the university students do not feel it necessary at all. But it has become so unseparable and so widely known that the school and college students hardly term it as 'private' rather than normal coaching.

Firstly, the gigantic course of the Intermediate syllabus can never be given an exclusive and satisfactory completion within such a limited number of college classes and within such an insufficient time. The government colleges enjoy unusual holidays and thus allow the students to seek for private tutors. Secondly, the teachers, who actually care for their students, often do not get sufficient time to teach them according to his interest and

things done by others is much easier. Of course, this type of attitude also depends on a student's calibre. Fifthly, parents naturally want their children to succeed. This is an age of competition. Parents now are very serious about their children. It is only by sending their children to the private tutors that they can feel relieved. No doubt, the attitude of the teachers have also grown similarly.

Yes, in above circum-

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satisfies himself by private teaching. Thirdly, school and college teachers observe this as a source of their commercial gain. Special notes and discussions, which they do not usually want to reveal generally, gladly expresses amongst his private students with active interest.

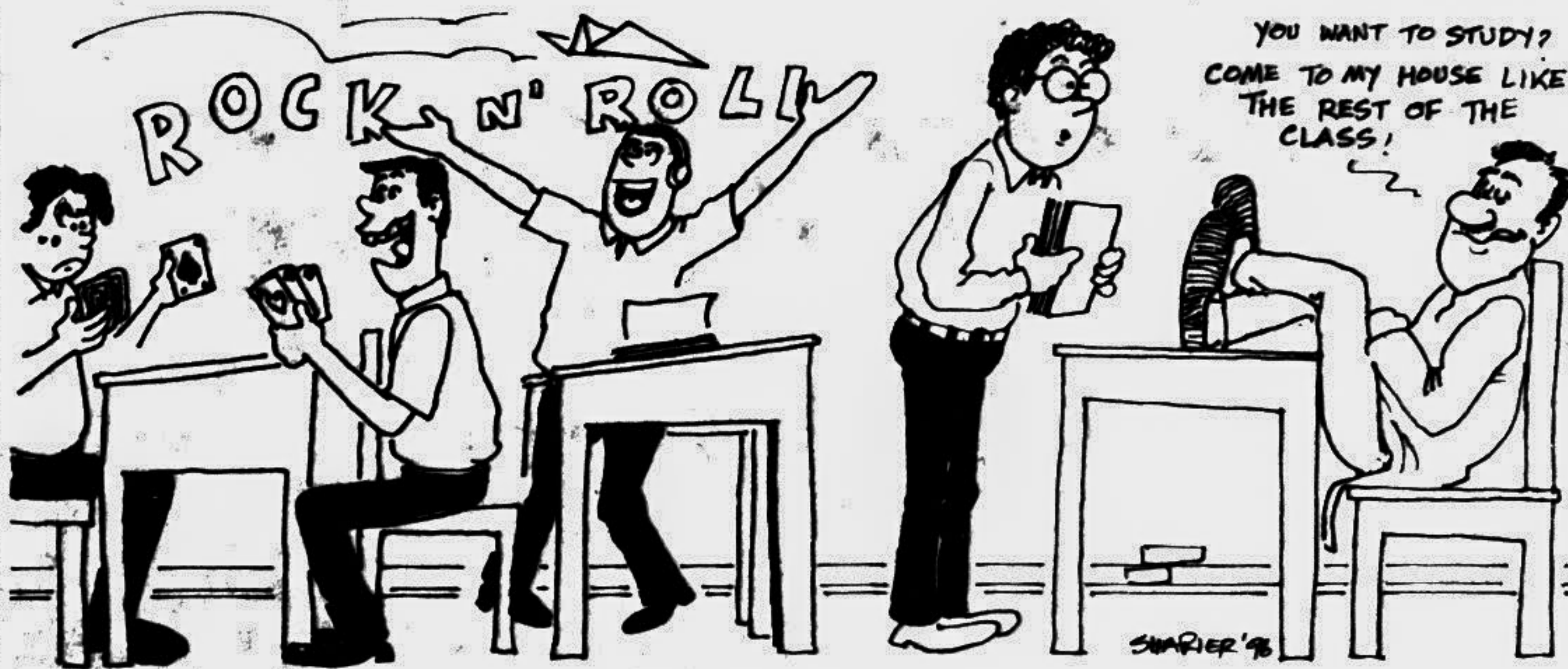
Now we can ask a student — "Why do you care for private notes? Why don't you try yourself?" But it is a matter of fact which we can say — Fourthly, students today are too much dependable. Get-

stances, private teaching is necessary — at least for a good student. As a student gets promoted to higher classes, the tougher it becomes for him to understand. Parents or guardians often cannot satisfactorily answer to their queries and many of the parents are too busy to give them some time for it. Thus its necessity is felt. Now one can question us — "If there is so much private coaching everywhere, what is the need for schools and colleges?"

The answer is — "For a certificate." Living a decent life today concerns many things. Money is supposed to be the most important of them. A teacher has to maintain his family. Private teaching is the only alternate source of their income. This is not just something illegal. Rather it is helpful to both of us — we and our teachers. Some poor university students also engage themselves in private teaching. A BUET or a Dhaka University student is able to teach mathematics, science, chemistry, etc. and they can do it quite efficiently. Thus they can earn Taka 3000 or 4000 or more per month and go on with their own studies without giving much pressure on their poor parents.

But private coaching is not affordable to all of the students. It has been mentioned that it has become necessary nowadays, but where will the poor students go? This is quite complicated. Yet, it must be said that the necessity of private coaching above all depends and a student's mentality. If he is confident to do all by himself, it is alright for him. But if he is not, he needs it.

A thoughtful person of today must want to know how to solve this problem (if he thinks it to be so). The one and only way is to make a revolutionary change in our methods of teaching and a rearrangement in its procedures. This is neither the job of the students nor the teachers. But what we can do is to try to change our attitude.



### Blueprint of a Coaching Centre

Before starting a centre, one needs a place. Sadat Mannan has more

TO speak the truth, nowadays the only occupation that can make a person very rich, establish him as a philanthropist and a learned man in a twinkling of an eye is to open a coaching centre. It is an unique feature of the present education system in Bangladesh. Nowhere in the world can you find such a business related to education.

Well, this article is not meant for speaking ill of the coaching centres, but this writer would like to inform you how a coaching centre would look like if all the facilities that different centres are now offering are put together in the proposed 'High Breed Coaching Centre' or HBCC planned by a team of highly professional coaching experts.

You need not be shocked by the name, because there can be a coaching centre named 'Brain Breeding Centre' or BBC then what is the problem with HBCC?

Before starting a coaching centre, one needs a place. But to have such a place is not a matter of joke. As some

coaching centres previously rented some houses but left bag and baggage without clearing the bills. But I am hopeful that the HBCC will get a place after some time.

Then comes the question of decorating the place. To make the HBCC a profitable organisation, one needs to decorate both the interior and exterior views of the centre. It should also have an air-cooler (it is not a dream, because we already have a coaching centre which claims to be air conditioned). It may also have a projector and a recorder, as a renowned Math teacher in Dhaka teaches his students with the help of these blessings of science.

But we must not forget the best part of it. It must be printed in the prospectus and posters of the centre in bold letters, because then, everyone will notice them.

One will need teachers for the centre. Well, it is not a problem at all, in a nutshell, everyone can teach at the centre. If there is a problem in finding teachers, one can

easily go to any college or university to hire some students. They will be pleased to serve at the HBCC if there daily expenditure is met by the salary they will receive from the centre.

The 'High Breed Coaching Centre' will not run smoothly if the students do not come here in large numbers. To attract students, a prospectus is a must. One will need a 'well-wishing message' from a so-and-so minister or a vice-chancellor to publish in it with his picture. As students are becoming more statistics loving there will be a fullpage statistics showing that hundred per cent of the students succeed in any examinations they take! There will also be the bait that our suggestions are 300 per cent common!! (Don't get astonished by reading this, as a student in our examinations have to answer one question out of three so if he gets three questions common then it is 300 per cent common!!)

There will also be other steps to attract more students. It is needed to give computers (beware! not full

computer sets but only the screen) to the students and publish the pictures of it. The HBCC will also offer plane tickets to Hawaii and Hemaipur (the first one for brilliant result and the latter for blunt results so that he or she cannot tell it to anyone). This distribution of prize is bound to make the HBCC a leading philanthropist organisation in the country.

If the parents are not attracted, then nothing will work. So to attract the parents, a multi-colour poster will be pasted all over the city. The poster will look like this — "Dear Parents, if your son or daughter is inattentive, negligent, heedless, spoilt and disobedient then — only for you. The coaching centre that will breed their brains. Contact us as the last attempt. The New HBCC (fully air conditioned)."

At the end, I would like to inform you that the HBCC is coming to your area soon. So be ready to get admitted in the 'High Breed Coaching Centre' and discover the new aroma of coaching.

### Not to Learn, but to Score

Ashif-ul Haque explains why he thinks there should be some laws regarding coaching centres so that they can't abuse the students

ONCE upon a time, there lived a philosopher and teacher in Greece. Among many of his pupils, the king's son was not a valiant one. Brought up in luxuries, the young prince failed to bear the hardships of education. He, then, asked his preceptor to recommend a way through which he would acquire knowledge not only within a short period of time but also with a certain ease.

But the philosopher replied: "There is no easy way of learning for the prince." Surely, the students of modern era have forgotten this story. They are finding some outrageous ways — not to learn but to score in the exams. And the coaching centres are certainly supporting them in many ways.

In the chief cities of the country, especially in Dhaka, coaching centres are almost difficult to avoid during one's educational career. Even the infants who are yet to enroll themselves as students are being 'coached' — thanks to some efforts from their concerned parents. In general, students from class seven to HSC/A levels discover this new dimension of education often situated in a residential area with a quarrelsome couple living next door.

Very often would the coaching centres suffer from improper sitting arrangements, bad system of ventilation and lighting and not to mention lack of space. But there are a few 'air-conditioned' coaching centres for the rich and the mighty.

In the beginning, the theme of these coaching centres must have been to help the weaker students. But considering the facts, we find that at least 50 to 60 per cent of students cannot resist this temptation. The reasons due to which students go to coaching centres are:

a) Many students who do not intend to pay any attention in class or try to improve their intellects at home, go

to coaching centres just to improve his or her scores in the exams. But he or she should be aware that the difficulties are within themselves. Unless one finds a way to improve his or her methods of studying, he or she can never reach a desirable point of education in life.

b) There are some stu-

dents to attend coaching classes in spite of their better achievements in schools. These parents behold a strange propaganda that the coaching centres may improve the student's pedigree even more. But in reality, the consequences may turn out the other way. There are, however, some other attrac-

tive degree. In fact they are slightly improvised from 'rubbish'. Besides, the teaching methods are not that much good.

If we compare the amount of money spent on the coaching with the monthly tuition fees at schools, the sum may not alarm many affluent families but would certainly look healthy enough. Again there are some rules in these institutions which are very rigorous. A rule as such of a very 'well-known' coaching centre is that students must not roam around the adjacent areas — after the classes, they should head straight to home.

Many teachers of the coaching centres prefer physical torture as a punishment largely due to their idea that it would save the students from going astray. The tests which are held there may contain good questions but the answer-sheets are not properly evaluated. So what's the point in giving these tests? I have seen students skip classes in school to attend tests in coaching centres. I really don't understand how a student makes time for his or her intellectual improvement and mental recreation when he/she spends five hours in school and three hours in coaching centres each day.

Now, a question may rise: "What is the remedy to this?" From my personal point of view, I would suggest that students must engage themselves more seriously in acquiring knowledge. We all understand the value of good scores in exams but students must not chase it until they have learnt something.

As for the parents, they should take care of their sons and daughters up to a certain age when they are self-reliant. From that point onwards, they should be able to hang on to their own lives. Finally, I would suggest not to eradicate the coaching centres completely but to levy a strict set of laws so that they don't abuse students.

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dents who go to the coaching centres because their friends are doing so. They even persuade their parents to admit themselves where their friends are spending afternoons, even though they do not need coaching.

c) On the contrary to that, there are students who are being provoked by their par-

titions of the coaching centres, e.g. attraction for the opposite sex during adolescence.

After considering the reasons, one must determine how much these coaching centres should indicate that the study materials these centres supply to the students are not of the superia-

### The Writing Game

If you're a college student — or a would-be college student — in both Bengali and English mediums, including residential and cadet colleges: It's your page. This paper invites you to write on subjects concerning you, your society and country. You're also encouraged to send news with photograph, if possible, of events that are happening in 'your' college to be printed in our COLLEGE CORRIDOR column. Send it to —

VOICES

The Daily Star

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### Stop! Stop!! Stop!!!

Raihan Jamil feels let-down by observing the absence of collective initiative in solving people's common problems

IF each of us can help ourselves a little — we can easily make our daily life much better and easy-going than before. A little innovation of our own will help a lot to increase our living standard, and a sincere interest in the public will also make the government very much willing to help.

A very very common problem in our daily life is that people smoke around us freely. We are so much used to this that it no longer occurs in most of our mind that we can protest against it. We can say: "Please don't smoke in front of me. Be an active smoker or whatever you may like, but please, don't make

These create serious problems, specially in congested and busy places and streets like the old Dhaka city. As far as I am concerned, there is a law restricting people from doing such things and creating public nuisance. But who cares? We have a very lenient government!!

Another interesting issue 'avoided' by most of the people is that, from the very poor, uneducated, to the rich and well-educated, people spit freely on the roads and other public places. Some doesn't even hesitate to respond to the call of nature in broad daylight! God!! One day when I was going somewhere by rickshaw, I saw a speeding Toyota passing by me. The

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me a passive one. You may have the right to kill yourself, but you don't have the right to kill me, or others."

Our problem is that those of us who are not active smokers are made to be passive smokers. And another thing is that even if we are able to say something to other people with our social condition, we cannot say this to our parents that "Father, please stop smoking," or "Brother, please stop smoking. It is bad for our health." So, unable to say things inside the house, we do not feel free enough to say it to the other people, and thus go on suffering.

But the government can at least minimise this problem. It can formulate a strict law against smoking at public places, like inside a bus or a train, busy marketplaces, inside restaurants etc. This way the number of innocent victims will be reduced. It is a grand request from victims like me to the law-makers.

Another aspect which is very 'popular' among building construction works is that they love to keep their construction materials scattered on and along the street, no matter if the place is an alley or a busy road. Their definition of "this is my land" is not very clear to us. But this is a big public nuisance. Like most of other cases, we got used to it.

next thing I remember was that the tinted glass of the car came down and a generous amount of willful filth came out of it, and just missing the rickshaw-puller headed towards me!

Well, nobody carries soap and water along with them to wash their faces anywhere they go. And just like spitting of papers and food remains etc., on the streets and all around us! "It doesn't matter actually, we already have quite a dirty town," said a friend of mine, studying at one of the well-known English medium schools. I couldn't say anything.

An attentive look at them indicates that all the problems are mainly due to the lack of our own sincerity and caring feelings about ourselves and others. Not much, a very little effort from each of us will reduce these problems to a great extent.

And in any country, the government ultimately is bound to what the citizens expect them to do. Our benefit is that we have a "democratic" country. But first of all, we must ourselves be sincere and willing to improve our standards and induce these feeling on to others. Our combined effort will give us a good and beautiful town, a beautiful country — Bangladesh.



The Dhaka city in the past

Courtesy: Bangladesh

