

College bus going against traffic

A wake-up call for everyone

THE picture of a college bus full of students moving on the wrong side of a road in the capital's Moghbazar Wireless Gate area was disturbing, to say the least. Published on the back-page of *The Daily Star* on Tuesday, it reaffirms our fears that the dangerous precedent set by high-profile traffic offenders is bound to have a trickle-down effect. We didn't know just how far down the hole it can go, but now we do.

Last month, police took action against individuals who sought to use their rank to drive on the wrong side of the road. Among the offenders were a state minister, a lawmaker, several bureaucrats, police officials and journalists. Some repeat offenders were also fined in subsequent drives. When high-profile people flout traffic regulations and even refuse to learn from the punitive measures taken against them, it inspires a certain level of confidence in the general offenders. It's alarming that even children now think it okay to flout traffic regulations. And to think they can get away with that on the strength of their association with a power base (a government institution in this case) is more troubling.

This is not just a case of some individuals breaking rules on the streets and how flagrant violations have collapsed our traffic system. The fact that the students in question also snatched away the camera from the photographer makes us wonder if we've failed to teach our children the basic principles of morality and dignity. Children are an impressionable group and we need to set proper examples for them so that they understand that no one is impervious to the law, and that nothing gives them the right to break it.

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