

How to cope with feminist burnout

NAHIAN NAWAR

To live as a feminist means being proud, resilient, and unapologetic in your advocacy for equality, and this fight to abolish the patriarchy has never been an easy one.

For those of us who identify as feminists, the mere act of existing is reason enough for many to hold us in disdain. Strangers and loved ones can turn against us. They equate our demand for basic human rights to misandry. They label us as “angry feminists”.

But we keep explaining how “man-hating” has no place in our movement. We embrace the “angry feminist” tag with open arms; the centuries of oppression that women and gender minorities endured gives us every right to be enraged.

There are, however, times when we feel intense exhaustion from constantly fighting for something so fundamental as our human rights, from debating over issues so personal to us with random misogynists from down the block. On days like this, we don’t have the emotional capacity to deal with unwarranted hate.

This is “feminist burnout”, and many feminists experience it in some form or another.

When you’re fatigued, the ever-present instances of casual sexism only elicit from you a resigned sigh, instead of the usual sense of burning fury. You simply want to go to bed and wake up to a world where every individual is well versed in the feminist ideals.

While such a feeling is often unavoidable, learning how to deal with it is essential.

The very first step is acknowledging the problem. Understand that it’s completely normal to experience feminist burnout. Being fatigued doesn’t make you a bad feminist and it definitely doesn’t take away from the legitimacy of your advocacy.

Then, take a step back. Focus on your mental health and wellbeing. If you’re lucky enough to have feminist friends, make that your sanc-

tuary. It helps to surround yourself with people who don’t need an explanation for why feminism is still relevant now that women can vote.

Also, try redirecting your energy to achievable causes. Maybe you want to help your parent understand why the word “feminist”, as opposed to “humanist”, more aptly describes someone who stands for gender equality. Or maybe you want your school authorities to stop discriminating between male and female students when it comes to sports. Whatever it may be, thinking of specific issues to tackle can give you the sense that your activism is making an impact.

Lastly, choose your battles wisely. When you encounter a misogynist, assess whether it’s really worth your time to engage. Do they seem like they are willing to unlearn biases, or are they simply being ignorant?

Being a feminist is not supposed to feel like a full-time job. This identity is meant to be empowering. Don’t let it consume you.

Nahian Nawar tends to fixate on random and unimportant details. Send her ideas on what to fixate on next at nahian-nawardhk@gmail.com

ILLUSTRATION: WARDHA MORIAM

What you need to know about inflation

HRISHIK ROY

Looking for a CNG, I found myself bargaining very hard. The usual fare from my house in Paltan to Farmgate was 200 taka. All of a sudden, no CNG driver was willing to go for less than 280.

Finally, a CNG driver with paan-stained teeth agreed to take me to my destination for 250 taka.

Due to the depleting foreign exchange reserves, the government has taken a series of measures, which include curbing luxury goods imports and fuel imports. This means that the supply for fuel in the market becomes inadequate to meet the demands of the population, and there is a scarcity. What this leads to is surge pricing, which means that the prices of the goods are increased to de-incentivise people from buying that product, in this case, fuel.

Another reason why the government may have increased the prices of fuels is to repay the loan from International Monetary Fund (IMF), to deal with the

dwindling foreign exchange reserves. This means that the government has to comply with the austerity measures asked by the IMF to seek such a loan, which may explain the sudden price hike, too.

Note that the harmful impact of this fuel price hike can be felt across the entire socio-economic ladder. However, it disproportionately harms people from the lower socio-economic order even more, especially because the status quo is filled with income inequality.

This means that as fuel prices increase, the costs of the most basic necessities such as food and transport also in-

crease.
For example, food prices increase simply because the



transport cost of the food from where it is produced to markets increase. This is true for other consumer products as well, particularly evident with globalisation, as most products tend to be produced further away from consumers. Therefore, an increase in transport costs directly impacts the market price of those products.

This also means that there is a very sharp fare hike for transports across the city. What this looks like is that school students have to pay 5 taka more for each bus trip.

The working class still receives the same wages as before, and as they already have very little money in the status quo,

their purchasing power decreases and so they are less likely to be able to invest into living better.

This is known as inflation, which refers to the general increase in the price of goods and services in the economy. Inflation leads to the devaluation of a particular currency as the purchasing power of money decreases during periods of inflation. This is why you see the price of 1 US dollar increasing to 114 taka in the news.

With a 7.56 percent inflation rate already in place, such a fuel price hike means that such vulnerable people are going to suffer much more. Therefore, it is high time that we take off our privilege-tainted glasses and ask ourselves how such policies really affect the struggles of vulnerable people at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder.

Hrishik spends his evenings adjudicating debate spars, and writes poetry at 3AM. Send him matter banks about Economics at hrdib-bo@gmail.com