

# SHOULD OUR PROFESSORS HANG THEMSELVES?

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**A** I write this piece, a picture of a stunned Professor Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, drenched in rain, after an assault on a teachers' demo at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) on August 30 has gone viral, thanks to social networking sites and the media. Prof. Zafar Iqbal perhaps could not believe what had just happened--some students of his university swooped on their teachers right before his eyes. Shell-shocked, the eminent educationist who is widely respected for his pro-student stances over different issues found it hard to keep standing. According to news reports, he squatted on the ground and remained there even when a splash of rain drenched him. He had an umbrella right beside him but didn't even touch it, perhaps because of perplexity triggered by the shock. "The way the students attacked our teachers, if they were my students, I should hang myself [because] you [I] have made these kinds of students," he said in despair.

Prof. Zafar Iqbal occupies the status of an idol to many of our compatriots, including myself, who could not emulate his bold and unprecedented patriotic step of leaving his prestigious job in USA, by opting for his motherland for whose creation his father had met martyrdom. He is equally, if not more respected, for his staunch pro-liberation stance as, among other things, he travelled around the country to teach young children the true history of our great war of liberation. What perhaps came as a bigger blow to Zafar Iqbal was that the attackers were shouting



"Joy Bangla" when they pounced on the teachers. "With this 'Joy Bangla' slogan, the Liberation War was fought. I never saw such a humiliation of the slogan in my entire life," said the professor.

To make an observation, one does not have to delve deeper into the issues that triggered the movement by the teachers demanding for removal of the VC of SUST. As part of the agitation, the teachers were to stage a pre-scheduled sit-in at the

administrative building from 9:00am on the day of the unfortunate occurrence, to stop the VC from entering his office. Amidst allegations and counter allegations by both the VC and the agitating teachers, hindsight demands that if the VC had felt threatened, he had the authority under his executive power to ask for the protection of law enforcing agencies to give him safe passage to his place of work. It was no business for any student group, no matter which party they

belonged to, to get involved in the altercations. According to agitating teachers, several of their colleagues, including Prof. Yasmeen Haque, wife and constant ideological comrade of Zafar Iqbal, were assaulted by some student activists. Prof. Yasmeen blamed the BCL men for the attack. "Chhatra League carried out the physical assault on the teachers. It never happened on this campus in the last 25 years. What is the source of so much audacity? It is the VC," she has said. The eye-

witness accounts, as reported in video footage, confirm testimony of Prof. Yasmeen Haque.

How could my university behave with such behaviour with the Zafar Iqbal in frustration? I myself have been 2 years, though the bulk of foreign countries, states. Wherever I taught the superiority of our (esteem for guru) to the professors. In line with year after year my student sub-continent have to especially during communitarianism to the rest of it.

radiating the greatest bhakti to the rest of it. assault by some so-called individuals; rather on individuals; rather world-admired guru for all the students, political beliefs or a deplorable incident front of numerous criminals shouted, forewarn law enforced immune from the indeed a big challenge and especially for that the death-def liberation war is a wrong-doers to justice.

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