

Teachers face humiliation by MPs, ruling party men

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TEACHERS are being subjected to humiliations and physical abuses by MPs and other politicians belonging to the ruling Awami League and its allies across the country.

The incidents public humiliation and beatings of teachers that took place at different places since January reinforce the public perception about the ruling political class.

At least five incidents of abject public humiliation to which teachers were subjected since January at different places including the capital, Narayanganj, Ashulia, Bogra and on the campus of Jahangirnagar University depicted a dim view of MPs, local ruling party politicians and Chhatra League men.

The incidents also tarnished the nation's long tradition of holding teachers in respect.

Well known academicians denounced humiliations of teachers to make them more insecure when low pay turned them in a neglected community in the society.

They blamed the unprecedented slide in social values for the recurrent incidents in which teachers faced public humiliation and physical attacks.

Professors emeriti Serajul Islam Choudhury and
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Anisuzzaman, former Dhaka University vice-chancellor Emajuddin Ahmad denounced humiliation of teachers.

They called the recent incidents of subjecting teachers to humiliation as 'attacks on education and demanded exemplary punishment to the perpetrators.

They called for building nation wide resistance to stop recurrence of such heinous acts.

The denial of traditional respects to the ill paid teachers only complicated the situation for them in the society, said Serajul Islam Choudhury.

Humiliation of teachers are most condemnable acts, said education minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

'We always took steps against such incidents' he told New Age.

'We took departmental action' he said referring to an incident in which a UNO recently publicly humiliated a government college teacher at Bhandaria, Pirojpur.

Nahid was asked to specify actions the government took against the perpetrators.

The incident of headmaster Shyamal Kanti Bhakta's public humiliation in Narayanganj on May 13, by Selim Osman MP of Jatiya Party, a partner of the ruling coalition, drew unrelenting nation wide protests.

Shyamal, the headmaster of Piyar Sattar Latif

High School was confined in a room, dragged out of it, slapped time and again before Selim Osman and his companions asked him to sit up 10 times holding his ears.

A video footage of the headmaster doing the sit ups

holding his ears went viral on social media sites.

On Wednesday, a female head teacher of 11 No Paschim Sutrapur Government Primary School in Dhamrai was beaten up by the school managing committee vice-president Abdul Malek also a local leader of ruling Awami League, in front of her colleagues.

Teachers said that Malek and his companions came to the school and demanded to know from head teacher Fouzia Yeasmin why she changed her office room and verbally abused her over the issue.

Angry over the head teacher's protests Malek raised his hands to strike her.

As she took shelter in the school toilet out of fear, Malek and his companions dragged her out of the toilet and beat her up repeatedly, said a teacher.

Asked to explain his conduct, Malek told reporters that the head teacher changed her office room without any consultation with the school managing committee.

Malek said that he did not beat up the head teacher.

Dhamrai police station officer in charge for investigations Dipak Chandra Saha said that after the head teacher filed a general diary, police detained Malek for interrogation.

The incident sent fresh shock waves across the nation as it occurred within days of subjecting abject public humiliation to headmaster Shyamal including getting a mob to beat him up.

The mob was mobilized using the public address system of a local mosque on the false allegation that headmaster had uttered anti religious remarks while providing

corporal punishment to a student on May 8.

The video clip shows that Selim Osman, MP and his companions subjecting the headmaster to physical abuse in the presence of a crowd shouting the 'Joy Bangla' slogan.

Later, Selim Osman claimed at a news conference that the headmaster did the sit ups holding his ears on his own to save himself from public wrath for his derogatory remarks against religion.

On January 11, headmaster Ataur Rahman was beaten up by Jatiya Party MP from Dhaka 4, Sayed Abu Hossain Babla over a dispute centering the managing committee of Dholairparh School and College.

Later, Babla denied that he had beaten up the headmaster and said he went to the school only to discuss issues relating to its managing committee.

On April 16, 2015 Rajshahi city chapter AL general secretary Dablu Sarker hurled abusive words against Rajshahi University vice-chancellor Muhammad Mizanuddin at his office room for his refusal to recruit more ruling party men as RU officers and staff.

Dablu also forcibly pushed aside science faculty dean Habibur Rahman for protesting at misbehavior of Dablu and his companions.

Just a day before, ruling AL MP Omar Faruk Chowdhury from Godagari-Tanore, Rajshahi, accompanied by his followers insulted the VC in his office chamber for the same reason and threatened him with dire consequences.

In these incidents MPs and other politicians showed how powerful they were, completely oblivious of what

should be their public conduct, said Anisuzzaman.

He called their conduct as unfortunate and unacceptable.

'Attack on any teacher is an attack on me,' he said.

On January 1, Majira Union Jubo League general secretary Al Amin beat up three teachers of Shahjahanpur Belpukur High School in Bogra as he failed to get elected as the chairman of the managing committee of the school.

Chhatra League men beat up Jahangirnagar University history professor Mojahidul Islam on January 22, 2016 for his efforts to dissuade the group from beating up a couple on the campus.

At least seven teachers of SUST suffered injuries when Chhatra League men dragged and beat up the teachers holding a peaceful demonstration against the vice-chancellor on the campus on August 30, 2015.

At least 50 teachers of Islamic University in Kushia, six teachers and some students of Begum Rokeya University, in Rangpur and three teachers and scores of students of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute suffered injuries during a series of attacks by Chhatra League men in January 2013.

Chhatra League men threw acid on teachers of Rokeya University when they were holding a peaceful demonstration against the vice chancellor.

By attacking teachers these people are making education and dignity of teachers their direct targets, said Serajul Islam Choudhury.

These incidents point to the lawlessness 'our society is headed,' he said.