



Rab's excesses

We strongly criticise the assault by the unruly members of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) on a Dhaka University teacher. Once again, the heinous act carried out by the members of this law enforcing agency has proved that they are getting used to this kind of abuse of power. The reason for which Muhammad Saif Uddin Khan, a lecturer of Finance department, was beaten up is that he requested the Rab men to move their pick-up van that blocked the traffic movement on the road.

What Rab men did to the teacher so victimised was senseless. The teacher was admitted to the Pongu hospital later. The two sentences uttered by one of the Rab members -- "How dare you say that? Don't you know it's Rab's car?" -- were totally indecent and shameful.

We are worried because such incident has not taken place for the first time. Prior to this occurrence, last year Limon, a college student of Jhalakathi district, while returning home allegedly came under the attack of Rab men who termed Limon as a terrorist. Limon's story earned much criticism from different quarters and put Rab into question. The worst thing is that the authorities concerned did not feel the need of expressing sympathy to the victim's family.

However, after such brutal incident the chief of this agency verbally promised to probe into the alleged involvement of his people in the incident but later we saw how they failed to make good on their promise.

Finally, we urge both the chief of Rab and the government to seriously take such incidents into their consideration and ensure that those hot-headed members of RAB are brought to book.

A bereaved student
University of Dhaka

"Dear Amina, I am sorry"

Recently a tragic incident took place at a Washington elementary school where an 8-year-old girl, Amina Kocer-Bowman was critically wounded when her classmate's (9-year-old) gun had been accidentally fired at her. The young boy was reportedly unhappy with his family life and had planned to run away from home. He took a .45-Caliber gun from the glove compartment of his mother's truck. The gun the boy had stowed went off and the bullet critically injured Amina.

This painful incident depicts a very sick picture of the present-day American family where probably children are not properly attended with love and care!

Meanwhile, the boy in a simple letter begged apology from the young wounded girl. He wrote:

"Dear Amina, I am sorry I hurt you because I brought a gun to school... I wish everyone was okay. I made a bad choice. I was sad, scared and afraid and I did not solve my problem well. I will stay away from guns... I will promise to learn better ways to solve my problems. Again I am sorry Amina"

Professor M Zahidul Haque
Dean, Faculty of Agriculture
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Why should we suffer unnecessarily?

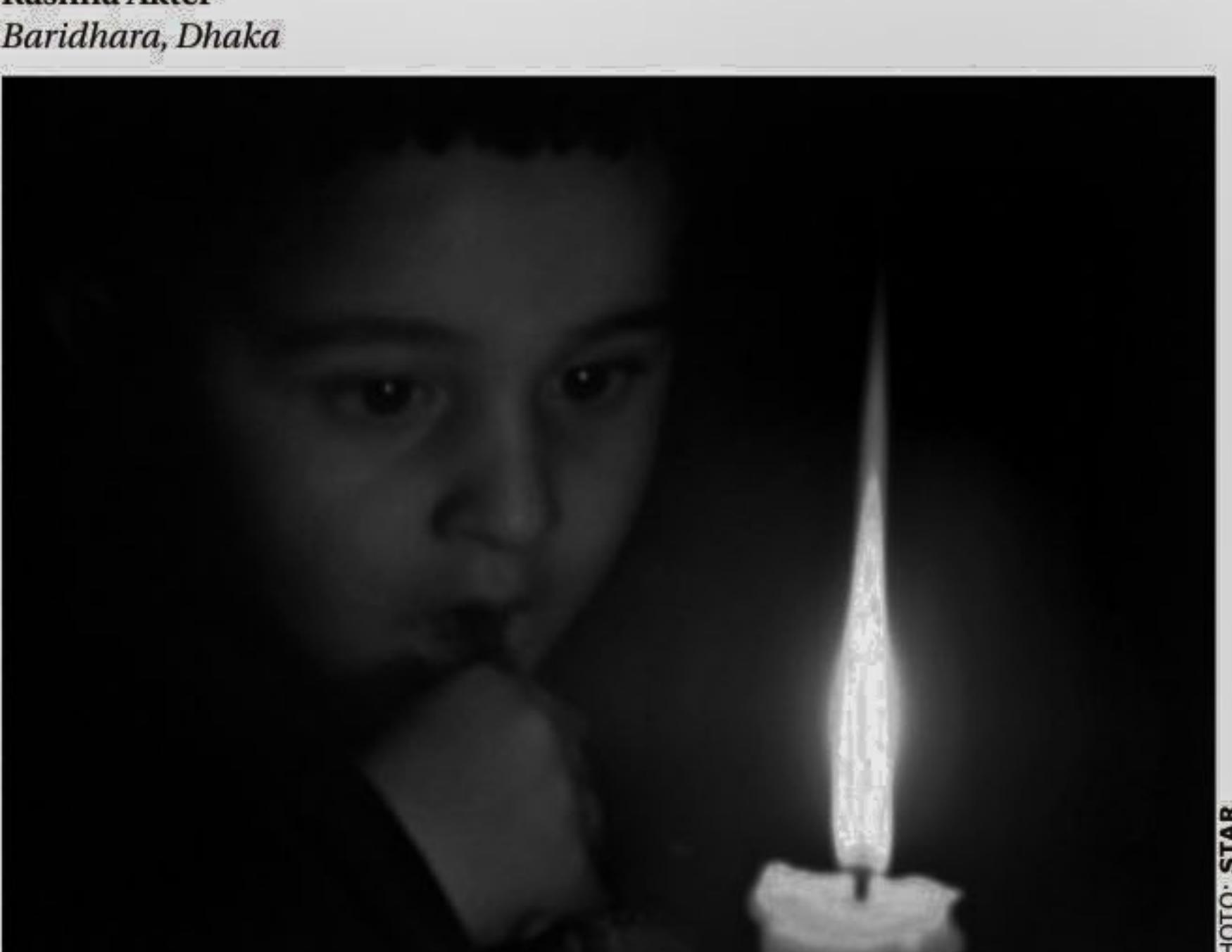
Last week I read a very interesting article in an English daily that gave a solution to many of the load-shedding problems we face several times daily. While its writer Sir Frank Peters did not attempt to address the alleviation of the load-shedding problem entirely, he did put forward an excellent suggestion all the same that would ease the burden and be beneficial to all if translated into action.

He wrote about the irritations everyone experiences when the power is cut. He referred to the erratic cuts as 'musical chairs' played by the electricity providers because no one knew when the power would be cut, and, that only deepens our frustration, anger and rage.

The solution he offered and which we entirely agree with, is to have set times for cutting off and restoring the power. This would eliminate much of the uncertainty, frustration and suffering.

No doubt 'forewarned is forearmed' and if we know when to expect the power cuts, we will be prepared. The policymakers should consider the recommendation which would cost nothing to put into practice, in order to remove the uncertainty and bring great relief to the entire nation. Why do we need to suffer unnecessarily? We pay our electricity bills on time and don't deserve such cruel punishment!

Rashna Akter
Baridhara, Dhaka



Will home minister accept the fact?

It seems that killers, muggers and all sorts of criminals are prowling everywhere; at any moment they may pounce upon you.

On April 6, 2012, a man lost his life at the hands of muggers in Mirpur when he tried to save three elderly women from being mugged. He was shot dead. It is reported that 16 hours earlier, criminals on motorcycles looted Tk 20 lakh from a real estate official at gun point. These are not isolated incidents, these are happening regularly.

We are living in constant fear; when our children go out we pray for their safe return; tension and anxiety have replaced the peace of mind.

We want to ask Home Minister Sahara Khatun, is this the law and order situation she is bragging about and declaring that the situation is better than ever before? She should have the courage to acknowledge the fact and the situation obtaining in the country.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

"First Responders" training programme

Going into the American Center auditorium I found myself to be quite dazzled by the number of volunteers who showed up. By 9:15 am Dr. Bernard started the training session. At times I felt I wasn't in any training. The doctors talked seamlessly and we listened. Who knew we were learning so much. After the theoretical aspects of accidents were discussed, we went for the practice session. It was amazing. I volunteered to lie down while the doctors showed others how to handle me if I had just undergone a terrible accident. Later, we tried CPR on the manikins which seemed quite easy but actually was extremely hard. The programme ended with Mr. Korvi introducing 'JAAGO' and 'Volunteer for Bangladesh' to the new volunteers present. With the number of accidents happening, I'm sure I will use my skills someday soon.

Mushfiqur Rahman Saad
Baridhara, Dhaka

Attack on religious minorities

From The Daily Star report of April 6, I came to know about the attack on minorities in Satkhira. It's really sorrowful to see that some people use religion to gain their heinous interests. During the last few months, there have been several events of attack on minorities throughout the country.

Many of the columnists are saying that these incidents have a strong link with the trial of war criminals. They opine that the criminals are doing these to lead the country to a chaotic situation so that they can stop the trial of war criminals. Some think these are the acts of the religious fanatics.

Whatever the case is, the situation would go from bad to worse if the government fails to control the situation. We the people of all religions, caste and creed want to live in peace together in Bangladesh.

Indrajit Kumar Das
Chittagong

"What Must Be Said"

Gunter Grass, the Nobel winning novelist of Germany, has broken the truth to the world that Israel, not Iran, is the threat to the world civilisation. He has exposed the western hypocrisy that keeps mum about Israel's nuclear stockpile but cry wolf on Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy. Gunter Grass has spent his last ink as if as a last minute confession of a dying man to relieve himself from the burden of concealing the truth. By protesting the injustice and double standard perpetrated by the western governments, Grass has raised his image on a par with other leading figures of freedom who stood like Himalaya against the onslaught of colonialism and injustice.

Grass through his poem "What Must Be Said" has displayed a sword against the falsehood. Long ago Joseph Conrad exposed the diabolical side of the western civilisation by his novella The Heart of Darkness. Now the question is how long will we remain sub-human by being submissive before the falsehood.



Wake up before it is too late. Take a decision in favour of justice and truth. Come out of the cocoon of darkness to light and freedom.
Abdus Subhan
Ishwardi Govt. College

Internet facility and its abuses

Information technology has developed much in recent years. Availability of internet service has also increased. It is helpful for keeping pace with the current world. We are now more connected with the outside world. But it cannot be denied that internet has some bad sides too.

The young generation is addicted to it. They are spending much time on the websites which are not always helpful. They are also visiting restricted sites. It is very difficult to prevent someone from visiting some sites by imposing rules and regulations. Religious teachings are needed in this case. The young generation should also get guidance from their family and friends. And parents should keep watching their children too.

Engr. Montasir Mamun
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B.Sc. in Civil Engineering (BUET)
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"...where is democracy?"

This was the question asked in the last line of Ahsan's enlightening essay on the subject, published in your editorial page on 11th April. It is indeed the million dollar question that baffles millions of people in Bangladesh.

There can be many answers to this pertinent question. However, expressing these in a lighter vein, one can put these in the following order arrayed alphabetically:

1. 'Autocracy'; of, for and by the party inner coterie, after coming to political power.
2. 'Bogeyocracy'; the usual format adopted in Bangladesh, where democracy is nothing but a bogey!
3. 'Democracy'; where demons are let loose in the country to do whatever they like at their whim and fancy!
4. 'Eliteocracy'; where the party and associated elites practice theoretical governance, without links to realities!
5. 'Foolocracy'; where the party in power tries to fool all of the people all of the time!

Finally, at the end comes 'Zapocracy' (from the verb 'zap'); which is practiced to destroy all norms of governance while the party elites 'make hay while the sun shines', usually for one term! In between there is also 'Hypocracy'; which is practiced in our format of democracy. The less said about it the better, as it has no end!

Vexed Bangali

Dhaka

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Saturday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Let him decide"

Shamim

This incident reveals the original face of our so-called top leaders. They do not love the country or the people but money.

Ekram

I think he is innocent but he is trapped.

Sazzad

Suranji should resign.

Fida Likhon

We are a poor country mainly because of corruption. People are waiting for justice to be done by the prime minister. If the PM fails to take impartial decision, she will have no right to criticise the sons of Khaleda Zia.

N.H

For the sake of impartial and unbiased investigation, it will be an appropriate decision on the part of Sengupta to step down. This will demonstrate his innocence and retain his dignity as a veteran political figure.

Let him have the courage to set an example in a country where politics has turned into a blame game counterproductive for the nation.

Anonymous

Suranji has proved that there is no honest politician in today's Bangladesh.

Sellma

The Awami League has decided to let him decide his own fate! This shows that the AL does not know what is right and what is wrong!

Anonymous

There should not be any engineering into the matter of Suranji Sengupta. We want the immediate formation of a judicial inquiry committee for investigating into the matter. Moreover, there should be a joint interrogation of the four: the driver, APS and the two railway officials in the microbus by concerned law enforcement authorities.

The BGB CC camera recording on that evening's incidence should be investigated. The HR commission could come forward to save the driver.

Salam

It is not the fault of Suranji Sengupta but the fault of the people who vote corrupt politicians to power. I hope no harm befalls the whistle-blower driver.

Naabaj

Minister Sengupta has lost his credibility. It's a shame. Dear minister, please resign for the sake of ethics and to retain some prestige of the ruling party.

Engr. Abdur Rahman

He is a veteran politician. I used to work in Sunamganj years ago and saw his popularity among the people of Jamalganj, Dherai, Shallah and neighbouring upazilas. If he doesn't have strong ethics, how did he become such a popular leader? There must be something behind the story.

James Rozario, Chicago

There are very few respected politicians in Bangladesh who have good image built over the years despite dirty political environment. Late Abdur Razzak, Rashed Khan Menon, Badruddoza Chowdhury, Matia Chowdhury, Hasanul Haq Inu, Suranji Sengupta are few of them.

If I had been in Sengupta's position, I would have resigned at that fateful night when the car was heading towards my door with bagful of illegal money. Please do not disappoint us anymore.

S Hossain

This resourceful country needs a new, educated leadership who will lead us to the path of peace and prosperity.

Mohammad Kafil Uddin

Apart from the railwaygate scandal, the nation now wants to know the source of the money spent to build the Sen Market. PM