

Safety of women at workplace



PHOTO: INTERNET

Doctors are dedicated to save our lives but who is going to save their lives? A few months ago, I was shocked to hear the news of tragic death of a female doctor, Eva. She was working at a BRAC clinic. Faysal, the caretaker of that clinic, tried to rape her. But failing to do so, he killed her.

There are many female doctors and other women who are working at different government and non-government organisations. Many of these women become victims of sexual harassment at their workplace by their male colleagues. But they remain silent. Thinking of the social stigma, they never dare to protest. The government is taking many steps to encourage women to participate in various development activities. I think, first of all, the government and the NGOs should ensure security of women at their workplaces. Otherwise, women's participation in socio-economic development activities will decrease day by day and in effect it will hinder the development of our country.

Abdur Rob, On e-mail

YouTube: Lost forever?

Government banned YouTube quite sometime back because of an anti-Islamic film. It is like cutting the head off to cure headache. This Internet site has lots of information which are very useful for people of all walks of life. For me it was the only source of music which cannot be accessed from anywhere else. YouTube gave me the privilege of listening to Abdul Karim Khan, Bare Ghulam Ali Khan, K.L. Saigol, Kanan Devi, Juthika Roy, Kamala Jharya and Pankaj Mullick of the long lost times. I could also enjoy the incomparable gazals of Mehdi Hasan, Ghulam Ali, Jagjit Singh and Bangla songs of Jaganmoy Mitra, Dhananjay Bhattacharya, Hemanta Mukherjee, etc., just sitting in front of my PC. Alas! It appears those days of heavenly bliss for me are gone forever. Will the government have mercy on people like me and not deprive them of this innocent pleasure?

Shahjahan Hafiz
Gulshan, Dhaka

Orwell's warning about nationalism

I am a Canadian of South Asian descent, who was living in Canada during 9/11. In those uncertain and terrifying post-9/11 days, my family and I were constantly on edge and felt we had to prove our loyalty and patriotism - even in Canada. It was truly a climate of 'you are with us or against us' and there was no grey area in between, no space for opposing viewpoints. I feel the same sentiments today when I look at what is happening in Bangladesh. George Orwell described patriotism as the "devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force on other people." Conversely, he described nationalism as the feeling that your way of life, country, or ethnic group is superior to others and warned this feeling can lead a group to impose their way of life on others. That is something worth pondering over, whatever one's political affiliations.

Amy Damon, On e-mail

Making Spelling Bee more popular



PHOTO: STAR

I enjoyed the Spelling Bee contest arranged jointly by The Daily Star and Channel-i held at Comilla Zilla School on 16th February, 2013. A large number of students from different schools of Comilla city took part in the competition with spontaneity and merriment. I, being spell-bound, remained with the spellers as long as the programme continued. The participants, the guardians and the teachers were joyous and cheerful being present at the programme. The arrangement was so nice and flawless that we found no breach of discipline anywhere. The organisers left no stone unturned to make the programme a success.

Actually, Spelling Bee contest is a very creative and innovative programme for which the authorities concerned deserve thanks. It has created much enthusiasm among the students. I know how much exhilarated my students were when they heard the contest would be held at our city. We called a lot of students and chose a required number for the programme. Some of our students are playing the online game also.

To make the Spelling Bee contest more popular, its scope should be expanded by holding programmes even at the upazila level. My other suggestion is: select the best spellers. The competitors should be asked at least three questions successively instead of only one in the first round.

Md. Abdur Rahim
Asst. teacher
Nawab Faizunnesa Govt. Girls' High School, Comilla

No advice, please

After dillydallying for long, BNP's reaction to the ongoing demonstration at Shahbag has really frustrated the nation. Instead of expressing solidarity, they literally gave some 'advice' to the protesters. It is really surprising. We the youths of Bangladesh know it far better than BNP that our motherland is beset with many problems of different magnitude. And we also promise to take our country to a bright future together, irrespective of class, race or religion. Mentioning some sensitive issues like border killing, they are trying in vain to divert the attention of the youths. We are protesting the killing of three million people of our motherland and one day we certainly will protest against border killing and all other political killings committed since 1975. We will surely remain vigilant against corruption and hypocrisy. But for God's sake, for now, either support or just keep listening to the roar of Shahbag. But no advice, please.

Indrajit Kumar Das
Pathorghata, Chittagong

War cannot solve anything

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 in an attempt to prop up a communist regime beset by civil war. Afghan rebels fought the Soviets to a standstill, wearing them out much in the same way that Vietnamese forces wore out U.S. forces in Vietnam. More than 2 million Afghans were left dead in a war that ultimately saw the ouster from power of the communists, though war continues in Afghanistan to this day.

After more than 33 years of war and chaos, Afghanistan is really a mess. Despite all the American aid and promises to rebuild the country, it's a wreck. America is trying to remake the world in its own image with its own form of government, but different peoples and nations simply need different forms of government. War is rarely necessary and never glorious. That's one thing Americans should have learned from their experiences in Vietnam, and from seeing the daily horror and carnage of that war televised in their living rooms every night.

What a sad litany of carnage, killing, destruction and woe! Such is the history of the supposedly "enlightened" 20th century!

Ted Rudow III, MA
Encina Ave
Palo Alto, CA



PHOTO: AFP

All killers should be punished

Top Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Quader Mollah was sentenced to life imprisonment instead of capital punishment for committing crime against humanity during the Liberation War. People have become outraged and demonstrating at Shahbag intersection for the last two weeks demanding capital punishment for him and other war criminals as well. A killer must be punished, whether he kills one person, or many.

We laud the younger generation for becoming vocal on the lenient punishment awarded to Quader Mollah. It is heartening to see people becoming united to protest against the unjust decision. We saw in the language movement of 1952 and in the Liberation War of 1971 how victory was achieved by the united movement of the people.

But people should also protest the pardoning of 22 murderers, who were sentenced to death, by the president. They should demand punishment of those who killed Bishwajit Das; demand death sentence for the rapists; demand arrest of the murderers of Sagar-Runi; demand arrest of the kidnappers who kill for money; and ask the government to rescue people who have disappeared mysteriously in the last couple of years.

The Padma Bridge scam is another issue. The young generation must raise the question of why Syed Abul Hossain has become more important than the bridge that the people have been dreaming of.

Nur Jahan
Chittagong

Youth of Bangladesh will win

The Shahbagh movement is an inspiration for the freedom loving people. Religion must be one's personal matter and should not be linked with politics, and definitely not with politics of hate and chauvinism. Parties like Jamaat should be banned in any society.

It's really inspiring to see Bangladeshi youth showing courage, common sense and decency in the movement at Shahbagh and other places. It would be good if Jamaat is banned. And, no doubt, Bangladesh's future will be better without them. Surely, the brave youth of Bangladesh will win!

Gopal
Mumbai, India



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

READERS respond

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Focus shifts now to SC"

Sengupta, Canada

The Supreme Court has given many historic verdicts. Hope our nation's hopes and aspirations will be reflected in the upcoming judgment of the war criminals.

Iftekhar Hassan

Awami League and BNP love rubber stamp parliament and other institutions to achieve their political objectives. The whole International Crimes Tribunal issue is the prime example of it.

Asad Zaman

Now the law is ready and the government just needs to appeal for the death penalty. I still wonder what were the factors that led to such lenient punishment to Quader Mollah.

Barkat

One thing is sure that war crimes trial is a trump card for the extremely corrupt AL government. AL will delay and play with the war crimes issue when it needs to divert people's attention from its failures and corruption. The Shahbagh protesters should demand a timeframe for the judgment. Otherwise AL will drag this war crimes issue till the next general election.

Here are some comments that came in response to Tuesday's The Daily Star news report headlined "Hartal for war criminals fails"

A concerned observer

Before further killings of innocent people, the government must take steps with full confidence to foil the conspiracy of Jamaat-Shibir cadres for now and forever.

Sohul Ahmed

It is good news that the so-called hartal failed. Hopefully, our next generation will defy all hartals for the benefit of the country.

Kazi Salim

Congratulations to the courageous and patriotic people of Bangladesh for totally ignoring the so-called hartal called by the anti-Liberation and anti-state Razakars and Pak collaborators of 1971 genocide.

Truth Teller

Let us defy all hartals called by all political parties -- be it Jamaat, BNP, or Awami League. They have the right to call hartals, but they do not have the right to disrupt our everyday life. We, the people, have the right to defy hartals and live a normal life. That right has been given to us by the constitution and no one can or should try to take it away.

Rehnuma

People will always win. Yesterday's mass defiance to the hartal proves it again. Parties like Jamaat (who has committed genocide in our land) have no right to do politics in Bangladesh, let alone doing activities like hartal. All the Jamaat activists should keep it in their minds.

A reader

Jamaat-Shibir men have crossed all the limits. They killed many people in the last few months and attacked our police on several occasions. This fascist party does not care about people's life. From 1971 till now they have been carrying out their atrocious activities in the name of Islam. This party should be banned immediately in Bangladesh. I thank all for defying their hartal and doing regular activities on the hartal day. I believe, people will win against this anti-Liberation force.

Anonymous

Let us defy all hartals whoever calls it. Hartal causes huge economic loss. It hampers the country's development.