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*In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways, and they're still beautiful.*

– Alice Walker

**SNAPSHOT**  
BY NAZMUL SHANJI

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## Threat to the migratory birds' sanctuary

It is alarming that the authorities of Jahangirnagar University (JU) have decided to carry out development work on the campus without properly addressing the migratory birds' sanctuary in the surrounding area.

JU is recognised as the only residential university of Bangladesh which has a large number of waterbodies, providing a safe sanctuary for the birds. For this, JU is at times called a haven for the migratory birds. During winter, hundreds of thousands of migratory birds, in search of food and to escape the unbearable cold of the northern countries of the globe, flock to Bangladesh. Around 15 species of migratory birds come to JU every year because of its ideal climate and abundance of fresh water and food.

Needless to say, migration involves a perilous

journey in which they have to overcome a wide range of threats, often posed by human activities. Every journey is fraught with the possibility of being trapped and hunted, collision with unsafe environments, and loss of key stop-over feeding and resting sites. Around the globe, many migratory bird species are sharply declining in numbers, which is indicative of the threats facing the wider environment and our ecological balance.

Development work of JU is necessary for expansion of higher education and research, but at the same time, it is imperative we address how to save and protect the migratory birds' sanctuary.

**Md. Zillur Rahaman**  
Gandaria, Dhaka

## Turning exam-centric primary education into learner-centric education

There is hardly any country in the world where children have to sit for public examinations—that too, with the goal of simply scoring A+. In Bangladesh, children take part in the public exams in 5th grade, and then again in 8th grade. Such frequent pressure from parents and educational institutions to get A+ in public exams make students reliable on coaching centres, guide books and rote learning. Parents have to invest a lot of money for their children, which mean that their expectations from their children are high. Parents, consciously or unconsciously, encourage unhealthy competition among children.

Most importantly, the exam-centred education system and the pressure from parents and teachers make students indifferent to learning from a very early age. They do study, but without any enthusiasm. The rat race of doing well in exams have denied them the opportunity of running in the play grounds or pursuing other passions. Unfortunately, they also learn little in their academic sessions.

On the other hand, such an exam-centred and expensive primary education system has made our education unaffordable and inaccessible to marginalised groups and the number of dropouts at the primary level is increasing at an alarming rate.

It is high time to repair the declining condition of primary education. Extending primary education up to grade eight, turning exam-centric education into learner-centric education and last but not the least implementing the National Education Policy 2010 will increase the quality of education and give students their childhood back.

**Samia Jahan**  
Rajbari Govt College