

A few years ago, popular actor Mosharraf Karim played the role of a transgender, also known as 'Hijra', in a Television drama called 'Chaiya Chaiya'. It great received response from the audience. The drama depicts how a transgender can infuriate a person and can force anyone to achieve what they want. It is a satirical drama but portrays the popular image of a 'Hijra' as an extortionist, fear proliferating, troublesome being.

Just like the TV drama, the society portrays them as intruders. We treat them as the invaders who attempt to disturb the

LIVING IN DENIAL

ANANTA YUSUF
PHOTOS: AMRAN HOSSAIN



poetics of space of masculine and feminine. Since the conservatives believe the two major actors of society are male and female, thus the third gender becomes alienated. In other words, they are kind of a 'mistake of nature'. So they are not socially accepted, thus have no right to stay with males and females in the same society.

They are seizing the street, city, nation and world, which is made only for these two exclusive genders and threatening their social security, real or imagined. And for that reason, people living in this society narrated the Transgender as a threat to their social and civilised being, a vicious threat to human nobility. Transgender or Hijras thereafter cannot work as a normal human beings, cannot walk on the street, and socially have no right to ask for a decent job.

However the situation is; history tells us a different narrative. Some of them were royal guards, heroic soldier, politician and courtiers in Mughal Darbar. Researchers believe that with the decline of Mughal Empire, the third gender lost its social position. Slowly from a respected social


hierarchy, transgender degenerated to a neglected and scary social creature.

The contemporary social contract between citizens and the state provides them the right for decent living, job, and security. But the life transgender people are living, is still way beyond minimum dignity. Bangladesh in November, 2013 officially recognised the Hijras or transgender as a separate gender. This is a historic decision that allows Hijra's to add their gender information in the passport and can be enlisted as voters. And of course, it will help them to gain rights as a citizen of the country.

Article 27 of our constitution reads that all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law. Article 28(1) further provides that the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Now the fight is against social stigmatisation of the transgendered, public reception of the third gender and understanding their behavioral patterns. And it needs to involve social institution, willingness of individual and societies to change their collective negative judgment. ■

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STARDIARY

CIARÁN HINDS

9 February 1953



Ciarán Hinds is a Northern Irish film, television and stage actor. He has built a reputation as a versatile character actor appearing in such high-profile films as Road to Perdition, The Phantom of the Opera, Munich, There Will Be Blood, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2, The Woman in Black, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy. As a stage actor, Hinds has enjoyed spells with the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre in London and six seasons with Glasgow Citizens' Theatre. Adding to his New York Broadway theatre performances, Hinds starred in a production of Tennessee Williams' Cat on a Hot Tin Roof as Big Daddy in early 2013.



SKETCH: YARIZ SIDDIQUI

“ I DON'T USE THE WORD 'ARTISTS' LIGHTLY.

I COME FROM THEATRE AND I ALWAYS GO BACK EVERY COUPLE OF YEARS.

GRIEF IS EXHAUSTING.”

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA AND BRAINY QUOTES

LOST AND FOUND



Last week I went to pick up my grocery from a supershop. Suddenly I found my mobile phone missing from my pocket. I turned back immediately and saw a shop attendant calling me over with a phone in his hand. He handed over the phone to me, saying that I left it on a counter. The supershop was packed with lots of customers and I never thought of getting it back. I could not believe my luck and could not find the words to thank him. I wanted to reward him with a hefty tip, but he smiled and left as soon as he handed over the phone to me. As I was finishing my shopping, I saw with my own eyes how hard they have to work to earn a living. In a world filled with people who are ready to rip us off, this young man's integrity touched me.

Mubarak Ali
Mohammadpur, Dhaka



PHOTO: KAZI TAHNIN AGAZ APURBO

DON'T KEEP IT TO YOURSELF

I was never a thin and slim child. Growing up, I was always a few pounds heavier than my friends. My size and my habit of being silent made me an easy target for bullies in my school days. I was scared of going to school because of the bullies yet never told anyone thinking nothing would change. I had to pass sleepless nights of self-loathing and starved myself for countless days, ignoring the regular hunger that everyone feels. But this kind of self-harm never helped me overcome the situation. Body image was never an important thing in my life, but being bullied for it definitely was. Now as I look back at my schooldays, I wonder why I haven't ever shared my experience with my family and teachers. There is no shame in discussing your problems with your loved ones, your life will be so much better if you can share your worries with someone you can trust.

Faija Rubaiyat
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