

When Teachers Torture Student To Death

How serious an offence can a class-IV student commit, so that as many as four teachers of a government primary school can torture him for two consecutive days to death? This is mind-boggling, to say the least. That violence against children is a crime has been recognised by the United Nations charter endorsed by most of its members including Bangladesh. Government primary schools appoint only trained teachers. What are they trained for? Don't they know that violence against the young ones is not permitted? Even if they are unaware of the legal bindings, no adult can be such cruel to children below 12. Children of such tender age rarely commit serious offences; if they do, they do so unknowingly but even that should be dealt with very cautiously. Punishing them severely may be counter-productive instead of producing desired results. They may turn anti-social.

The whole concept of educating the children in our country is rather flawed. It is too dangerous to leave this highly important responsibility to poorly educated and psychologically non-oriented teachers. As in games and sports, it is necessary to catch them young. Only those people with an insight into young minds and capable of judging the unique potential in each individual child should be given the charge. They alone can be friends, philosophers and guides to the children. The four teachers who accounted for the physical annihilation of a 12-year-old on Tuesday are not the only ones to commit the crime, there are others in the teaching profession who can be equally sadistic. What a madrasah teacher did a few months ago exemplifies this: he asked 12 or 13 of his students to recite verses from a religious book but they were not loud enough. So he slashed ears of the students with a pair of scissors.

Sounds mentally deranged! But those not so mentally troubled also do irreparable damage to young minds by forcing on them lessons they do not like. The teachers would not admit that it is their incapability to make the subject attractive and easily understandable to the students but they would hold the students blamable. A student may develop phobia or a kind of psychological barrier because of bad teaching. If teachers are not understanding enough of the students' special limitations, handicap or precocity, they are likely to go for the stringent punishment. This means they are not looking into their own limitations. True, death of students at the hands of teachers do not happen every other day, but we hardly know how many students' lives are damaged by teachers' mishandling. The young ones are capable of committing only slight wrongs, the adults really take crimes to their extremes. No wonder, Annada Shankar Roy, one of the finest minds of our time, put it succinctly when he pointed accusing finger at the juvenile elders who are angry at a little girl for breaking a bottle of oil whereas they are totally oblivious of the fact that they have managed to pull India apart. Great Leo Tolstoy then advises elderly people to be like children if they want to enter the heaven. The innocence in children has also been highly prized by William Blake in his poems. So one must know how to appreciate the minds of children—a different world altogether—before one embarks on teaching children. The four teachers who are responsible for the death of a 4th grade student of Nayatola Government Primary School have proved they are unfit to teach children. Their vile crime calls for exemplary punishment because that is how it will act as a deterrent to such crimes in future.