

## Harassment of the headmaster continues

*The shame is ours*

FIRST the headmaster, Shaymal Kanti Bhakta, was publicly humiliated by the local MP, and now he has been suspended by the school management committee! It is like giving him a bad name and hanging him. We are outraged by the sheer insensitivity of the committee. Who are they trying to save by heaping injury over insult on him?

The public humiliation of the teacher was clearly an act of highhandedness by the MP who had crossed his limits as a public representative. He administered his 'judgment' without verifying the matter. Clearly the issue on which the 'punishment' was administered was concocted to create the situation as evident from the statement of the concerned student. And he is now using his power and position to shield his act of haughtiness and the managing committee is pandering to him. We are also flabbergasted at the muted reaction of the many teachers' organisations on this issue. Isn't it a humiliation for the entire teacher community?

Both religion and nationalism was exploited in this case, which has neither glorified the flag nor religion. While we would not like dwell on the religious undertone of the matter we would like to urge the government not to miss the message the issue has sent out. It is a litmus test for the government in which it can only acquit itself well if it stands up to protect the vulnerable by immediately bringing the perpetrators to book. It should also review the suspension order. Any further harassment of the headmaster must be stopped immediately.