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Bangladesh sets a good example



LITON RAHMAN / DRINKNEWS

The Bangladesh High Court ruling by Justices Md. Imman Ali and Sheikh Hasan Arif on January 13, 2011 that outlaws corporal punishment in schools greatly serves Bangladesh and is a significant lesson to all. Sir Frank Peters also deserves a special round of applause for his spirited and incessant effort to warn Bangladesh of the consequences of corporal punishment, and for helping to bring about a historic change.

In their summary, the honourable HC judges described corporal punishment as "cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and a clear violation of a child's fundamental right to life, liberty and freedom."

Sir Frank Peters described it as: "a form of mental and physical torture that causes pain, humiliation, irreparable damage, violates the human rights of the child and teaches hate, violence, resentment, vengeance and disrespect."

Loving and concerned parents here in the United States of America were inspired by your HC decision in 2011. They are now anxiously waiting for the passage of an anti-corporal punishment bill through Congress by Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy.

The Parents and Teachers against Violence in Education (PTAVE) wholeheartedly wishes the people and children of Bangladesh success on the first anniversary of the anti-corporal punishment law.

Jordan Riak

Executive Director

Parents and Teachers against Violence in Education (PTAVE), California, USA

Atrocities carried out by BSF

We are outraged and vehemently protest the killings of Bangladeshi citizens by Border Security Force (BSF) of India. According to Ain O Shalish Kendra, 39 Bangladeshis were killed by BSF in 2011, while Odhikar puts the number at 3.

A few days back, BSF men brutally tortured a Bangladeshi citizen in Murshidabad of Pashchimbanga which was shown in a video footage.

It can not go on like this; it is unfathomable why our government is unable to stop these killings.

Seemingly, it has become a favourite pastime for BSF, an opportunity to practice their marksmanship on innocent Bangladeshis. It is the most detestable act and our government must take urgent steps to stop border killings.

We can easily imagine how India would have reacted if a Indian national had been killed by BGB. Our government must shake off this meek attitude and act promptly to stop killing of our people at the borders by BSF. We should be firm in upholding our rights.

Nur Jahan

Chittagong

"Khaleda Zia's self-contradictory comments"

This is in reference to the letter written by Abu Shahjalal Azad under the above heading published on 16th January where the writer seems to have misinterpreted the comments of Khaleda Zia. The tirade of Begum Zia about Fakhruddin-Moinuddin's unconstitutional regime was not a new one.

The two year long illegal rule has been condemned by the BNP leaders in different political rallies for the last three years. Not only that, some ruling party ministers and MPs also came down heavily on the heroes of the so-called army-backed caretaker government.

But as the Awami League is allegedly the beneficiary of that rule, the AL leaders feel embarrassed to talk about this and try to divert the issue while talking in the talk shows. And certainly, the caretaker government and the Fakhruddin-Moinuddin regime are not the same. Although both the caretaker government system and the Fakhruddin-Moinuddin regime are unconstitutional now, the CTG system is accepted and appreciated by the people of the country, and on the contrary, Fakhruddin-Moinuddin government is not. So how come Khaleda Zia's comments were self-contradictory?

Dr. Md Zahid Hussain

Consultant

Shahid Sk. Abu Naser Specialised Hospital

Khulna

Reintroduce CAP on lending rates

Bangladesh Bank recently liberalised the deposit and lending rates by removing the CAP (restriction). Generally the central banks of most of the developed and developing countries prudently control the deposit rates and lending rates of the commercial and other financial organisations. Many commercial and loan giving agencies have started to enhance the lending rates and issued memos to the borrowers in the respect. As a result of enhancement of lending rates, the industrialists and business communities, especially the export-oriented industries facing tough and stiff competition in the international market, are having serious problems to market their products with high financial costs.

The enhancement of the lending rates will severely affect our economy. Thousands of people will be unemployed and under-employed and economic misery will aggravate. Bangladesh Bank's whimsical decision will not bring good to the ailing economy, rather it will deteriorate the investment environment. The central bank prescribed the 'medicine' without consulting others. It should have discussed and consulted the trade bodies like FBCCI, MCCI, DCCI, CCCI, BGMEA, BTMC, and BTMA who are the real users and play the most significant role in the national economy by earning foreign exchange, providing employment to millions of people, and paying taxes to the government. The deposit and lending rates in Bangladesh are exorbitantly high in comparison with the developed and developing countries like USA, UK, EU countries, Japan, China, Singapore, Malaysia and India.

The enhancement of lending rates due to removal of CAP by Bangladesh Bank will severely affect the export earning of the country and will have a direct negative impact on the investment environment.

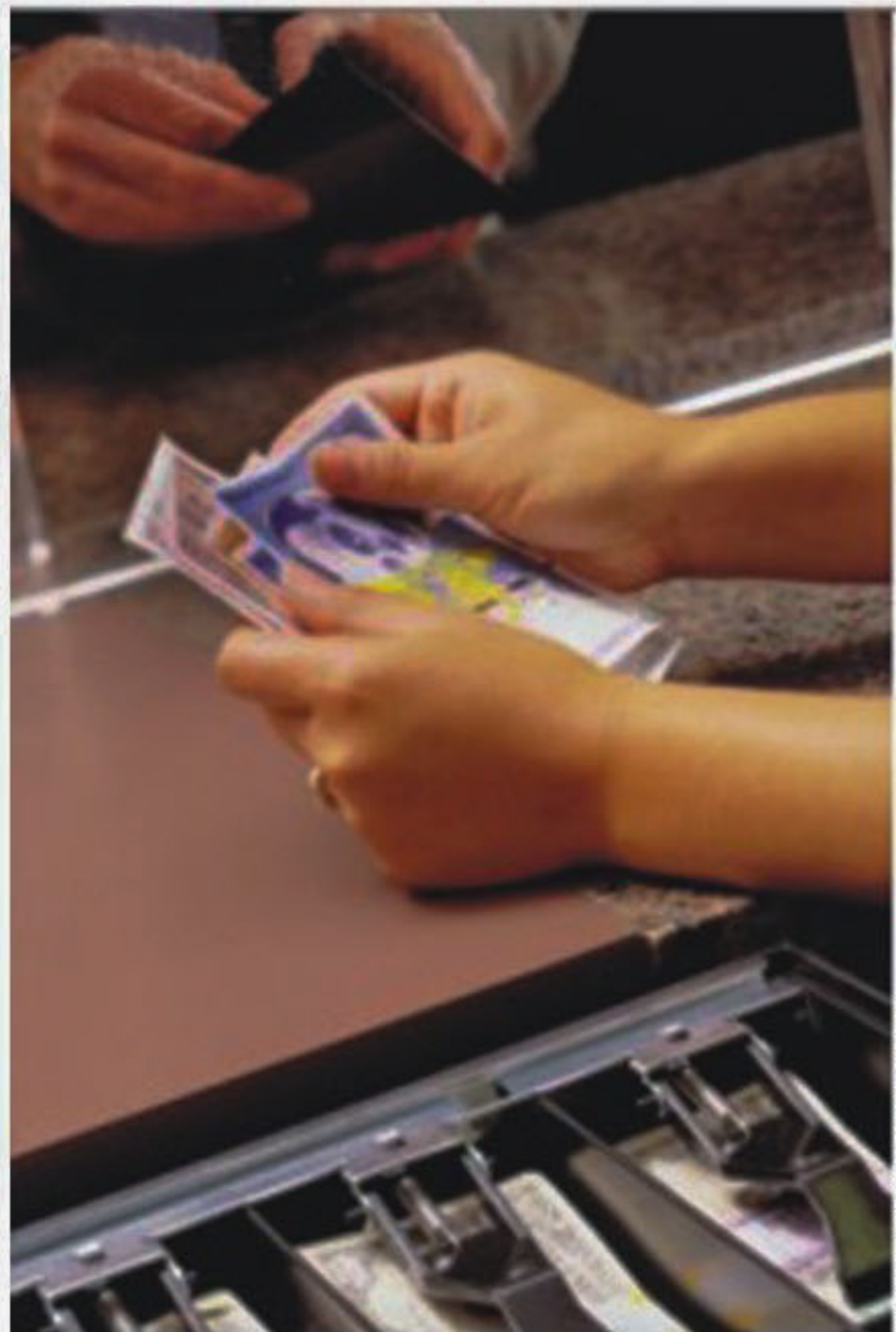


PHOTO: KEITH BROFSKY

Finally, we urge the Bangladesh Bank authority consisting of economists, experts, professionals and bankers to review the decision and reintroduce the CAP on both deposit rates and lending rates congenial to Bangladesh economy.

Adnan Abdullah

Dhaka

Bangladesh a killers' haven?

It seems in Bangladesh if one wants to kill a person, he can do it easily. The only condition for the killer is that he must be associated with the ruling party. After the killing, the killer will not be arrested as long as the party he belongs to is in power. Then when the opposition party will come to power, the killer will have to hide for five years. And, again, when the killer's party returns to power, if he surrenders and asks for clemency, he will be pardoned, as it happened in many cases. Thus the fortunate killer can remain free forever and become a hero.

Kazi Mizanur Rahman

Gulshan-2, Dhaka

A friend or a foe?

The hanging image of Felani, shot dead by BSF, is still fresh in our memory. And now we see another instance of their brutality on a Bangladesh citizen. The continuous killing and torturing of Bangladeshis by BSF show clearly how India treats us. India has violated all international norms and human rights while dealing with Bangladesh.

Actually, India did not want us to be a vibrant independent county and that is why they violated all treaties with Bangladesh. She took from us all she wished, but in return gave us nothing but humiliation, death, torture and exploitation.

In this critical moment, we think both the government and the opposition party should be united to face our common enemy.

Abdus Subhan

Roadside parking continues



PHOTO: WRITER

Despite the communications minister's directives and widespread protests from the citizens, the practice of parking vehicles, mainly private cars, has been lingering the people's woes in the overburdened city.

Apparently, it has come to this state due to poor implementation of the related laws and directives given by the DMP alongside other government agencies. Taking advantage of this, wealthy people park their cars haphazardly on the streets.

It is frustrating for us, who have neither cars nor do contribute to the nagging gridlock on the streets, that "those influentials do not care". So what would we do after buying a car? Seeing the current situation, we might also be tempted to dodge the rules.

The government might rhetorically say that they can't manage the roads due to lack of adequate manpower - a very common excuse, or some other new reasons, but it's true that only strict law and its execution in public is the most crucial thing to be addressed. All the DMP members should be given the authority to drive away unauthorised vehicles from the streets and pavements and in case of failure warn them or inform their senior officers of it.

Probir Bidhan

On e-mail

Creation of new job avenues

Unemployment is one of the major problems in most countries of the world including Bangladesh. In this regard I would like to recall a saying of Bill Owens - "Job creation in the 21st century economy can't be business as usual. Competition is global, and it's fierce.....tourism and agriculture are superb economic generators and we are all proud of these key industries."

Fortunately, Bangladesh has enough scope for creating job opportunities in both agriculture and tourism sectors. What is needed is a pragmatic policy and action plan. For instance, setting up of agro-based rural industries can create a lot of job opportunities. Again we can also create job avenues in our tourism sector. Cox's Bazar alone can contribute significantly to this sector. To turn Cox's Bazar into an economically profitable tourism spot, the government needs to take some actions to develop all the tourism facilities in Cox's Bazar including improving transport facility by commissioning direct railway service from Dhaka to Cox's Bazar.

Appreciating the importance of tourism, particularly in job creation, the US President Barack Obama has recently launched tourism initiative. President Obama in a recent radio address said: "We want more visitors coming here. We want them spending money here. It's good for our economy, and it will help provide the boost more businesses need to grow and hire."

The White House said more than 1 million U.S. jobs could be created over the next decade, according to industry projections, if the nation took a larger share of the international travel market.

It is sincerely expected that the government of Bangladesh will attach priority in the creation of new job avenues through adopting appropriate measures to develop our agriculture as well as tourism sectors.

Professor M Zahidul Haque

Dean, Faculty of Agriculture

Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University

Dhaka

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's *The Daily Star* news report headlined "No room for bigots"

Truth lover

It is a matter of shame that we proudly say Indian officials warned us of the coup. Then what is our military intelligence doing? Islam is a religion of peace, and whoever plays with Islam should be punished.

Green land

Only the united efforts of all the officials looking after national security against fanaticism will help.

Fida Likhon

Since 1975, Islamic parties, especially Jamaat-e-Islami, motivated their youngsters to enter army with an aim to bring Islamic revolution in Bangladesh. What the government needs to do is to identify those hidden extremists.

Faqul

It appears that the Chief of General Staff is getting worried about the negative and far-reaching and damaging impacts of mixing religion with governance. The army should be above any emotional attachment. They must maintain discipline and a peaceful environment.

Mita

We need to find out why and how a pious army persons becomes a religious fanatic.

An observer

Dharma Praan, Dharma Parayan, Dharma Bhuru, Gora, Dharmandho, and Dharma Baboshayee are all nonsense terms for a soldier. Let our army have a strict code of conduct and let them follow it for the good of the army and the country.

Opee Monir

What's the point of having a large armed forces when our own citizens can not be protected along the line of our border with India? Why was Felani killed in that way? Why are our citizens tortured mercilessly by the BSF? Why was a BGB man abducted by the Indian smugglers and BSF took no action for three days? Why should we have such a big army at the cost of the taxpayers' money? We need to know all the answers.

Maloy K Dhar

It is surprising that many Bangladeshis have blamed India. They should understand that even if India had alerted Bangladesh government, it is the Bangladesh intelligence and army who have worked out the details.

Parif

We have a long history of the army trying to go to power because our democracy is not strong and we have politicised this institution.

Anonymous

Can he let us know the definition of these six categories of religious people, and also help us understand which group he himself falls into?

Shamima Begum Shelley

Bangladesh is predominantly a Muslim country and our armed forces can be clearly identified as a Muslim army globally. The word secularism is often misinterpreted. The word is more inclined to Godlessness. And if we at all like to be a country where all religions should be equal, then we should be an Islamic country, because Islam is a true believer of equal rights for every other reli-

Shocking indeed!

Just like every other morning I was reading newspaper on January 4 and a heading "small mistake great loss" caught my attention. I felt very sorry for the irresponsible mother as well as the ill-fated child who was found dead on the staircase of DMCH. On 5th January, it was found that the child was murdered. The victim child died due to suffocation. Several other injuries were found on her body. On 9th January, we came to know that the mother of the child was also involved in the crime. I was shocked for a moment. Only God knows how a mother could do this to her child.

Safran Fazle Rahman

A-level student

Uttara, Dhaka