

## // Schoolgirl commits suicide //

### *Arrest instigators immediately*

**I**T is appalling to learn that a young girl found no recourse but to commit suicide out of public shame steeped upon her and her family by the local Union Parishad (UP) member in Gopapur Upazila of Tangail. The incident centred on the girl who was allegedly having an affair with a batch mate. In such cases local arbitration or shalish is the most common means of resolving the situation. The UP member went beyond his mandate and verbally abused the young girl. The way the matter was handled shows the extent of chauvinism that is present at all levels including the administrative bodies. This has become all too common in our country where societal perceptions are almost always stacked against women and girls.

We understand that the principal accused in the case UP member Selim and five others who instigated the castigation of Sathi have gone into hiding. All too often, we see the same scenario in rural Bangladesh where overenthusiastic, root level public officials like UP members taking matters to a level where young girls like Sathi find it impossible to bear the shame and throw away their lives through suicide.

The law must step up to apprehend and punish these criminals who profess to be guardians of morality because no one gave them that right. It is not up to them to dehumanise people in this way and certainly not within their rights to instigate a situation which leads to a young woman taking her life.