

Is Donald Trump bad for the environment?

PROMA GULSHAN

Donald Trump's presidency is going to be a game-changer for the world. The impacts that it will have on major world issues such as terrorism, racism and global finance have been extensively discussed in the public sphere. Trump has claimed that he will make America "great again" by applying the same principles that have made him a business tycoon. Many of Trump's supporters believe that his methods will make all Americans richer and more successful like Trump himself. However, environmentalists are not impressed by this rhetoric. Businessmen are generally known to only think in terms of profit and loss. From this perspective, the environment can be degraded as long as it is profitable to do so. The US needs a responsible leader who will make the planet more sustainable by taking into account the needs of future generations; however, their new President is just another powerful businessman who could not care less about the environment.

Throughout the presidential campaign, Trump had made fantastical remarks about serious issues and proposed radical policies for dealing with them. His solution for terrorism was to ban Muslims from entering the United States while his way of reducing abortions was to punish the doctors who performed them. His stances on the environment are no exception. He has made it clear that he thinks that global warming is a hoax. It is not unusual for Trump to make claims without feeling the need to back them up with any kind of fact or logic. He simply chooses to ignore the large body of scientific evidence that suggests the need for drastic measures for combatting climate change. Human induced climate change is now a fact recognised not only by scientists but also the majority of world leaders as evidenced by their participation in the



growth in order to preserve the environment for future generations. Doing so is not easy for any politician because politicians require their popularity in present times. They do not gain popularity or success by making sacrifices for the future. This is why environmental sustainability requires responsible leadership. A leader who is egocentric and popularity-centered will not understand the importance of making sacrifices in the present in order to create a better future.

Scientists say that human-induced climate change has already begun, and the best that the COP21 deal can do is limit the rise in temperature. Sea level rise due to global warming is already happening. The effects of global warming on melting ice caps and subsequent sea level rise increase exponentially with each degree of rise in global temperature. The aim of the COP21 is to limit the rise in temperature as much as possible so that the environment is damaged as little as possible. If major countries such as the US do not follow through on the deal, there may be an irreversible climate catastrophe which will have yet unprecedented effects on human society.

While the future does look grim, all hope should not be lost. Environmental activists have been able to prevent politicians from making harmful deals in the past and they still hold quite a lot of power. There are many powerful figures around the globe who support action on climate change including the Pope, the Queen and many artists and celebrities. As President Obama has recently commented on the Trump presidency, "Reality has a way of asserting itself". Despite Trump's claims during his campaign, it is possible that he will act in a responsible way under the right kinds of pressure.

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recent COP21. COP21 is an environmental agreement between 195 countries that was made in December 2015 in Paris. The aim of this agreement is to limit global warming by switching from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy over the next 50 years. Even though this deal has legal aspects, it cannot be enforced on any country that wants to break away. This is especially true with a powerful country such as the US, which can afford to affront others without suffering major consequences. Republicans

in general do not approve of cutting carbon emissions. Therefore, the future of the deal would be grim if any Republican was elected president, not just Donald Trump. However, even a Republican President with integrity would respect a deal signed by a previous president of the United States. Trump has made it clear that he wishes to renege on the deal signed by President Obama.

Trump may not be able to pull out from the deal completely, as a four year binding commitment has been made, but

he can slow down the much needed progress. This would be the best case scenario. The worst case scenario is that the COP21 agreement would break down completely because of the US' lack of support. The US is the second largest user of fossil fuels after China. Their backing out of the pact would not only make a big difference by itself but it might also encourage other important countries such as India and China to do the same. All countries that signed the deal will have to sacrifice some of their present economic

The ignorant educated

NARMIN TARTILA BANU

A few days ago I was in conversation with a medical team in Shonnyashir Char at Gaibandha, serving the poverty stricken locals. The humanitarian team informed me about the struggle they had faced in their initial years concerning the provision of medical care to women. Despite diagnosis and treatment being free of cost, women were sometimes prohibited from availing these services. The reasons were varied. But mostly there was a perception that women are of no value, so why bother waste a 10km trek to the hospital for her? 'She'll get well if we ignore the symptom. Nothing's wrong with her'.

The finding was saddening, but not surprising, given that the team was dealing with mostly uneducated people, unaware of rights and wrongs. And perhaps the silver lining was the fact that these attitudes are slowly changing in rural areas, thanks to various NGOs and private sector investors who are dedicatedly creating awareness on the importance of good living. People convene at counselling sessions and amongst educational programmes on health; they are also exposed to social messages concerning health risks from early marriages, complimented with appeals to be humane and to treat daughters and daughters-in-law the same way.

It's worth musing that people coming in droves to attend such programmes, would take the message to heart. While not all would act accordingly, some might, while others would be coerced to conform to a certain extent due to social pressure. And that little change might mean prevention of a handful of child marriages, and perhaps a few incidents of domestic violence as well. No incremental gain is too small!

Now this is a chapter on the most rural of populations, those who are still grappling in the bottom rungs of Maslow's need hierarchy, concerned mostly about the most basic of needs. They travel a dozen kilometres on foot to attain medical care free of cost. When they borrow a seemingly insignificant amount of Tk. 300, they are not sure whether they will be able to pay that back. They don't know if their house will be standing if the next monsoon hits them with vengeance. They eat a bowl of rice if lucky, and fall asleep soon afterwards, as the moonbeams wash over the char.

Now let's fast forward and enter the happening world of urbanites where life doesn't stop till the middle of the night. Complaints about horrible traffic slowing life down are rampant. People worry about dust settling over and discolouring their designer shoes. Exorbitant medical care costs and apathetic doctors drive people to foreign countries. In between doctors' appointments in shopping destinations, they indulge in making purchases to flaunt in elite restaurants back home, which they frequent in chauffeur-driven cars, which get stranded in traffic, and oh my goodness, could someone please do something about the terrible traffic!

Yes, life happens on a jet plane here as people, with roots in villages not unlike the one portrayed above, adopt western habits and adapt themselves at an incredible pace. Unfortunately, however, on this extraordinary journey of metamorphosis, while a fragment of their mindset evolves, the rest lags behind, travelling at a leisurely pace on an ox cart.

As an educator, I have had the opportunity to come across a few hundred unique individuals every year. Through them, I get an insight into typical households of many

families who dwell in the same city as I do, and probably subscribe to the same lifestyle as myself. Sadly, however, what I also see through their armour of education, western exposure, and modernism is that antiquated mindset smugly smirking away from atop the ox cart.

Some of the brightest young women I have come across have expressed their frustration involving

under the conditions that she arrived home before he does every day. Married young women speak about in-laws intentionally hampering their education schedule, treating them like household help, and going so far as to even physically abusing them. "Perhaps she is not as educated as you", I had once volunteered to comfort a weeping student whose mother-in-law had intentionally

generation and continues to persist even today. Women, "products created for the amusement of men" – hard to believe, but I heard this from a PhD holder – should continue to be so. And if I am the 'alpha woman' of my clan (family, in the 'modern' concept), then I will continue to subject her to do my bidding, or so dictates the mindset.

We, the educators, continue to

or not we were enrolled in their courses. Call this old-school, but I will defend this attitude as being courteous towards guardians away from home. A typical student today, in contrast, displays far more freedom in their demeanour which sometimes verges on rudeness.

And it's not their fault. The jet plane we are on has played a crucial role in breaking the barrier between the mentor and mentee, and that is, to a large extent, a good thing. There is more knowledge transfer, richer discussions, newer perspectives and better dynamics. But this education is remaining limited within an academic boundary. And that's where the problem is. By containing the education within an academic setting, we are educating students without really educating them (must I define the difference?). The misdemeanour is a symptom which in a few years is likely to culminate to, amongst other things, violence against household members.

As educators, we can help bring about a change. The monstrous women and men, hidden behind their accomplished degrees and happening social lives, will not stoop down from the upper rungs of Maslow's need hierarchy, to show up for any counselling session, unlike their rural counterparts. But as educators, we have access to a plenitude of youth. Side by side with the academic curricula, an extent of coaching, guidance, art of goodness, good living and empathy, could perhaps decrease the creation of dangerous alphas, hiding in broad daylight. The process will be excruciatingly slow. But it must start. Today.

The writer is a faculty member at the School of Business and Economics, North South University.



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ILLUSTRATION: DANIEL STOLLE

the journey to find a perfect groom. Well-settled with a Wall Street job, one 'gentleman' expressly told a particular young lady with a Bachelor's degree that she would under no circumstance be allowed to work after marriage. An NRB with a law degree from the United Kingdom, declared that the bride-to-be would be allowed to work only

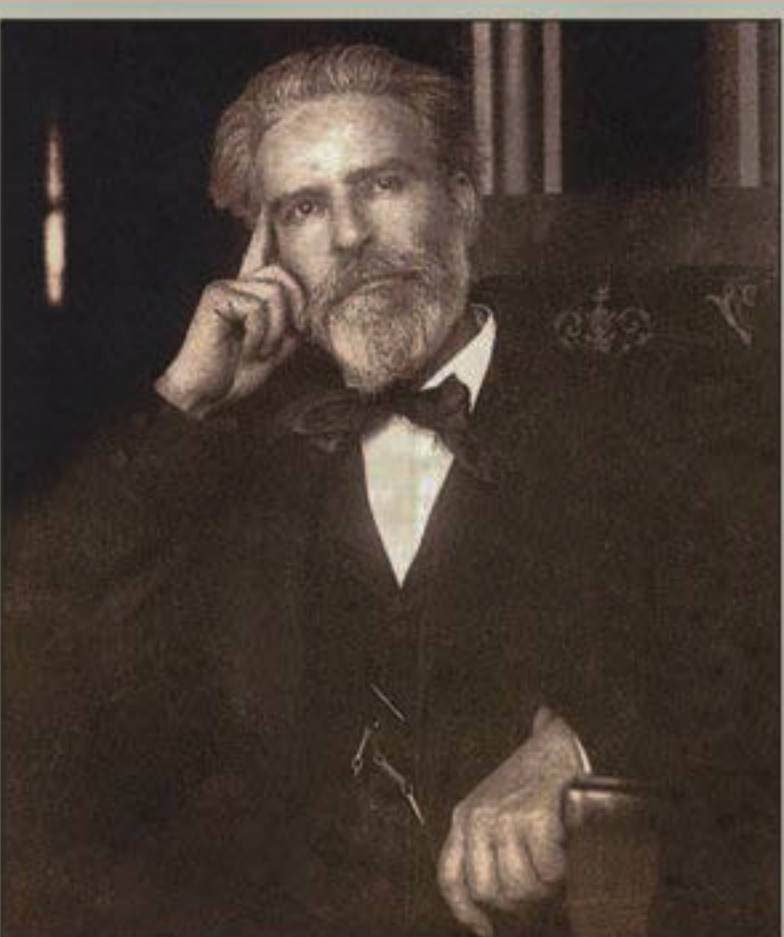
knocked over scalding tea over her wrist. "Miss, she has a Masters in Chemistry", she said, as I stared, appalled!

So what is it really? It's definitely not the lack of education or academics bothering them. What is?

I'm no anthropologist, but I can state that the archaic mindset of cavemen sailed through every

educate and take pride in creating a generation of nation builders. But what are we teaching really? A common topic of discussion amongst my co-workers is the paradigm shift in attitude that students have undergone. Fifteen years ago, as undergrads in a public institution, we hastened to collect ourselves in the presence of faculty members, whether

QUOTABLE Quote



EDWIN MARKHAM

In vain we build the city if we do not first build the man.

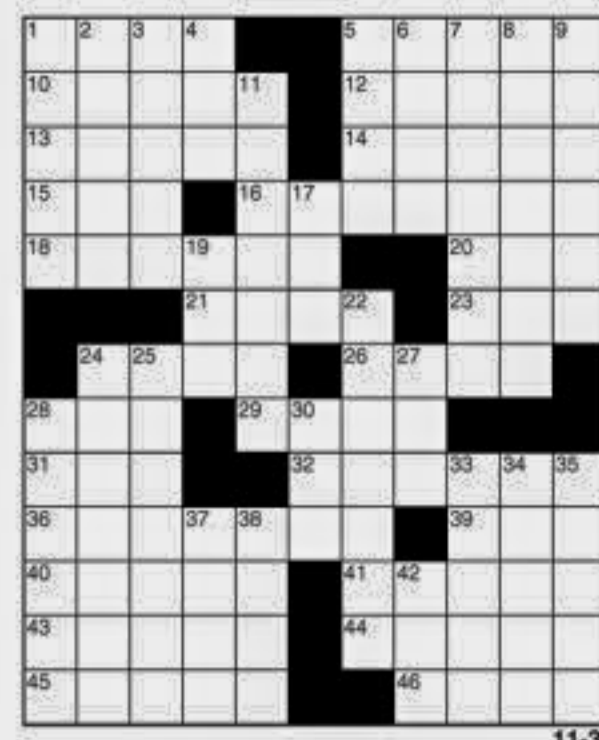
CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

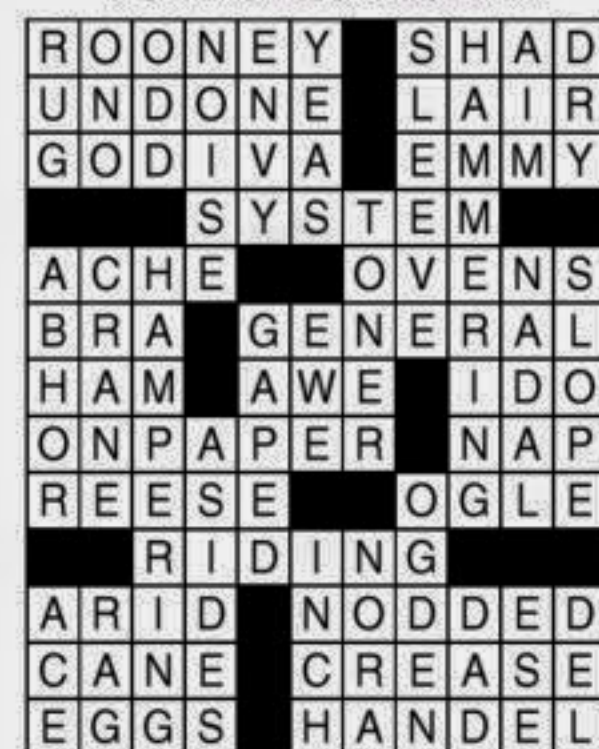
- 1 Phone downloads
- 5 Loses weight
- 10 Pulsate
- 12 Basic belief
- 13 Noted trailblazer
- 14 Geometry measure
- 15 -- loss (baffled)
- 18 Soup choice
- 20 Brouhaha
- 21 Marsh hopper
- 23 Badge makeup
- 24 Partner
- 26 Guinness of film
- 28 Sulky state
- 29 Stunned state
- 31 Court worker: Abbr.
- 32 Soup choice
- 36 Soup choice
- 39 Cider girl of song
- 40 Malia's sister
- 41 Many a time
- 43 Like bar beer
- 44 Light lunch
- 45 Comfy spots
- 46 Thomas Hardy heroine

DOWN

- 1 Ready to hit
- 2 Snap
- 3 Tourney type
- 4 Abel, to Adam
- 5 Antlered animal
- 6 Give for a time
- 7 Thankless person
- 8 Tuneful
- 9 Squelch
- 11 Blushing
- 17 Sticky gunk
- 19 Toward the stem
- 22 Garden pavilions
- 24 Flammable gas
- 25 Certifies
- 27 Writer Deighton
- 28 Relay
- 30 As done by
- 33 Noble's pride
- 34 Think tank output
- 35 Touches down
- 37 Discussion
- 38 Emulates Drake
- 42 Diet no-no



YESTERDAY'S ANSWER



BEETLE BAILEY

by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES

by Kirkman & Scott

