

- [Home](#)
- [Opinion Home](#)
- [1971](#)
- [Agriculture](#)
- [CHT](#)
- [democracy](#)
- [Development](#)
- [Disaster](#)
- [Economy](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Polls Archive](#)
- [Readers' Opinion](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- January 10, 2012

**[Rubana Huq](#)**

## Aren't we teaching violence, after all?

January 3, 2012



File Photo.

Violence in the Universities is becoming “dudh-bhaat”. I apologise for the lack of equivalence of this Bangla expression, but such indeed is the case.

On Tuesday, the police dispersed almost 200 Jagannath University students, who, under the banner of “Progotishil Chhatra Jote” were protesting against the University’s imposition of development fee.

Just a day back, the BUET administration faced agitation on the campus as a few Chhatra League activists, later expelled, beat up a 2006 batch student. Once again, 200 policemen were deployed in the campus while the students continued their protests for the third consecutive day.

At almost the same time, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET) was shut down indefinitely after Bangladesh Chhatra League activists had used lethal weapons, hammers, chains, bamboo sticks and brickbats to attack 25 students who were protesting about being served sub-standard food at an annual feast on the campus. In response, infuriated students attacked the VC’s house and 5 teachers and a police officer were injured. Police was, once again deployed on the campus.

For God’s sake, these are our children and for God’s sake, this is our land!

While we engage in road marches with 3000 cars packed on the streets, while we witness elephants and horses being paraded in party meetings, while our senior politicians get beaten by the police while trying to demonstrate against the administration and while we actually see these same victims taking a full 180 degree and becoming perpetrators when in power, can we not, in our sane moments, remind ourselves that all we are teaching our children is violence and that the pages of our history will only be blotched with blood while our memory will be a melting pot of massacres?

When will our political parties (position and opposition) who regularly engage in mutual castigation realise that for a mere short-term benefit, they may instigate (not inspire) risings and revolutions as part of collective madness that may not be deemed as merely political events laying bare the legitimacy deficit that moves rational men and women to kill and die? Can the current collective movements that forms violent participation, truly be termed as the true representative of a civil society?

In our country, starting from street fights to genocide, including coordinated destruction,



opportunism, brawls, individual aggression, scattered attacks: all count as collective violence. The incidents of violence occur on occasions where the political parties take to streets and where one Noor Hossain is sacrificed at the altar, in the name of justice and democracy. What the bickering political parties tend to forget is that they are subjecting the entire nation to a negative collective memory ...

The French historian, Pierre Nora in 1989 wrote:

"Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution...History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer..."

There are lessons to be learnt from all across the globe. If we look at the early modern Europe, we discover a violent place that attracted scholars to form discourses on the concept of state formation. Across Europe, the protesters were usually made up of artisans, shopkeepers, and agriculteurs vulnerable to economic and fiscal oscillations. There were tax riots, grain riots, etc. Protests were all shared sentiments against the state having failed to uphold principles of traditional justice. These protests were never much of use as authorities preferred to let events run their course and then punish or execute a few people. However, the state in the meantime intervened preemptively. This is how civilising in Europe had begun. This is how Europe studied the rioters' identity, the motifs of political violence, and the issues and conditions that could transform lingering discontent into violent and avoided mass hysteria like the "sans-culotte" movements of their past.

Bangladesh at 41, cannot afford to have memories of mass hysteria, "new liberation wars", new discourses on revised formats of democracy and daily engagement in violence. Bangladesh, at 41, does not want to witness its children getting murdered and dumped in bins, beaten in campuses, threatened in the name of political ideology. Bangladesh, at 41, needs to be fearless and free from violence.

It's most definitely time for us to re-engage in the study of foundation of civil societies, examining programs, marches, riots, and other forms of collective political phenomena that indicate deep-seated conflicts in the society. At the same time, responsible members of the civil society must also kindly devise a model of conflict resolution based on the recognition of memories of violence while promoting new institutional arrangements to form a non-violent core of our land.

At 41, is it really too much for Bangladesh to ask this of us all?

[Rubana Huq](#), Managing Director, Mohammadi Group.

Tags: [Bangladesh](#), [BUET](#), [Jagannath University](#), [JNU](#), [KUET](#), [student politics](#)



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## 17 Responses to "Aren't we teaching violence, after all?"



Altaf on January 6, 2012 at 2:39 am

It is time to end all types of student politics. No more Chhatra League/Dal/Shibir. Also no more Jubo League/Dal or any other affiliated League/Dal. These are all front organizations for terrorism, extortion, tender manipulation, violence and other criminal activities. Take a poll among the masses, vast majority will overwhelmingly reject them.

[Reply](#)



Ali on January 8, 2012 at 8:58 pm

And I QUOTE:

"Take a poll among the masses, vast majority will overwhelmingly reject them."

'Them' includes today's teachers, who are themselves promoting division, militancy and partisan leanings to get special favors. The academic atmosphere is absolutely polluted.

This banish-politics alone will HELP regain academics, research, sanity and much better graduates.

How and what do all VCs collectively or individually think about this cleansing act?



[Reply](#)

Muzahidul Islam Jahid on January 5, 2012 at 10:45 pm

Dear MS Rubana Huq,

You are absolutely right in the views you have upheld here very frankly. The piece of writing is really wonderful, well organized and does reflect a passion for the nation. But I do have certain points as I think something very crucial is always overlooked.

Though the politicians of the country are the main culprits, here the role of our so-called teachers in these institutions can be called into questions as well. I may be a bit ungrateful to the teachers by uttering this; but what the teachers have started in different universities to grab some opportunities don't go with any sensible sense.

How can we expect better days when the conscience of the nation (i.e. teachers) is still asleep; in a bad dream of only shameless personal gains?

Please, Ms Rubana, pour some ink to saturate and thus awake this bunch of people. In fact, we have no alternative to the uprising of the teachers and the students following their footprints.

After all, it is high time we needed the blow of ARAB SPRING...

We all aspire after a golden Bangladesh; not dreamed by any figures of the misleading past but created by the young Turks of Bangladesh...



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[Ahmed Abid](#) on January 5, 2012 at 9:02 pm

The violence reveals from the power structures it infected every sphere of society. That produce conflicts, and it goes on and on. We could not produce any other mechanism/windows to get rid of violence. Before starting on 'conflict' we need to study the types of violence and academic institutes/civil society could take a step for that.

[Reply](#)

yamuna Jaman on January 5, 2012 at 10:14 am

"Aren't we teaching violence, after all?"

Nope! I find these as mandatory "hands on" field training for our future national leadership. Please rewind the pages of our history, the same music...

[Reply](#)

parvez ahmed on January 5, 2012 at 12:01 am

There is no democracy in Bangladesh. What we have is a twisted monarchy.

You have to have blue blood of two dead leaders to run this country. Unfortunately not a single parent in this golden Bengal is capable to produce sons and daughters to run this country.

All we have to do is cry our hearts out in this forum.

Laughable indeed.

Why the hell the university admin will control the student politics, when they themselves originated from that.

I will ask the writer to inspire people to something radical. Of course if the CEO of bdnews24.com permits you. He is quiet a character on controlling media.

So good luck. Let's work on the field. Or else write something different...

[Reply](#)

parvez ahmed on January 5, 2012 at 12:06 am

I must add as long as your civil society remain civil (I hope you get the meaning)..you can hope to achieve nothing..

[Reply](#)



Golam Arshad on January 4, 2012 at 10:34 pm

Rubana: You have rightly depicted, the duplicity in the arena of our politics. We need a Voice for Change!! Both the BNP and AL are equally responsible for their atrocious posture to one another. Good job!!

[Reply](#)



Akhtar Shah on January 4, 2012 at 10:25 pm

Rubana, a very well picked topic. This now, I am afraid, is woven into the culture. Everybody right from the top wants to teach lessons (Sikkha deoa) to the opponents (or even laymen for simply having a different view). I am afraid it cascades down and gets into every nook any cranny.

To even attempt to reduce this, boys and girls at primary school level need to be taught the art of resolving conflicts and disagreements by dialogue — that violence never resolves issues. It merely begets worse violence. Other cultural activities should also attempt not to glorify violence. It is a monumental task and is like, trying to turn a giant tanker without power steering. One should make a start though.

[Reply](#)



sajjad on January 4, 2012 at 7:24 pm

This is nothing new. So, do not act surprised.

Also, along with “Dhood-bhat”, we have no English word for “Porosrikatorota”. Or have we?

Good article to read. Thanks.

[Reply](#)



Shams Reza on January 4, 2012 at 4:48 pm

How dare you insult these “Shonar Chele” (Golden Boys) of Chatra League. I am quite sure we'll find the future home minister, finance minister, communication minister, shipping minister from among the mob that has started a “beating fest” in the various educational institutions in Bangladesh.

You must not criticize our future leaders.

[Reply](#)



parvez ahmed on January 5, 2012 at 12:03 am

right to the core.....

[Reply](#)



parvez ahmed on January 5, 2012 at 12:04 am

The guy who throwing the kick could become a perfect home minister in future

[Reply](#)



russel on January 9, 2012 at 6:58 pm

Your comment made my laugh. 😄

[Reply](#)



Mozammel on January 4, 2012 at 2:50 pm



Thanks to Rubana Huq for her opinion on the very recent 'developments' in Bangladesh. I also have something to add to your opinion.

The formula of divide and rule started much earlier when we majority were dominated and a minority reigned over in the past. This perception is located in the gene of our national character as such that we are not getting rid of it.

So there is one countrywide feeling "beat to live" game and "hunt to eat" for survival.

And this beat to live is reflected in violence for a very simple issue and HUNT TO EAT is reflected in "FAO KHAO" practice. It begins from village to anywhere in the national level.

And these FAO KHAO and HUNT TO LIVE should not continue and these arrived at a point to end.

We need leadership to stop and prevent FAO KHAO. Let us do that. And media has a great part to play to dig out these two games and practices so that the benevolent government can formulate policies and control it.

It is strange not a single academic administration has developed a policy to assess their students' financial capability, lodging facilities for enrolling them with the institute and the government has no cell to monitor this.

The monitoring cell of the government cannot work only for the political interference. Alas for our nation.

[Reply](#)



russel on January 4, 2012 at 1:38 pm

Well write-up by Rubana Huq. We can't deny that we are degrading our values by getting involved in student politics and polluting our educational institutions. Sad indeed.

[Reply](#)



Syed ImtiazAli on January 4, 2012 at 12:37 pm

We definitely need some sanity back in our lives! Cannot forget the scenes prior to 1/11, can we? The picture above show how much decay in the lives of our youngsters have crept in, thanks to the political parties.

The country is not on lease. Let us all behave rationally and leash the wrongdoers for their and collective good. Soon this behavior will start taking shape into monsters of tomorrow.

A well chronicled and passionate article to remind us of our follies being shown on a daily basis. It indeed is alarming to say the least!

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

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