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Police brutality on the primary schoolteachers



Last Thursday the law enforcers swooped on the non-government primary schoolteachers as they were staging a peaceful demonstration to press home their demands. They want their jobs to be nationalised. Unfortunately, the cops acted in a highhanded manner and resorted to baton charge-- a sheer display of brutal power. As reported in the newspapers, one of the teachers later succumbed to his injuries caused by the action of the police.

These ill-fated teachers are bearing the torch of education in the remote areas of this land for a pittance as their monthly salary. Their backs are pushed to the wall and they took to the streets as the last resort. But the cops treated them as if they were a bunch of hooligans.

The bigwigs of the education sector never get tired of talking about the importance of education and the dignity of the teaching profession. Is it all rhetoric or do they really care for the well-being of the teachers?

ZabedWali
On e-mail

Bangabandhu in Madame Tussauds

Recently while visiting the Madame Tussauds Museum in London, I felt that there should have been a figure of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of Bangladesh at the famous wax museum. I was disheartened not to see the person, who came up as the "Greatest Bengali of all times" in a poll conducted by BBC. Bangabandhu was put behind bars for years and after a long struggle, the great leader succeeded in liberating Bangladesh.

He along with most of his family members was assassinated while serving the country. Therefore, it is needless to say that Bangabandhu certainly has the stature to join the likes of Nelson Mandela, John F. Kennedy and other famous leaders at the Madame Tussauds.

There was a kiosk placed near the exit door of the museum that asked visitors for comments. I put Bangabandhu's name as the statue I would like to see when I visit Madame Tussauds the next time. I hope the Bangladesh High Commission in London would make a formal proposal to the museum authorities regarding this issue. I, like millions of Bangladeshis all over the world, wish to see a glimpse of Bangabandhu at the Madame Tussauds. I hope the museum authorities would honour this wish of ours.

Arafat A. Islam
Gulshan, Dhaka

Vandalising vehicles during hartal

Before and during every hartal, the pro-hartal activists vandalise

vehicles causing great harm to the passengers and owners of the vehicles. These vehicles do not belong to the rich class only. When they torch a vehicle, they put some family's future in great uncertainty, as most of these vehicles are bought with bank loans. Public transports are also vandalised during hartals. Why do they do this? Don't they have any common sense at all? The authorities must find out the culprits from the video footages and photographs and punish them severely so that they think twice before committing such crimes.

Badal Hasib
Dhanmondi
Dhaka



Missing Ilias Ali and some questions

This letter is in response to the letter published on 4th May under the same title. The writer mused on some unanswered questions although several analyses are prominent in the media. Understanding the reason behind his disappearance does not require perceptiveness like Sherlock Holmes. Barrister Rafiqul Haque termed the disappearance a well rehearsed drama of the government to conceal Suranjit's graft scandal. Intuitively, something required to be done that would avert everyone's attention from the railwaygate scandal.

Though he was a mid level leader, he was gaining popularity in Sylhet region for his persistence in opposing the land grabbing by India. After his abduction, the media got less scope to concentrate upon Suranjit's alleged scandal. Ilias' abduction followed by a series of hartals was the focus of the media. And the opposition's plea for caretaker government has also fallen into oblivion.

Undoubtedly, hartal is unacceptable. But again the question of credibility comes. How could two motorbike riders hurled cocktails aiming at the home ministry amid beefed-up security?

Again is it not aimed at diverting the fact that arsons before the hartal night might have been the work of some mysterious perpetrators and then accuse the opposition and suppress their agitation by throwing them behind the bars. Thus the disappearance enigma is getting more entangled.

Concerned Citizen

Nurses need training to give quality care

As a profession, nursing is a noble one. A nurse looks after the sick and wounded persons and thus performs one of the most important duties for the mankind. But our society looks down upon the nurses, and their services are not valued in Bangladesh. Here nurses are not well educated. But education is a must for all nurses. And there remains a huge gap between nursing education and nursing practices. Nurses must reduce this gap. If the nurses practice what they learn in the trainings, the quality of nursing will be improved.

If the student nurses receive better and quality clinical teaching, the patients will receive quality care from them. So, proper training should be provided to all nurses to get better services from them.

Md. Golam Kibria
Lecturer, B.Sc Nursing unit
International medical college

Protect public spaces

We wait with bated breath to discover whether the 'Wonderland' on Gulshan Avenue will turn into the 'wonderland' that we all need - a truly public field with all land-grabbing private enterprises firmly removed.

For some years in Lalmatia Block C, I saw what a public field could be. I lived one side of it and my school was the other so what with exercising myself and the street dog, I could observe with pleasure how young and old, rich and poor, enjoyed it for social and sporting activities. Numerous games of cricket could be watched and floodlighting meant that local youth could play football in the evening. We had our school sports day there. Older people, under instructions from heart doctors, exercised there vigorously early and late - much nicer than on their roofs!



Then all the gates were closed and locked and the degeneration of the field began. Protests resulted in the opening of one pedestrian gate. A local cricket club were said to have taken it over. A builder dumped some stuff there. The grass grew long and was not cut and had mice in it. After I had 'shifted' north, subsequent visits revealed that parts of the field were continuously flooded and almost no one was using it. It was shameful and depressing.

The efforts to re-establish land for public use are laudable but we will withhold our 'wonder' until good and honest people are appointed for the protection, care and maintenance of such a heritage on behalf of the whole population. Isn't that what public space is for?

Angela Robinson
Gulshan, Dhaka

Sooner the political dialogue, the better

Newspaper reports of 15 May suggest that the prime minister has finally realised the importance of dialogue between the major political parties for creating atmosphere for holding a free, fair and credible election in the country. This is an important change of her mind because she was always talking about constitutional changes and vehemently denying the caretaker government issue. I highly appreciate the prime minister for her understanding of what she should do for holding a free and fair election and also what steps she needs to take to avoid farther political unrest in the country. We thank her and urge all political parties to join hands, sit for a dialogue, and save democracy and the nation. The sooner, the better.

Shafiqul Islam

Deaths on road

Almost every day we have been watching horrid occurrences of road accidents. The situation has worsened much with time. The recurrence of accident has made us indifferent. People do not seem to bother nowadays about road accidents except for the victims' families.

Not a single day has passed for the last 10-15 years without the news of a road accident. Each accident is followed by tears and unending grievances. How many lives do we need to sacrifice to let the authorities begin to pay any attention?

The drivers' incompetence has been proved to be the most important reason behind these accidents. According to a minister, the only qualification for being a driver is to know the signals and difference between a cow and a goat! When the situation is like this, who would we blame -- the authorities or our fate? When will this nightmare end?

Khondoker Rezwan Tanvir
Department of Business Administration
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology
Sylhet



READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Sunday's *The Daily Star* news report headlined "Pabna journo's arm chopped"

Anonymous

The government considers journalists as their second opposition, as they try to point out corruption and wrongdoings of the government. Several members of the journalist community had to lose their lives because they criticised the government or the high-ups in their reports.

Roney

We condemn this attack on the journalist in strong terms. The government must ensure security of the journalists. The attackers must be brought to book immediately.

Concerned

What kind of a country has Bangladesh become? Is anybody safe here?

Shimul

Even at such time there are two factions among the news people? Shouldn't they be united at this time? And it is laughable that the Pabna journalist sought justice from Tuku. Is Tuku a friend of the journalists? I don't think so.

Dr. Farzina Zesmin

It is another bad example for a democratic country like Bangladesh where journalists are repeatedly humiliated and even murdered.

Rahim

This is very sad and unfortunate; we need to awake up immediately.

Nasirullah Mridha, USA

These types of incidents are increasing alarmingly. We vehemently condemn this attack and demand exemplary punishment of the culprits irrespective of their party affiliation.

Nazrul Islam

Now it seems we are under Tikka Khan's regime.

Abul, UK

The education minister should not take it lightly. By sacking the principal he can set at least one good example. We are surprised that no one from the teachers' mess came forward to protect the journalist. Have the teachers sided with the thugs? We are also shocked that so far no action was taken against the criminals who attacked other journalists. All these are leading the country to total anarchy.

A journalist

The government must ensure freedom of the press because it is a prerequisite of a democratic country. We urge the government to take immediate action against the assailants otherwise such type of incident will continue unabated.

Tonmoy

When the thugs of the ruling party always get away with impunity, crimes at large increase and lead the country to destruction.

Asif

This is not new in Bangladesh. Attack, humiliation, murder, and chopping of hands of journalists have happened before. But these are happening more often now. The media should raise their voice against the culprits and organise movements protesting such criminality thus pressurise the government to take punitive action against the perpetrators who attacked the Pabna journalist as well as others. Media's strong role can really make a change. If we want democracy to work in this country, freedom of

Undue remarks against Prof Yunus, Hillary

Hillary Clinton was an invited guest. Like everybody concerned about the political development of Bangladesh she made some suggestions to the Bangladesh government. But our finance minister made some arrogant comments which were insulting to the guest. He did not even hesitate to insult Prof. Yunus, the only Nobel laureate of Bangladesh. Adding insult to injury, the LGRD minister Syed Ashraful Islam questioned Yunus' competence and capability in getting the Nobel prize. He even criticised the Nobel prize committee for awarding Prof. Yunus with such a prize. According to the minister, such awards may even be obtained through manipulation. What a discovery by an immature minister of Hasina's government! We should be ashamed of such utterance. Both the ministers showed their arrogance by making such remarks which they should apologise for.

Dr. S. A. Miah
Lasalle, Quebec