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Travesty of a Library

Last Monday's Star report about Dhaka University library forms a sad commentary on the standard and atmosphere of learning in the premier seat of education in the country. Not the first and neither the last to come out from the bag of ills this once glorious academia is laden with, this is one of the most nauseating thing to experience because it reeks such criminal indifference towards intellectual nourishment by people whose *raison detre* is all about keeping it in the best possible shape.

What sort of a library is that which releases journals and periodicals for general perusal after four or five years of entry? Is it that difficult to update even various UN journals and annual reports? Is it a library or a bonded warehouse?

How does it sound in the backdrop of authorities' apathy to general students' need that books disappear regularly from the so called rare section? Since only the teachers and the researchers have access to the is section does not this phenomenon of 'periodic disappearance' suggest that some of the teachers and researchers are wanting in integrity? Can one make light of this by referring to a Twainesque streak?

Not all problems are hard to detect though. One of the more tangible, mentioned by the librarian himself is fund shortage. We fail to understand how a repository of knowledge and information can suffer from fund shortage if people concerned are serious about its value.

The truth is, something is badly rotten in the Dhaka University library. It is likely to be a combination of evils ranging from fund shortage to administrative flaw. We suggest a committee comprising senior teachers be formed immediately to look into the matter. A ready suggestion for helping this ailing storehouse of knowledge could be to consult the wisdom lying in the more organised specimens in the city, like the British Council and USIS libraries. There cannot be any compromise on the state of libraries.