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Rubana Huq

South Asia: Royally raped

January 16, 2013



Photo: bdnews24.com

The woman behind the wheels was a golfer with a handicap of 14. She hummed, took breaks and told me her story while driving me to the next province in her shiny SUV. She was a typical Chinese entrepreneur, a bold 30-year-old and happened to fear nothing. China today is all about women. In spite of the image of Chinese society being repressive, the Chinese growth rates today are attributed to the impressive increase of female employment proving that there is an opportunity to balance economic issues with social justice.

And... in Bangladesh, where the GDP growth rate along with all the other human development factors come off as promising, 711 cases of abuse were reported in 2012, with 119 of the victims being gang raped and 89 of them being killed. On the 1st of April, 2012, a four-month-old baby was raped. On 1st of August, 2012, a physically challenged woman was violated in Louhajang. On the 27th of September 2012, a twelve-year-old kid was strapped to a tree and abused. On the 12th of June, in Mireswarai, a six-year-old was raped. On the 2nd of June 2012, a 17-year-old teenager was attacked, raped and was chopped into 26 pieces. It was only yesterday a student of Eden College came under acid attack after having refused a marriage proposal. It was only the other day when a 14-year-old teenager was taken and raped for three days at a stretch and was dumped by the railway at Madhupur in Tangail. Another victim, a 20-year-old recounted her tale, only in January 2012, before a judicial magistrate detailing the trauma of being raped in November.

Rape happens to be a steady South Asian tale...





Photo: Reuters

While Damini in New Delhi was violated with an iron rod, which left her with severe intestinal injuries, and was ultimately hurled out of the vehicle, the conscience of India suffered a stark blow. In a note to her mother, while Damini had written: "I want to live", she finally didn't make it through the intensive care unit. The story didn't quite end there. Right after the Damini gang-rape episode on the 16th of December, on the 11th of January, 2013, another brutal case of rape was reported in India. This time, the victim was raped by seven men in a district bordering the Sikh holy city of Amritsar. Seven men have been arrested so far. What had prompted their defiance? Worst of all, the lawyer defending the accused in the Damini rape case has gone up to the extent of stating that Westernised women invite sexual assaults and has even dared to share that he had not ever heard of a "single incident or example of rape with a respected lady". A guru in India has even said that the girl should have "chanted God's name and fallen at the feet of the attackers" to stop the attack. Some have even said that these attacks happen only in Indian cities and not in the villages. In New Delhi alone, 128 women committed suicide because of dowry related abuse. In 2010 and 2011, the numbers stood at 142 and 143 respectively.

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission recorded 4,010 cases of violence against women in the seven months between March and October last year, nearly twice as many as in the previous 12 months. The perpetrators feel that they can operate with impunity as these figures keep on rising as justice falters in its stride in the region. Apart from cases of acid attacks on women, violence over dowry, 'honour' killings and other equally barbaric practices, there are many widespread practices of the sex-selective abortion and infanticide that leave a count of 96 million 'missing' women in the Asia-Pacific. A grim figure indeed...

Not surprisingly, the UN data on South Asia records that millions of women across South Asia continue to suffer violence inside and outside their homes. Their access to economic opportunities is limited, employment choices are few, and their control over assets is meagre. And of course, there is almost no implementation of legislation in spite of existing domestic laws.



Photo: Reuters

Rape here has become routine...forming human chains and organizing protests too. What hasn't yet become common is the execution of justice. This is one area where the whole of South Asia limps. In South Asia, days or dates don't matter anymore as the region along with its people and ideologies continue being raped. The concept of justice today stands out much more violated than ever before...

In Sri Lanka, the parliament, dominated by Mr Rajapakse's supporters, impeached the first female Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, Shirani Bandaranayake on suspicion of corruption. Charges? Well...among other rulings, Bandaranayake delayed a bill that would grant greater political and financial power to the president's youngest brother Basil, who is the economic development minister. That was what ushered her downfall. The all-powerful go on forever while the judiciary stands violated.

In our very own land, we routinely fall prey to violation, bias and brutality. Given that there are active civil society members routinely protesting the heinous crimes, we still lag behind with our individual conscience bearing the burden of inactivity. While many of us are raped right within our own secured homes, while many of us are discriminated and displaced on account of gender, while many of us suffer passive aggression, while many of us subscribe to the fearful pledge of silence, the perpetrators strut around in distasteful honour.

In reality, we, women, are possibly the most vulnerable to violence, fall and ouster. We are possibly the most passive of all races when it comes to our dignity. We are possibly the cheapest of all commodities that outlive their expiry dates on their shelf lives. We are indeed...women.



[Rubana Huq](#) is a poet, researcher and an entrepreneur.

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Tags: [Bangladesh](#), [Delhi gang rape, rape](#), [Sexual assault](#), [South Asia](#), [Tangail gang rape](#), [women](#)

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10 Responses to “South Asia: Royally raped ”



Zain on January 20, 2013 at 8:48 pm

But the women too needs to act responsible. With provocative outfits and going back home late at night, how can women expect to feel safe?

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Sabbir Huda on January 20, 2013 at 8:42 pm

Even after the brutal Delhi-rape that shook the entire of India and other countries too, brutal crime against women seem to have increased these days. Isn't there any end to this terrible crime?

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Emon on January 20, 2013 at 8:18 pm

Rape! Rape! Rape! In Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, USA...you name it. How will human being survive in this dangerous place called the world?

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Iqbal Hasan Chowdhury on January 20, 2013 at 8:14 pm

Everyday there are rape news. What has the world come to? Why this torture on women?

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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qut on January 20, 2013 at 7:53 pm

Rape takes place in this country and our neighboring countries because we are not strict enough about this crime. Proving a rape case here is the toughest. The victim is portrayed as a slut and the one with extremely strong mentality can only face such allegations. It seems like the society is more favorable towards the rapists and not the rape victims.

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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faria on January 20, 2013 at 7:47 pm

I didn't understand the title. What did the writer mean by 'Royally raped'?

Like or Dislike: 1 0

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Bina on January 20, 2013 at 7:26 pm

Rape is all about power. The powerful wants to exert authority on the weak.

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Tamanna on January 20, 2013 at 6:02 pm

This is something that needs to be eradicated but that requires a concerted effort — both from male as well as females. We cannot keep reading rape news everyday everywhere.

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Mostafiz on January 17, 2013 at 9:59 am

The power and influence of MOLLAHs, the most egregious enemy of 'women emancipation and freedom', is almost in state of extinction. Now, why so many vicious attacks esp. in the form of infestation of gang rape occurs, that is quite an enigma.

Many now swoop on MASCULINITY, an invisible ghost, but how to fight against it?

However, like all western countries, we should liberalise ourselves to accept prostitution in all its formats to be integrated in society, if we believe we are watertight accurate in/to the way we are heading to.

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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Judas on January 17, 2013 at 4:21 am

We just have to face the fact that the world is a horrible place -it is a cruel place and will remain the same .

Why so cruel, spiteful, vindictive? hideosity? why such a desire to hurt? Who knows what evil lies in our heart.

Like or Dislike: 0 0

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