

| SEXUAL HARASSMENT |

The recent Pahela Baisakh incident has left everyone angry, disgusted, upset, shocked, and scared. The question arises - will our law enforcing authorities consider this as yet another isolated incident of sexual harassment and forget about it? Let's remember a few similar incidents from the past, that the authorities had decided to ignore and forget.

One remembers the horrific incident from the night of December 31, 1999 - when Badhan was molested on the Dhaka University campus. Badhan recorded a criminal case against the perpetrators- Tutul, Chandan and Rassel. In the verdict, the court observed that the prosecution could not prove the charges against the accused beyond reasonable doubt, despite national dailies publishing photographs of the incident the very next day.

AS LONG AS MEN KNOW THEY WILL GET AWAY WITH PLAYING THIS TOUCH AND RUN GAME IN BROAD DAYLIGHT IN FRONT OF THOUSANDS, THERE WILL BE NO END TO THESE INCIDENTS.

Yet another case that made headlines was that of Farzana Akter who was molested by police officials inside the Police Club at the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court premises back in May 2012.

The victim's mother was finally allowed to file a case against five people including two police officials for sexually harassing her daughter. However, nothing happened. The case is still trapped in another sloth investigation process.

"The investigation is still going on. In fact the CID is now looking

into this matter," comments Advocate Nina Goswami. "But the problem is that whenever this kind of incident occurs, the people who are in charge of the investigation inevitably tend to hide and deny information making it easy for the perpetrators to walk free."

What entitles men to act so heinously is a wholly different story. However, as long as they know they will get away with playing this touch and run game in broad daylight in front of thousands, there will be no end to these incidents.

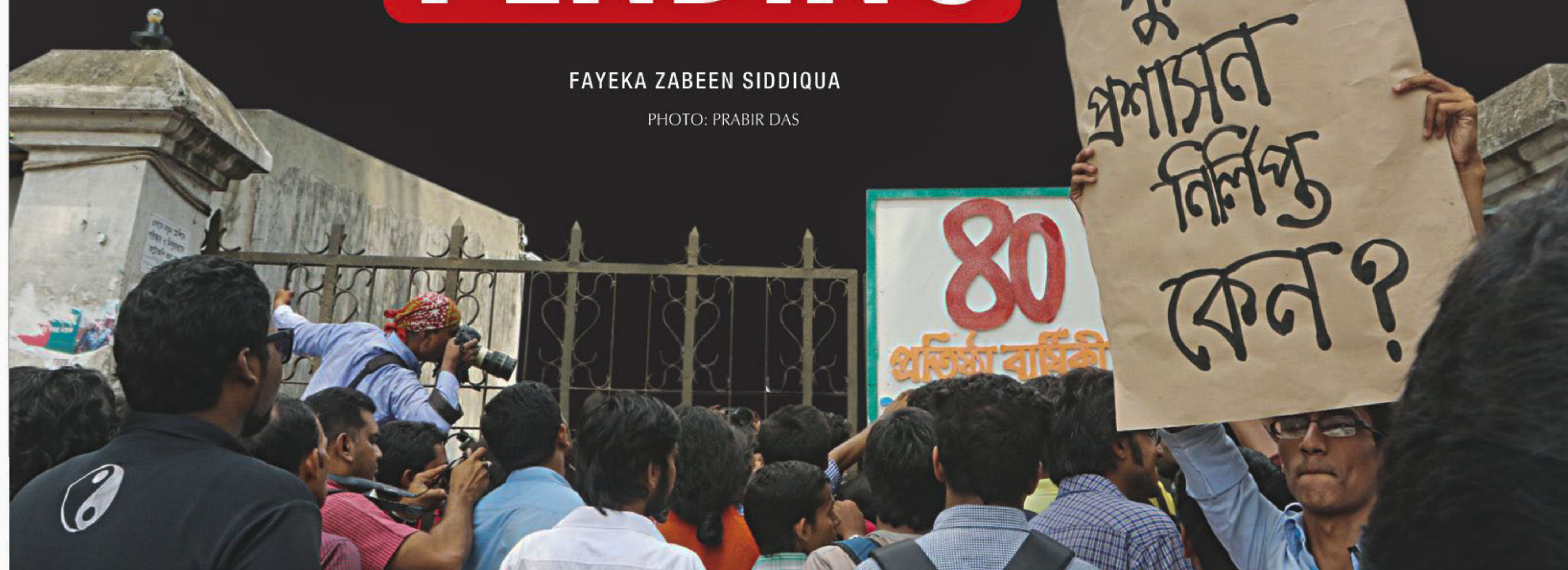
Four days after the Pahela Baisakh incident, the police finally admitted 'something happening' in the Dhaka University area.

One wonders how long it will take to punish the perpetrators - another four months or four years?

JUSTICE PENDING

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



| ART |



FINDING YOUR VOICE

NAZIBA BASHER

and issues that they want to talk about, get people to continue the conversation about these

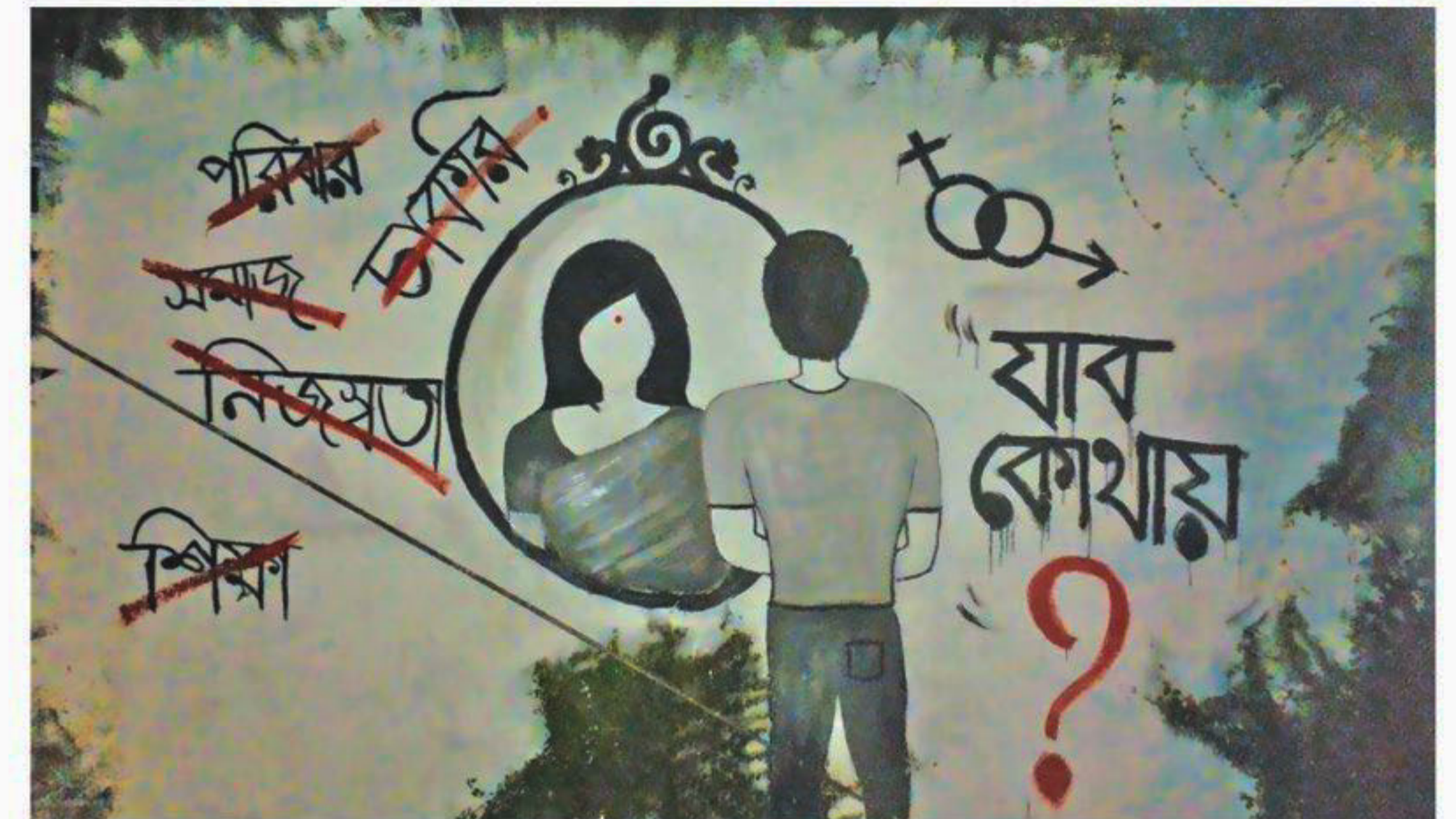
issues, even after the artists are gone, and to inspire a few 'Voiceless Bangladeshis' to start their own conversation through Wall Murals that tell their story.

"I have realised that university students learn more by doing," says Naima Alam. "That's why when I had to design a curriculum for my 'Introduction to Public Relations (PR) Course' I decided to take a project based learning approach.". Each semester, students plan a social awareness campaign and the final message is shared with the audience in the form of an elaborate wall mural.

Every day, students realise how much of the world is out of their control and they are constantly looking for a platform to speak out, raise their issue, and leave their mark. "So the VB project is a platform for the students to create awareness campaigns and leave their mark," says Naima. The project was inspired by graffiti artists like Banksy, who have been using walls to question our ideals and belief systems, and by 'The Ugly Indian' project, where a community gets together to clean up their city one street at a time. ■

Voiceless Bangladesh (VB) is a project initiated by Naima Alam, lecturer, Media Studies and Journalism Department in ULAB (University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh), to teach her students Public Relations in a rather unique way, working with social issues.

The objective of the project is to get students to learn to develop a social awareness campaign using a real project



| NUMBERS |

61.2

According to a study conducted by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, about 500 women get raped in a month in Bangladesh.

The United Nations Multi-country Study on Men and Violence asked men in rural and urban Bangladesh if they had forced a woman to have sex at any point in their lives. 14.1 percent of men in rural Bangladesh and 9.5 percent of men in urban Bangladesh said yes (10 percent averaged). 61.2 percent of urban Bangladeshi men who had raped did not feel guilty or worried afterwards, and 95.1 percent experienced no legal consequences. 3.7 percent of men in rural Bangladesh had raped another man. 89.2 percent of urban Bangladeshi men answered 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the statement 'if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape.'

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSSIN AGAZ APURBO



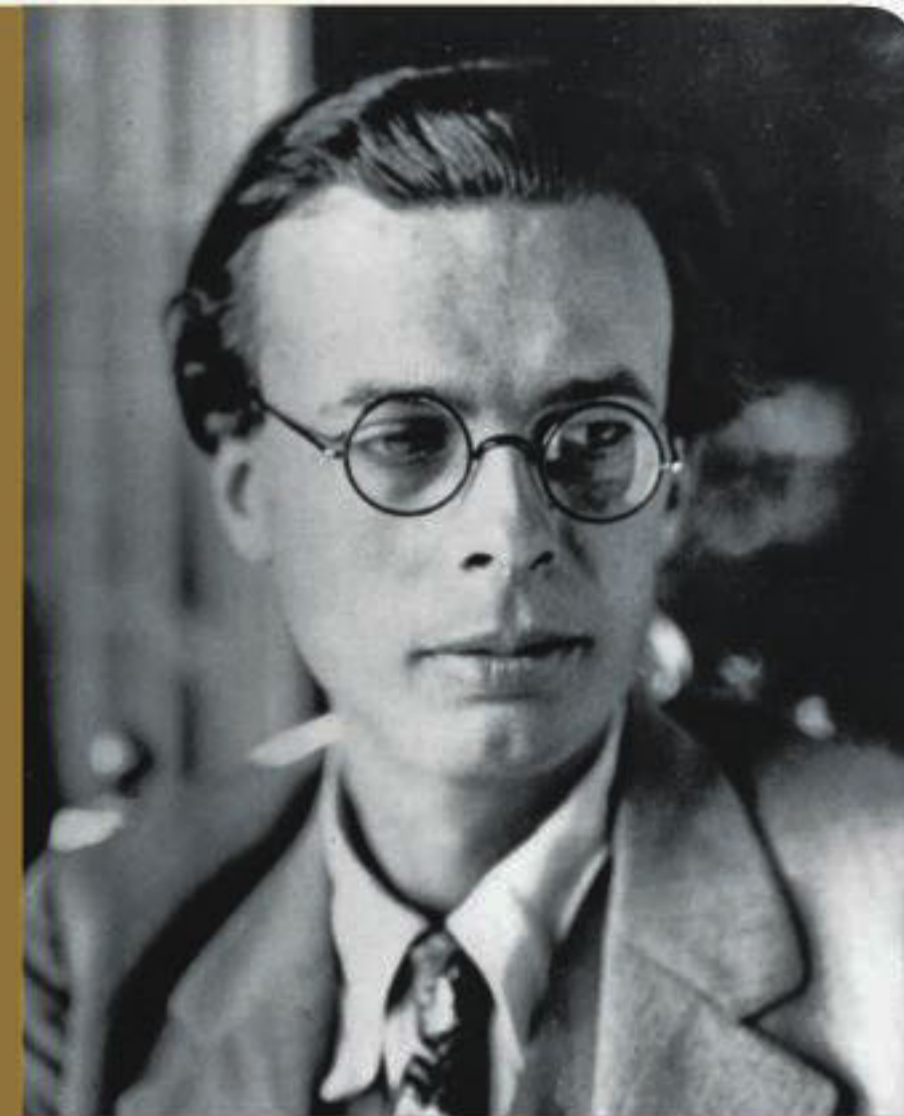
PEARLS OF WISDOM



"The emerging woman will be strong-minded, strong-hearted, strong-souled, and strong-bodied. Strength and beauty must go together."
— LOUISA MAY ALCOTT



"I am not ashamed to dress like a woman because its not shameful to be a woman".
—IGGY POP



"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored."
— ALDOUS HUXLEY