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# Curse of corporal punishment



TANVIR AHMED / DRINKNEWS

I regularly go through the English and Bengali newspapers. Reports like sinking value of taka and the deplorable situation of law and order in this country disappoint me. But no politician will ever admit their fault about the situation.

As a father of teenage children, the subject of corporal punishment in schools has been of particular interest to my wife and me over the last one year or so. I think I read every word written on the subject by Sir Frank Peters and other noted writers. In view of the irrefutable evidence presented, I cannot fathom why it is still in practice in our school system unchecked.

In a number of recent reports, I could not help but notice that Sir Frank thanked and praised Justices Imman Ali and Sheikh Hassan Arif and some others for the role they played in trying to eliminate the inhuman practice from the classrooms.

His modesty is refreshing and a lesson to all. The contribution he has already made is incalculably valuable and deserves applause and admiration from every schoolchild as well as my family.

It is shameful that some errant teachers cannot see the serious consequences of corporal punishment as Sir Frank and parents do, or they just don't care. May Allah bless him, watch over and protect him.

**Md Hamza Gazi**  
 Niketon, Dhaka

## Deprived of my due payment!

I have been teaching since 15 February 1997. The headmaster of St. Andrew's High School submitted necessary documents following formal process to Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) office and filed as usual in 2010. I have become sad to see that there is no response from the DSHE whether the application is accepted or not. And I have not yet got time scale though I have been serving as a teacher getting the salary scale of tk.8000/- for over nine years.

I sent a letter to the DG, DSHE reminding the fact and so did the headmaster. I know some other teachers who got time scale following the process I adopted. A teacher, who did his B. Ed after I had completed my B. Ed., even got a time scale and then got another time scale before passing 8 years in the same scale. But why have I been deprived of the due payment?

Now I am the silent and helpless witness to 'power game' played by the higher authorities! I went to the DSHE office in person. Now I can see the result of their airy assurance. I would like to draw the attention of the authorities concerned through this letter.

**S N M Zahangir**  
 Assistant Teacher  
 St. Andrew's High School  
 Haluaghat

## Aggression of alien culture

I was bemused to read Md Yeasir Arafat Nadim's letter on the subject in DS of 24 Feb 2012. Yes, Bangladesh is being inundated with a flood of alien culture, language, fashions, songs etc through the medium of Indian multi-channel TV, radio and media hype. Bollywood stars in their barest of bare attires receive royal welcome costing us crores. In return, the hospitable Bengalis give them free transit, a captive market for their sub-standard goods, freedom to kill/maim and divert/dry up our river waters.

Here I will focus on the endless "serials/soap operas", which are highly objectionable. Besides the lavish sets, each and every episode of every drama serial has an endless variety of Pujas being shown in full with elaborate, expensive rituals. Historical facts are distorted (Mahmud Ghazni obstructed by a child devotee and her pet rabbit). These serials are a flagrant depiction of a superiority that openly propagates the superiority of their culture.

However, Mr Arafat will be happy to know that these provide many Muslims with gainful employment as playwrights, songwriters, artists and media technicians. What Mr Arafat fears as "Hindi aggression" is in fact, sorry to say "Urdu Infiltration" because between 80-95% of what he hears is chaste Urdu. Hindi usage here would be a total flop.

**Sikander Ahmed**  
 Niketon, Gulshan-1  
 Dhaka

## Save indigenous languages

An article entitled "Strangers in a strange land", published recently in The Star, a weekly publication of this daily, pointed at the other linguistic factions of Bangladesh, especially about the endangered state of hill people's languages.

Our language movement is now internationally recognised and the whole world knows that people of this land sacrificed their lives to protect their mother tongue Bengali against the imposition of Urdu and Pakistani culture. We are proud of 21st February because now we are able to speak, sing and write in our own language. But have we ever thought of the 45 ethnic groups in the country who have at least 38 different languages?

However, it is very unfortunate that a majority of non-Bengali children receive education in Bengali that they do not understand properly, because Bengali is the language of instruction in all government educational institutions in Bangladesh. As a result, as the article says, an estimated 55.5 percent of the children of the indigenous communities aged 6-10 years are not enrolled in school. The dropout rate is almost 60 percent.

It may be mentioned that our constitution guarantees the right to study in one's own mother tongue. But the government has not yet provided primary education to the indigenous children in their mother languages violating the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord 1997.

Anyway, now it is obvious that any attempt to impose Bengali on the indigenous people at the expense of their mother tongue will have negative impact on them. So we hope the government will do the needful soon because a number of indigenous languages have become already extinct.

**Mobarak Ali**  
 RK Mission Road

# Who were behind BDR carnage?

On the third anniversary of BDR carnage, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina accused BNP of instigating BDR mutiny and said people know who brought out procession in support of the mutineers. On the other hand, Mirza Fakhrul Islam, the acting secretary general of BNP said the BDR tragedy was not a common incident--it was a result of a blueprint to damage border security to make the country dependent on others and also to destroy the future of the nation, a very clear signal pointing at the government party.

Now the people are at a loss, whom to believe. The simple way is to trust both of them as both of their leaders were killed by the army and hence none of them is happy with our defence forces. But there is common belief that BNP is more pro-army and probably that is the reason behind the forced eviction of Khaleda Zia from her cantonment residence. Late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the Nation, was brutally killed along with most of his family members and close relatives by army personnel and it is quite reasonable that AL cannot forget that tragedy. Involvement of both the major political parties also justifies the reason why the nation is yet in the dark about the real cause or motive behind this incident. But the common people and families of the victims have the right to know why fifty-seven high ranking army officers were killed by a disciplined force, a loss inflicted on the nation that many believe cannot be compensated any more.

**Engr. Md. Aminul Hoque**  
 East Rampura, Dhaka



PHOTO: STAR

## US president apologises to Afghans

I have seen and perhaps everybody would also endorse my observation that the Americans are very proud of their soldiers and irrespective of party affiliations (whether Democrat or Republican), they hold a special position for the armed forces personnel in their hearts. They leave no occasion to greet and congratulate the US Armed Forces' contributions for retaining and upholding national dignity and prestige.

But unfortunately, some of the US Armed Forces members often bring dishonour and humiliation to home for their ugly acts. I am talking about the recent heinous and condemnable act of burning copies of the holy Quran by the American troops in Afghanistan. This irresponsible act humiliated their president before the world. The US President Barack Obama has apologised to the Afghan people for the act the US troops have done calling it a genuine mistake.

The armed forces' personnel are well disciplined; they are not supposed to do any such thing that is usually done by the people of extreme thoughts. In my opinion, the US government should withdraw those personnel who were involved in the irresponsible and heinous act.

**Professor M Zahidul Haque**  
 Dean, Faculty of Agriculture  
 Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University

# Pray for Humayun Ahmed's quick recovery



Prolific writer, filmmaker and dramatist, Humayun Ahmed, has been undergoing treatment for cancer at a hospital in the USA. Over the last four decades, he has produced many titles which include novels, short stories, science fictions, children's literature and so on. It is difficult to name another Bangladeshi writer who has such versatility. He is a superb storyteller, to say the least. He holds the interest of his readers and transports them to an imaginary world. Who can forget the characters like Himu and Misir Ali?

We all pray for his recovery from the disease.

**ZabedWali**  
 On e-mail



## Commentary

### PM for Yunus as WB Chief

Is it a change of heart or a mockery? (February 24, 2012)

It is unbelievable! A complete u-turn? Is it because her government is feeling the pinch as a result of their ill-motivated efforts to discredit the person the whole world respects?

As Mr. Anam mentioned, the PM should know that the position of WB is held by a US citizen. On what basis, did the PM come up with this idea to request to EU representatives, and not to the US government?

**M. Faruque**

This write-up is based on incomplete facts. It is strange that the editor is unaware of the recent developments at the World Bank itself. China only last week wanted a change in the selection process for WB presidency.

It wanted a merit-based, transparent system, instead of a citizen-based one. Besides, Jean Lambert, the head of the visiting EU delegation also talked about untenable manner in which directors are being selected in World Bank. A change in WB, IMF is imminent.

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### Rezaul Bari

Mr. Rezaul Bari, the commentary is not based on incomplete or erroneous information. What he refers to are all in the realm of talks, not what is practiced until now. There were some noises along the same line before C. Lagarde was appointed IMF Chief after DSK's resignation, but what happened if I may ask Mr. Bari?

**Zahir Sadeque**

The main question is, did Prof Yunus himself request or express interest about this post? If not, then the government did a disservice to his name and prestige.

**Roni Rahman**

The question you ask is way easier to answer, it is mockery.

**Jumana Sarwar**

It should be noted that prominent American politicians had proposed Dr. Yunus' name as the World Bank president in the past, including an OPED in a prominent US newspaper

about 10 years back; as far as I know, he declined, since he did not want to leave Bangladesh. However, he was the chairman of the Policy Advisory Group for the CGAP (Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest), World Bank, Washington DC, USA (1995 - 2000).

**Saleh Tanveer**

The flatterers around the PM does not understand what to do or what to say. Even she did not hesitate to say that saving the journalists (Runi and Sagr) in their bedroom is not the duty of the government. How unfortunate for an elected PM of our wretched country!

**Dr. S. A. Miah**

Can we embarrass ourselves any further?

**Eliza, Canada**

Minus Yunus strategy? Her proposal does not fit any equation of her past and she obviously can't fool Yunus anyway!

**Yamuna Zaman**

Mr. Mahfuz Anam, thank you very much for your courageous and appropriate words. These are the feelings of millions of Bengalis living at home and abroad.

**Mohammad Iqbal, Ottawa, Canada**

I do agree with Mr Anam. Superb article.

**Dr. Golam Sarwar**

Thanks Mr Anam for your unusual bravery.

**Dr Islam**

It is neither a change of heart nor a mockery; it is at best a damage control, inspired by the elements surrounding her.

**Kamal Ahmed**

This is mockery, pure and simple. This is to further dishonour Dr Yunus.

**Shimul**

It would surely be very good if it came from her sincere heart. But the relationship between Dr. Yunus and Sheikh Hasina for the last three years showed otherwise.

**A Bangalee**

An excellent piece! Thank you again for picking up the issue.

**Mahfuzul H Chowdhury**

It is not difficult to assume that the PM possibly made the proposal just as a countermeasure to the EU delegation's query regarding her position on unwarranted removal of Dr. Yunus from the Grameen Bank. So it is really difficult to take the proposal as a change of heart on the part of the PM. But still we would like to see it not as a mockery but as a sincere gesture of a changing heart.

**NDS**

Is it really difficult to understand that this was a satire directed at the patrons of Dr. Yunus? His ideology and philosophy have their moorings