



Colour no issue as it's a boy, Bangladeshi matchmaker says on royal family controversy

PIERCED MORGAN

A Bangladeshi matchmaker kicked up furious debate after she said she did not agree with the British royal family's concern about the skin colour of Meghan Markle and her less famous husband's son. Shimul apa, a top matchmaker in the country, said the concerns about the skin colour of the baby were valid, but they were blown out of proportion as the baby was a boy.

"The baby is a prince, not a princess.

So I am not sure how valid the concerns about his skin colour are. Unless the royal family are racists, which they certainly aren't considering their history of equal oppression of all colours of people," she said.

"I am more surprised at how surprised people were to learn about the British monarchy's aversion to all other colours, especially when the astonishment came from South Asians. We should learn to be more grateful to them; remember the trains and the culture they gave us?"

When asked if it was the colonial past that had inflicted colourism in South Asian societies, Shimul disagreed. "Not really. Look at some of the deities in our cultures. They predate the European colonist, when there were other colonists. We have always had a fascination with being better and the colour of your skin was one way to do so," she said.

Shimul also pointed out that no one cared about the skin colour of men that much. "A lot of brands have dropped 'fairness' from their product range for

women, but the word does stay around for men. It's because men don't really care about their colour, but the colour of women. Like most things, they don't care when it has to do with them, but only the fairer sex. Sorry, I said fairer sex," she said.

Shimul said she believed Markle was a home-wrecker who had completely hypnotised her lesser known husband. "I think Piers Morgan and Ben Shapiro are right. These both wise men, with no shared traits, agree that Markle is a liar and so do I."

Country's image more fragile than male ego? One country finally opens up

OSAMA RAHMAN

The world over, people are being punished for tarnishing images of different countries. Be they stupid tourists, rights activists or outspoken critics, countries are now at a more fragile state than ever seen before. In a first ever interview of its sort, one such country, Chapasthan, has finally decided to reveal to the world why its image can be so easily tarnished.

Osama Rahman [OR]: We all want to know one thing and I want to get right to the point. Why is your image being tarnished so easily? Do critical words really take away from how far you have come since you were declared a basket case by a racist, mass murderer?

Chapasthan [C]: I want to say something. Can I?

OR: Yes. That is the entire point of the interview.

C: Well, first of all, let's talk about how successful I am in my field. As a country, I have climbed up transparency ladders, meaning I am less corrupt than ever before. I have also vaccinated everyone who knows how to use a smartphone and has internet. I now earn more than I used to. And I am growing every day, being well-fed by nutritious investments.

OR: Okay. But can you answer the question about your fragile ego and fragile image?

C: Can I say one thing first? Please, let me say it. Look at how well the women here do in schools. Look at how well we treat guests who are forced to take refuge in our country.

OR: Well, considering how less free the country still is for women and how you are literally on an eviction drive against your



first refugees, after giving them citizenship apparently, guess there is a lot to look at.

C: Listen, we are here to talk about my fragile image, so let's stick to that. My image is not fragile. It cannot be easily sullied. But with concentrated effort, anything can be tarnished. I am only trying to prevent that from happening.

OR: But if your people voice disapproval about something you are doing, shouldn't you at least allow that space of dissent to exist? Isn't that a democratic right?

C: Excuse me. Excuse me

please. What is democracy? Something the west taught you? Look at America. Look at the space for freedom of speech there. It exists when it suits them. Do you remember how everyone was critical of the massive rallies by Trump supporters? But then the massive rallies after Biden's victory were not even highlighted? The west is hypocritical. We are not.

OR: So, what does that mean? Are you saying you are not democratic?

C: No. Listen. We have many critical thinkers in our country. Many of them are critical of what

we do. Are they all in jail? No. Are they still being allowed to be critical? Yes. But sometimes, some people cross the line.

How would you feel if someone talked bad about your parents? How would you feel if you gave someone food and they kept saying it tasted bad? This is not about my image. This is about being ungrateful.

OR: If it is about being ungrateful, then why do you keep bringing up your image and how other people's words are tarnishing it?

C: I am not saying words are tarnishing my image. But there is a conspiracy to tarnish my image none the less. Look we want to be represented well on the world stage. We need Western powers to praise us, so they are more willing to give us aid and trade benefits.

OR: But you are a country. Your image cannot be tarnished. What good you have done will be remembered, while your bad can also be highlighted. Why can't you allow it? Why must you constantly resort to gaslighting your people?

C: Gaslighting? I gaslight my people? MY PEOPLE? I don't want to continue this interview further. Please meet me outside. *dials 999*



An employee with his full, generous salary for the month of February, paid amid a pandemic, with no cuts made at all. PHOTO: SENAD PALIC ON UNSPLASH

Employee who was asked to pull up socks, can't afford socks

LUBNAN KHALEESI

A Dhaka employee who was asked to pull up his socks and improve his performance at work yesterday informed his office that he could not even afford socks.

"I wear loafers and slides all the time just so I don't have to wear socks. Socks are an unnecessary expenditure in this economy," Jahid Alam, 25, told this correspondent.

Jahid, who is an executive manager, said there was nothing executive about his pay-scale. "It is difficult to explain the cost of socks to your boss who earns 140 times higher than you," he said.

Jahid makes a valid point, experts say. According to data from 2018, CEOs have seen their pay grow 1,000% in the last 40 years and now make 278 times the average worker.

Afzal Haque, the founder of SureSalary, a headhunting agency, said the disparity was, however, a snapshot of the survival-of-the-fittest idea. "You work hard, you make more money. You have the connections, you make more money. You are a better negotiator, you make more money. Your family has money, so you make more money. Its simple math and not some nefarious

conspiracy," he said.

For Jahid's problem, he said the solution wasn't lack of financial incentive to work more, but rather pairing up different socks. "Everyone knows that one in a pair of socks goes missing. What you need to do in this case is simply mix-up different socks. There's no such thing as mismatched socks," he said.

In the meantime, Bangladesh remains plagued by inequality problems. According to a 2019 report, the country's Gini coefficient, which is the economic measure of equality, stood at 0.482 in 2016, up from 0.458 in 2010.

The Gini coefficient is measured on a scale of 0 to 1; the closer it is to 1 the higher the inequality.

But those are just numbers, according to Afzal. The solution, as he says, is to fake it till you make it. "Get knock-offs, live in a smaller house, shop the discounts. Stretch your money. Stop asking for more, because that makes you less employable," he said. Lubnan Khaleesi has the best taste in socks and will get you some just so you don't get cold feet. Also, what's the best place for rings for your little finger? She wonders, while she gets fit.