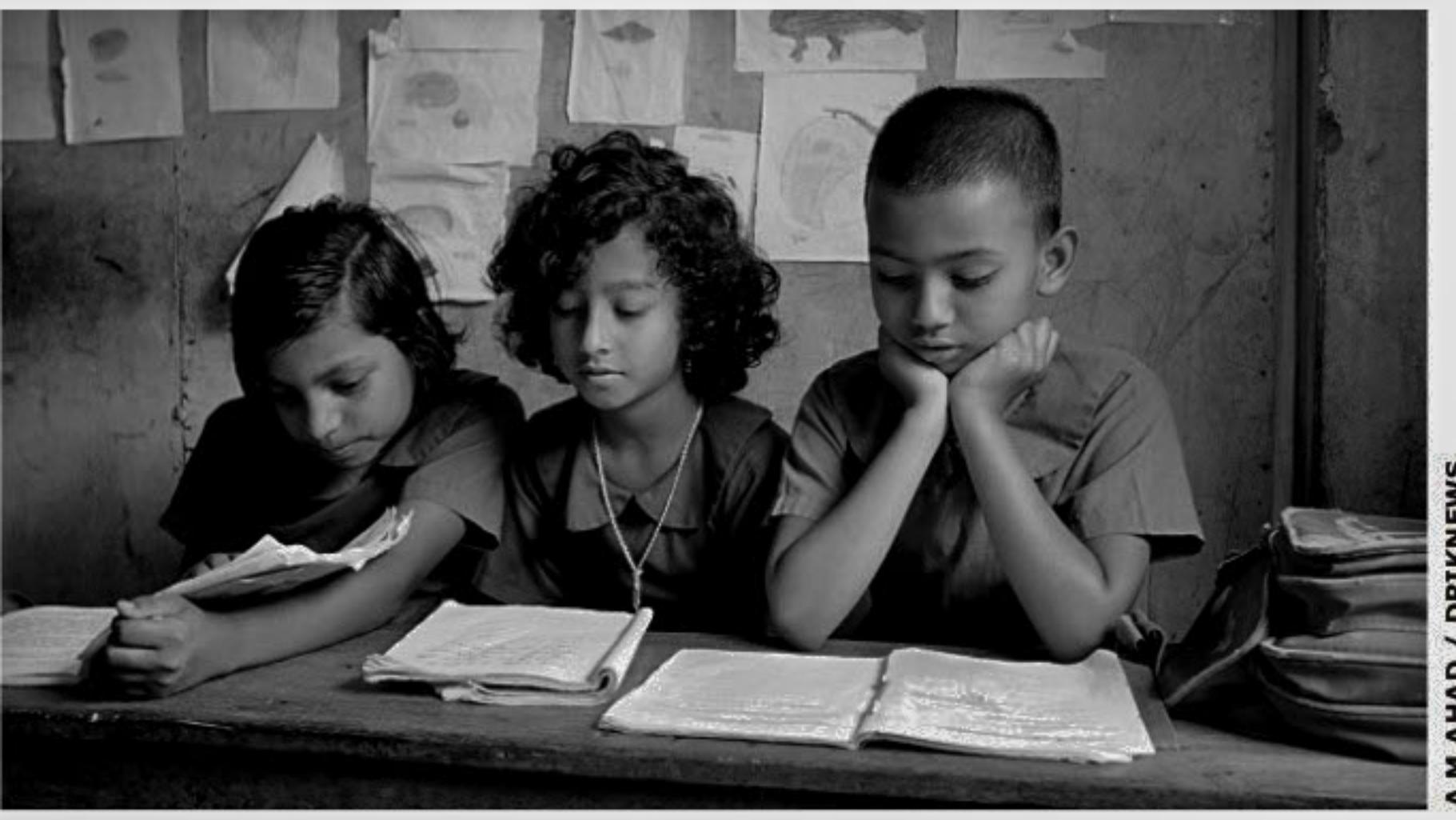


# Protect our children



A. MAHAD / DRIKNEWS

May Almighty Allah help the children of this nation and forgive some ignorant 'teachers' for the irreparable damage they are doing to the individual student and society on the whole. As a doctor I see the physical damage regularly.

The fact-filled provocative story by Sir Frank Peters about the mental scars and horrors of corporal punishment should be given as a government hand-out to all teachers in Bangladesh. I fear the majority of 'teachers' do not know what damage they are causing.

Teaching practices have gone

unchecked for far too long. For decades we accepted corporal punishment as being 'normal', even turned a blind eye to the most brutal, inhumane beatings of children as if magically the torture did the child good. I'm sickened that although corporal punishment is now OUTLAWED, some 'teachers' continue its practice. The quicker these 'teachers' are removed from the classrooms, the better for Bangladesh.

Dr. Tanveer Shams  
Banani  
Dhaka

## Traditional boat race in Bangladesh

Boat race is one of the traditional sports of entertainment of riverine Bangladesh. The race is held mainly in rural areas and organised by the rural people of Gopalganj, Madaripur, Norail, Munshiganj, Narayanganj, Pabna, Sirajganj, Sylhet, Brahmanbaria, Narsingdi, etc.

A fair is held on the bank of the river and the vendors sell various types of goods. Spontaneous participation of people gives the atmosphere a festive look. Unfortunately, this heritage is now facing a threat of extinction for lack of financing. To save this age-old tradition, various cultural, non-govt. and govt organizations should come forward immediately.

Saurav Sinha  
Dept of English  
Dhaka University

## 3G mobile network

Our telecommunications minister announced on May 10 at a function in the capital that the 3G (third-generation) mobile network would be launched in Bangladesh by this year. We hailed it. Actually, this service has long been active in a number of countries of the world. So, we also would like the authorities concerned to take immediate step in this connection.

Habibur Rashid Ismail  
Chittagong

## Human rights in France

France has banned using veils which some Muslim women regard as a religious duty. France is also reported to have arrested two Muslim women violating the ban. French women are displaying their bodies in public. On the other hand, French nuns are wearing a special dress covering from leg to head.

We wonder why the French govt. does not ban wearing special dresses for nuns and also using a special head-gear for Sikhs living in France.

What kind of human rights does France believe in?

O H Kabir  
Dhaka

## Rein in RAB

It seems the government has given a dark force license to abduct, maim and murder those opposed to it. In the absence of any accountability, RAB is serving the wishes of the government by monopolizing its position as a demigod among the Bangladeshis.

Tinku  
On e-mail

## Don't give the profession

### a bad name

Last year the High Court declared corporal punishment in schools unlawful. Sir Frank Peters wrote: 'Any teacher or headmaster who engages in corporal punishment is an enemy of a student, family and state, now that corporal punishment has been outlawed.' It could not be said more simply than that.

The very profession from which we expect perfect conduct is letting all of us down.

No doubt there are many good teachers who abide by the law, but the renegades who think they are above the law give the profession a bad name. To protect their once-hallowed name, it is vital that honourable teachers speak out and reproach their fellow colleagues for administering corporal punishment.

Kamal Hoque  
Rangpur

# Elephants of Bangladesh



Elephants of Bangladesh are starving. The forests of Bangladesh have become smaller in size and are no longer typical rain forests with various types of big and small trees and plants which provide abodes and food to varieties of birds and animals. These have been replaced by jungles of several varieties of foreign trees which can be used as firewood for brickfields, domestic purposes, curing tobacco and making inferior quality furniture. The photograph of elephants eating water hyacinth published in your esteemed daily recently is heartrending. Emaciated and starving elephants are being compelled to change their ancient food habits. They are now making forays into villages situated in the outskirts of their natural habitat, at times killing or injuring villagers and destroying their thatched homes. On the other hand, thousands of acres of fertile paddy fields in the valleys in hills remain untilled because of fear of elephants. The net result of this situation is sufferings, of both elephants and humans. Sincere desire of the govt. and a meticulous planning and vigorous, coordinated action by the ministry of forest, ministry of agriculture and law enforcing authorities could correct this intolerable situation.

Prof. Dr A.E.M. Aminul Islam, F.R.C.P (London)

Shahid Saifuddin Khaled Road, Chittagong

## We want real democracy

A former law minister recently called this government a "autocratic". Ironically, he was the Vice President under a military dictator. Dictators are hated species around the globe, for they lack legitimacy as they are not public representatives.

They cannot tolerate dissent. Opponents are jailed and disappeared. Media freedom is curbed. The average person is deprived of his right to protest against any misdeed or express any opinion. The dictator fears any political establishment. Thus Libya, Syria, Yemen do not have political establishments.

We restored democracy in 1991, but the question is do we really have democracy in this country? The ex-law minister is correct in a sense but is not his party also autocratic when in power? Elections alone do not ensure democracy.

The editor of an English daily calls the present situation of our country "electoral autocracy". We want real democracy.

Wasif Wahed  
On e-mail

## Big fish sinks

Raj Rajaratnam, the billionaire co-founder of Galleon Group Hedge Fund has been found guilty of insider-trading, fraud and conspiracy. He illegally traded on 35+ stocks including names like Intel, IBM, Hilton and Google. Charged in 2009, Rajaratnam had remained free on a US\$100 million bond as he mounted a robust US\$20 million defense.

The FBI finally indicted Rajaratnam after investigations led to incriminating phone conversations and confidential informants. The investigation also had ripple-effects as dozens more were implicated - of whom many have pleaded guilty.

In light of our own little financial disaster, there are lessons for us in this: firstly, the biggest of fish can be indicted regardless of how strong a fort of money he/she builds; secondly, a focused, rigorous investigation can help authorities uncover entire criminal networks and thirdly, that landmark indictments like this can be a deterrent for future financial-criminals.

Going after The Rich and The Guilty, therefore, can send a strong, positive message to the market, the criminals and the common people.

Adnan R. Amin  
Gulshan-1  
Dhaka



## Regional cooperation for tourism

In the present competitive global market trend, regional and sub-regional co-operation is essential for sustainable growth. In Asia, there exist at least 4-5 regional and sub-regional co-operatives for the promotion of tourism, among which Bangladesh is a member country. Some of those are Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Bay of Bengal of Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Asia Productivity Organization (APO). The objectives of all these co-

operations are to pursue common goals that are regional development, employment generation and poverty reduction through co-operation of various issues. Tourism is one of those issues. But the progress is very tardy of these cooperation due to various reasons and fund constraints. Different meetings and seminars on tourism of these forums determined to promote South Asia as a single tourist destination. For having an effective result, there needs a strong co-operation and political will of the member countries.

Ziaul Haque Howlader  
DM, BPC

## RAB brutalities

Moshed Ali Khan's front page report, and the pictures alongside published on May 7th, reflects the cruel and sadist trend of RAB, that we thought had gone with the 'Nazi Gestapo' after the last 'World War'. Surprisingly, it is alive and nurtured in Bangladesh by RAB; who seem to be proud of their animal like cruelty!

They feel proud to have crippled Liton and his uncle Mohazzal for life!

They feel that they are 'licensed to kill and maim; anyone they feel like'! In the name of implementing 'law and order', they feel no qualms in breaking 'law and order', whenever they feel like! Their objective is to shoot or beat people into death or permanent disability, with no questions asked or answers needed to be given to anyone! They are not public servants, rather public 'masters'.

Alive maimed or dead, who in RAB cares? For them anyone not in uniforms is a potential criminal!

Licensed to speak  
Dhaka

## READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's The Daily Star report headlined 'Rab office on Buriganga'?

Rover  
Great sons of the soil! A glorious enforcement of law.... (!)

Taiyeba Farhana  
The above mentioned news is shocking. It will affect the ecosystem.

Sairul  
It's not unexpected from 'Rab' who are involved in malpractice from the starting.

Manzoor Ashraf  
Why should these forces be rewarded with land when they should be tried for scores of killings instead?

Md Rafiqul Islam  
Good achievement should be like this. Why not other sources? I think government should arrange for other sources like this. Well done government.

Nasirullah Mridha in USA  
Government has lot of disputed and abandoned land in the whole country. RAB could utilise those. Why the RAB need river bank which is demarcated by administration?

Sheikh Monirul Islam, Opee  
How RAB can possibly claim a big and expensive piece of land for their private residential project in their official capacity raises a lot of question. This new phenomenon is becoming more visible in many areas of Dhaka. Our law enforcement officials are putting up signboard for their private residential projects. One such example is near Arong Gulshan area where Police has put up a signboard, in Dumni Thana near Basubdhara and Pink city project there is a very big piece of land also in the name of the Police dept. Now it is the RAB.

## Obama's birth certificate released

Recently the White House has released the long form of President Barack Obama's birth certificate in response to festering questions about whether he was born in the United States. Production of birth certificate by an American President to prove his American citizenship and to confirm his President candidature is really unfortunate. I cannot believe to have such a treatment in a highly civilized country like the United States! Had Obama not been born in the United States, how he received the majority votes? Was he a stranger to his supporters? Meanwhile I warmly appreciate President Obama's initiative to end the on-going debate over his birthplace and I sincerely wish his success in the office of the President.

Professor M Zahidul Haque  
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University  
Dhaka

## Osama and Obama

Abbottabad will open, not a can of worms, but a barrel of venomous serpents. A deluge of awkward questions will follow. The picture, shorn of all verbiage shows an unarmed middle-aged man shot to death with admittedly only his wife resisting, while other wives and a dozen children were mute spectators. It is irrelevant that his head had a price-tag of \$ 25 million, allegedly for a crime that he was never formally charged with, tried or convicted in a court of law. But is it irrelevant, the killers were one nationality, came from another country and completed their 'contract/supari' in a third? What happened to the "sanctity of national boundaries"? Where is the "sovereignty of independent states" that the 'civilized' countries love to teach? Extra-judicial killings are nothing new. The young puppy has been doing it with impunity for years. Now the tail is wagging the dog!

Sikander Ahmed  
Niketon, Gulshan-1, Dhaka

## New rates, new problems

Thanks to the government's initiative to fix the fares of CNGs, the drivers are now asking for Tk. 20/- more than what is registered on the meter. The reason? Now the meter is showing too small a fare. Previously, the fare used to be Tk. 100/- for a trip from Banani to Baily Road. Thanks to the new rate, the meter shows Tk. 70/-. It makes sense to ask for the extra twenty, right? It seems that whatever the government does to reduce the sufferings of the public, the CNG drivers will find their logic to impose their rules of fare. I fail to understand why the govt. fails to adjust their plans. The public has to be at the mercy of the drivers to go with the legal rate.

Asifur Rahman Khan  
Circuit House Road, Ramna, Dhaka

