

Dhaka Day by Day

Child Beating at School

By Tulip Chowdhury



It seems to be an ideal atmosphere for learning but at times classroom violence makes a mockery of the tranquillity.

When eleven years old Shaon came home from school, his mother hurried forward to change his clothes. After opening his white shirt she shrieked. There were several ugly scars on his back.

"Who did this to you?" asked Shaon's mother. "Miss beat me at school because of incomplete home work," answered Shaon with downcast head.

Any sensible parent would wonder if that was sufficient cause for beating a child? Not only for home works but for other negligible misbehaviours children are often beaten and abused by teachers in a number of government and private schools.

How come we resort to such a crude form of teaching even in this city? The world at the end of the twentieth century is trying to teach children in gentle, creative and positive ways. But we seem to be nipping a flower from its bud before it has time to bloom.

Parents and guardians send their children to school with the hope of developing them into alert and vigilant citizens of the country. Piles of home works from schools push the children on the verge of forming negative attitudes towards regular school. And to top it all, if children are beaten and abused by teachers, how can we expect our children to form a healthy, nurturing notion towards going to school?

Some teachers have no qualms about child beating. They are so naughty that they need a good spanking now and then," they argue. "Bachchader Thik Rakthey Holey Patey Hot" (to keep children on tracks, they have to be beaten) says others. Some teachers keep sticks of different sizes and the children are beaten according to the seriousness of their offenses or other mistakes. The school children refer to the

sticks as "No.1", "No.2", and so on. "No.1" stick is the hardest one, "No.2" the next and it goes on and on.

Apart from child beating teachers often use verbal abuses.

"I'll spank you red", says five years old Prithi everything her toddler sister does something against her wishes and she calls her parents "idiots" and "Hooligans" because she says her teacher also says all those things.

Punishment at schools has existed all along. Years back child beating existed in many countries of the world. But such harsh form of punishment is discouraged for healthy emotional development of the child. Minor punishment like forcing a child to stand up for some time, or write down several times a word or sentence he or she got wrong may be given. Even then it is better to take recourse to gentler form of teaching or reform. Why not keep in mind that a child can not be perfect, when we the adults are not.

Parents when asked as to why they do not bring this injustice to children to the notice of the school authority shrink back.

"That might put my child in trouble with those particular teachers who beat them," are often the answers.

Schools can not hope to accomplish their tasks of teaching children about the best things of life unless the teachers, all of them, become a true friend and guide for students. A child, when he or she poses to be a major problem needs more cooperation from teachers and parents. A child who is treated with violence is likely to preach violence in turn.

Perhaps it's high time for the school authorities and the concerned education authorities to take steps to stop this cruel form of teaching.

Government urged to place Indemnity Ordinance Repeal Bill in Parliament

Leading lawyers Sunday urged the government to place an Indemnity Ordinance Repeal Bill in Parliament to annul the black law, reports UNB.

The Indemnity Ordinance can be scrapped by a simple majority in Parliament, they asserted while participating in a discussion on "Indemnity Ordinance: Contrary to Rule of Law and Human Rights."

They suggested that after annulment of the ordinance, it be sent to the Supreme Court seeking its opinion to stop recurrence of 'adventurism' by the militarymen and promulgation of such ordinance.

The Supreme Court lawyers' unit of Bangabandhu Parishad organised the discussion at Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium on the occasion of National Mourning Day.

The Indemnity Ordinance promulgated in 1975 blocked the trial of the killers of independence leader Sheikh Mujib.

Speaking at the discussion, State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru described the ordinance as a black law and said it stands against the rule of law.

"Fundamental structure of our Constitution is rule of law, there cannot be any law against it... Indemnity Ordinance should be annulled to establish rule of law," he said.

State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed, former Attorney General, Barrister Rafiqul Haque, Attorney General Barrister K S Nabi, Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta and Advocate Sirajul Haque also participated in the discussion meeting chaired by Supreme Court Bar Association President Shaikat Ali Khan.

Khasru argued that the Ordinance was not a part of constitution as it was just protected by a mere ratification.

"It is like a Upazila Ordinance of the Ershad Government which was later repealed by the BNP government by simple majority... So this ordinance could be annulled by simple majority," he said.

The audience, most of them lawyers of the Supreme Court, supported the state minister's contention by clapping.

Giving a brief history of the Ordinance, the minister challenged the authority of Khondker Mostaque Ahmed to promulgate such ordinance.

Prof. Abu Sayeed said a conspiracy began after the arrest of the self-confessed killers and it could not be accepted that the killers will be protected by Constitution.

Quoting from an interview of Col. Farook, he said President Zia was involved in the killing of Bangabandhu. "BNP will have to prove that Zia was not involved," he said.

Other discussants including adviser to the Prime Minister on parliamentary affairs Suranjit Sengupta, Sudhansu Shekhar Halder, Barrister K S Nabi and Barrister Rafiqul Haque contended that the Ordinance could be rescinded by simple majority in Parliament.

Woman robbed at Jurain graveyard

A lady doctor was robbed of her gold ornaments and cash as she was offering tateba at the grave of her daughter at Jurain graveyard in the broad daylight on Saturday, reports BSS.

The mother was reciting verses from the Holy Quran when a gang of miscreants snatched all her valuables at dagger point. Her brother-in-law who was accompanying her was also robbed of his wrist watch and cash.

A good number of people were present there, but nobody came to her aid.

A case has been registered with the Demra police station.

Dr GM Chy dead

Founder president of Bangladesh Society of Hypertension Prof. Dr. SGM Chowdhury died at his residence in the city yesterday morning. He was 62, reports BSS.

Hailing from Joypurhat, Prof. Chowdhury served at government hospitals in Chittagong and Dhaka including at the PG hospital.

He was associated with a number of professional groups and social welfare organisations.

Prof. Chowdhury was laid to rest at his village home.

Death Condolled

National Professor and founder president University of Science and Technology, Chittagong Dr. Nurul Islam yesterday condolled the death of Prof. SGM Chowdhury describing him as a brilliant member of the profession. Dr. Islam said his example of honesty, devotion and dedication will ever shine in professional arena.

His example should continue to inspire and guide all when the professional integrity is facing a challenge in the present day, he added.

159 arrested in city

Police arrested 159 people from different parts of the city on various charges in last 24 hours till 8 am yesterday, reports UNB.

Of them, 26 people were caught under warrant of arrest and 20 others on various charges, said a DMP press release.

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