

Bangladesh

July-September 2017

Quarterly

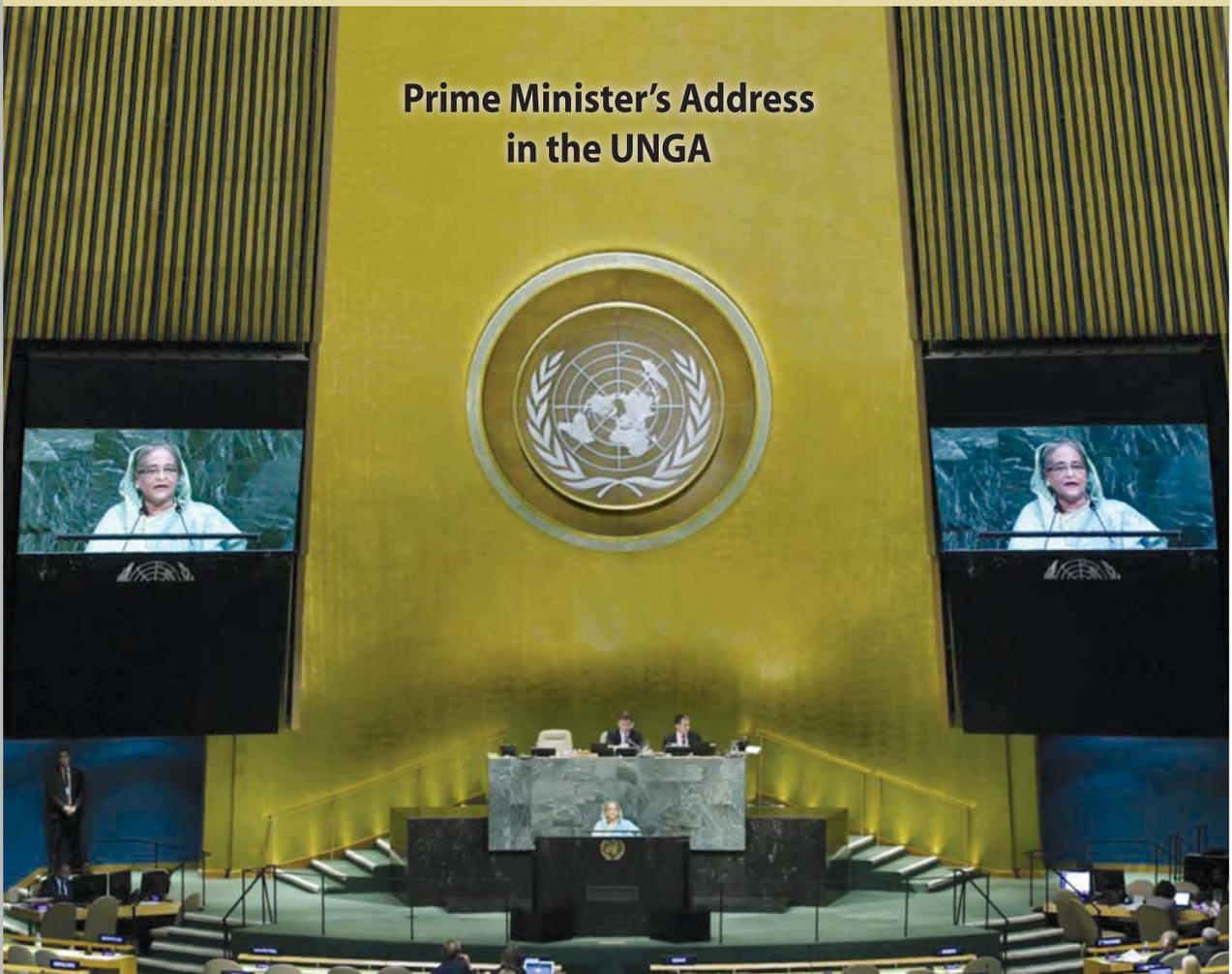
**An Outline of the Economic
Philosophy of Father of the Nation**

**Significance of Eid-al-Adha And
Its Celebration in Bangladesh**

Nazrul's Rebellion and Islamic Ideals

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**Prime Minister's Address
in the UNGA**



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Editorial

The nation observed the National Mourning Day on 15th August with due solemnity and deep sorrow throughout the country and missions abroad. On that night in 1975, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were brutally killed. The nation reproaches this heinous act of assassination. Bangabandhu is alive and remembered for his struggle and foresighted political career that led to the independence of Bangladesh. Bangabandhu in his whole life dreamt for 'Sonar Bangla', a happy, prosperous and economically sound Bangladesh. An article on the economic philosophy of the Father of the Nation is accommodated in this issue.

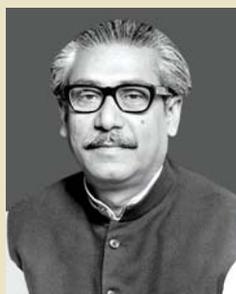
The recent influx of the Rohingya people, victims of ethnic cleansing, who are forcibly displaced from their own country Myanmar and took shelter in Bangladesh, has become a great concern for our country. The atrocities and human rights violations in the Rakhine State of Myanmar have compelled more than nine hundred thousand Rohingya people to take shelter in Cox's bazar of Bangladesh since 1978. Bangladesh, on humanitarian ground, gave shelter to them for the time being. Our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sought expeditious UN and global interventions to protect all civilians in Myanmar's Rakhine State and take effective steps for a permanent solution to the protracted Rohingya crisis. The speech of the Prime Minister delivered in the UN General Assembly on 21 September is covered in this current issue.

Eid-ul-Adha, is one of the two greatest festivals of the Muslim Ummah. Like the Muslims of all over the world, the people of Bangladesh also observe this day in a befitting manner. An article on the significance of this day and its celebration is accommodated in this issue.

Our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam is a man of versatile brilliance. He was not only a poet, at the same time he was also a novelist, short story writer, song composer and playwright. He is called the 'rebel poet' for his brave resistance to all forms of repression expressed in his writings. Though he had great regard and admiration for the older poets and writers, he did not imitate any poet or writer of his time. The vocabulary and the subject matter Nazrul used in his poems are unparalleled and never used in Bangla poetry before. An analytical article on the rebellion and Islamic thoughts in the poems of Nazrul has been accommodated in this issue.

The readers will find other articles on various subjects of interest in this issue.

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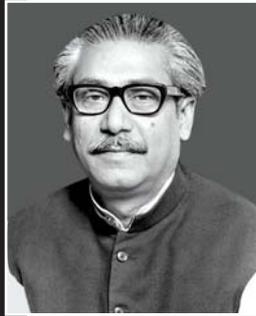
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An Outline of the Economic Philosophy of Father of the Nation

Dr. Mohammed Farashuddin

speaking about freedom, he certainly implied economic freedom.

The main and lone economic philosophy of the Father of the Nation was the constitutional right of meeting the basic needs of the people including food, clothing, shelter, education and healthcare. These rights were included in articles 13, 14 and 15 of the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in accordance with Bangabandhu's intense desire. Article 15 of the constitution ensured the people's right to food, clothing, shelter, healthcare services, employment and social security. Article 14 speaks about the freedom from exploitation of the peasants, labourers, and backward working classes. Article 16 of the constitution states, "The State shall adopt effective measures to bring about a radical transformation in the rural areas through the promotion of an agricultural revolution, the provision of rural electrification, the development of cottage and other industries and the improvement of education, communications and public health, in those areas, so as progressively to remove the disparity in the standards of living between the urban and the rural areas". Alongside other citizens, the constitution has granted equal constitutional status to the disabled and autistic segments of population in all matters instead of showing mere pity and kindness.

By voluntarily leaving the post of the president of People's Republic of Bangladesh and appointing himself as the republic's Prime Minister, the Father of

The long path of seizing the sun of freedom for Bangladesh was at times full of struggles, sometimes bloody and at other times razor-sharp with the intensity of non-cooperation. This political and administrative movement for liberation was conducted under the leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and in his name. However rugged the path of triumph might have been, the unambiguous ideal of achieving economic emancipation lay above everything else with unwavering assurance. The resolve to build a Bangla of gold by bringing smiles to the distressed humanity in a welfare state was the economic philosophy of Sheikh Mujib. It is not known to me whether any other country in the world was born with such an assured ideal for achieving economic freedom or climbing the ladder of prosperity. Bangabandhu had said in his 7 March speech, considered as the greatest poem of his politics, ".....The struggle this time is for our freedom.....". While

the Nation was enterprising and determined enough to invest the state resources for the overall welfare of the disadvantaged people through the public sector within the setting of a welfare state. But the people expected that their undisputed beloved leader would usher in a tide of prosperity overnight by bringing forth Aladin's magic lamp. But mostly a realist, Sheikh Mujib defined the pathway of Bangladesh's economy in the short, medium and long term based on the policies for survival, commencement of affluence and the climbing of the ladder of prosperity.



Bangabandhu takes oath as Prime Minister on 12 January 1972

Struggle for Survival:

The defeated and fleeing Pakistani forces destroyed all kinds of infrastructure, industries, mills-factories, educational and financial institutions as much as they could in order to turn war-ravaged Bangladesh into a graveyard. The task of reviving, rebuilding and in some cases reactivating the economy through reforms from these destructions was started from the very first day. Sheikh Mujib and his government also started to import and distribute food and essential commodities through state initiative for a short period. The state-owned Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) was established for importing food, edible oil, sugar, kerosene, pulses etc. The Consumers' Supplies Corporation (COSCOR) was launched to distribute commodities essential for day to day living throughout the country. Statutory and in some instances rectified rationing system were introduced in accordance with clear-cut directives of the Father of the Nation. Compared to other countries that achieved independence through armed struggles, the fatalities in liberated Bangladesh were comparatively less; this was a big proof of the initial successes of the farsighted economic policies pursued by the Father of the Nation. The war-wounded freedom fighters were sent to different friendly countries including East Germany for their treatment and rehabilitation. The deadly mines planted by the defeated and fleeing Pakistani forces were deactivated with the assistance of the Soviet Union. The sea-port was also reactivated with Soviet assistance. Some friendly countries including India and Iraq sent assistance of food and essential commodities. The central bank was launched with grants of foreign currencies from Sweden and Canada. The Netherlands gave a plant protection aeroplane. The UNDP sanctioned Bangladesh's share from the resources allotted for Pakistan.

Laying the Economic Foundation for the Medium Term:

With the objective of economic emancipation, the Father of the Nation attached

highest priority to reducing the income inequality between the urban and rural areas through developing agriculture, education, health and industries sectors and rural development. A devoted well-wisher of the peasants and working class people, some of the steps that were taken for the benefit of agriculture and agriculturists as per specific desire, directives and instructions of the Father of the Nation were as follows:

1. Rebuild the agricultural infrastructure that was destroyed;
2. Supply of agricultural equipments; arrangements were made for supplying 40 thousand low-lift power-pumps, 2900 deep tube-wells and 3000 shallow tube-wells at reduced price within 1973;
3. 16,125 tons of rice-seed, 454 tons of jute-seed and 1,037 tons of wheat-seed were supplied on an emergency basis, either free of cost or at token price, for increasing agricultural production within 1972;
4. The peasant community were absolved from the 1 million certificate cases lodged during the rule of occupying Pakistani forces and all their arrear loans and interests were waived;
5. Taxes for land of up to 25 Bighas were waived;
6. As price support, minimum fair prices were fixed for ensuring fair price of important agricultural commodities like paddy, jute, tobacco and sugarcane;
7. The low-priced ration facility was brought within the purchasing power of the poor farmers in order to save them; and
8. Arrangements were made for educating the children of poor peasant families free of cost through government expenses.

The status of agriculture sector has been strengthened today due to the growth trend sown at the very beginning. In 1972, food-grain production in the country was only 11 million tons. The quantity of cultivable land has now decreased by 15 percent. Despite that, total food-grain production in Bangladesh stood at 39 million tons in 2016. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization says, currently Bangladesh occupies tenth position in the world by producing 55 million tons of food. Bangladesh is the fourth largest producer of fish in the world. This success could be achieved through continuation of the welfare-oriented and farsighted policies initiated by the Father of the Nation, as well as the policies and strategies pursued during the past eight and a half years.



Bangabandhu in cabinet meeting

The West Pakistani owners of industries, banks and insurance companies that were shut down during the liberation war fled from this country. The Bangabandhu government decided to revive these industries and other institutions under ten sector corporations. Administrators were appointed at abandoned enterprises, but they were inexperienced in management and were therefore failures in most cases. Corruption also emerged. In this backdrop, the government created the industrial management service cadre. Efforts were made to prevent the centralisation of economic power by reviving the banks and insurance companies under the state-owned sector. The central bank was established. The services were democratised, the number of levels were reduced, and the gap between the highest and lowest salaries was decreased.

More emphasis was placed on the small and cottage industries so that they could flourish in rural Bangladesh, agro-based industries could be set up, poverty could be alleviated and disparities between the towns and villages and the rich and the poor could be reduced. But the Bangabandhu government was also aware that visible progress could not be made without large industries. Especial attention was paid to the health and education sectors as progress in these sectors raises the life expectancy of people, generates human resources and enhances responsibility as well as productivity at the work-place.

Long-term Interest of Bangladesh Economy:

The government took the initiative to build infrastructures for long-term benefit of the economy. The Father of the Nation started preliminary work for building the Jamuna Bridge with assistance from his old friend and Japanese parliamentarian



Bangabandhu meets UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim

Hayakawa. He made arrangement with India under the historic Ganges water-sharing agreement to get 44,000 cusecs of water for the lower riparian Bangladesh. Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman refused to take responsibility for the liability Pakistan owed to the development partners; rather he extracted Bangladesh's share from the grants sanctioned by the development partners including the United Nations. In the face of opposition from the socialist currents within the government, he adopted a realistic policy and agreed to join the consortium for aid to Bangladesh led by the World Bank; but as an exception, its first meeting was held in Dhaka. A land boundary agreement was signed with India. For eliciting the just share of Bangladesh with regard to the maritime boundary and the continental shelf, Bangabandhu submitted Bangladesh's claim in September 1974 to the United Nations and started discussions on the issue with Burma (At present Myanmar). Boosted by that strength and through exceptional diplomatic initiatives, legal preparations, survey maps and all other ground-works, the daughter of the Father of the Nation and leader of the masses Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina's government got positive verdicts from the International Tribunal on the Laws of the Seas (ITLOS) in the dispute with Burma (Myanmar) in 2012 and with India in 2014. A maritime area of 118 thousand square kilometres could be obtained in the process, as well as the right over 200 nautical miles of territorial waters and the continental shelf. Huge potentials of a blue economy materialized thereby. The Father of the Nation also nationalised oil and gas sectors in 1973 by applying his farsighted wisdom.

Within the framework of a perspective plan, the First Five Year Plan (1973-78) was launched in line with the four pillars of the constitution, viz. democracy, socialism, secularism and nationalism. It was aimed at alleviating poverty, rehabilitating the economy, a macroeconomic growth rate of at least 5.5 percent per year, fast production of essential commodities, controlling inflation, increasing per capita income by at least two and a half percent per year, extending incentives for employment generation and reduction of urban-rural and rich-poor disparities for evolving into a socialist economy, reducing dependence on foreign aid for building a self-reliant economy, bringing about a revolution in the agriculture sector through institutional and technological advancements, achieving self-sufficiency in food, planned families, achieving excellence in social security and human resources, equity and justice-based employment and opportunities for earning incomes. Policies and strategies were adopted for enhancing efficiency in economic activities and thereby creating opportunities for increased incomes for the working class. The Father of the Nation also took initiative for ensuring the progress of the disadvantaged population through imposing more taxes on the affluent classes if needed through the five-year plan; efforts were made to generate dynamism in raising the per capita income and standard of living of the working classes through economic activities. The goodwill that was created all over the world during a just and great war of liberation cum independence struggle under the dynamic, farsighted and fearless leadership of Sheikh Mujib gave rise to a unique ambience of goodwill and benevolence for Bangladesh, with the Mujib government pursuing the policy of "Friendship towards all, malice towards none".

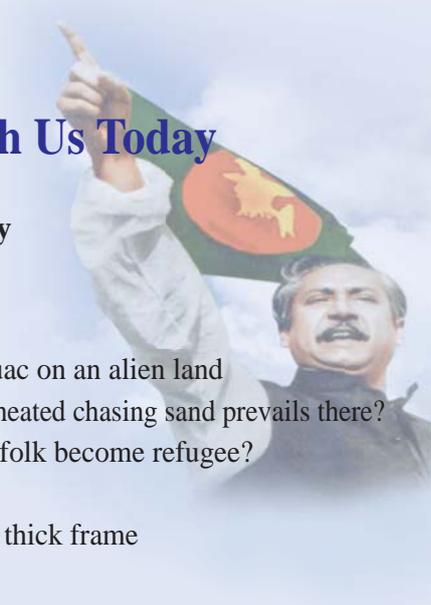
With the evolution of time, the economy of Bangladesh also took a turn for a free-market economy like most other countries. But by upholding and attaching highest priority and resolve for a welfare-state as desired by the Father of the Nation, Bangladesh's socio-economic orbit and path of advancement have been strengthened during the past decade. Bangladesh has achieved enviable macroeconomic progress and heart-warming exceptional social advancement under the innovative and courageous leadership at the front of the friend of the masses Sheikh Hasina. Many organizations and eminent personalities including the United Nations, World Food Program, Washington Times and the Fortune Magazine have conferred laudatory citations and awards for the selfless services of Sheikh Hasina. The trend of our great progress would be speeded up by treading the path and economic philosophy left behind by the Father of the Nation. That would fulfil our dream for a democratic Bangla of gold free from hunger, poverty, ill-health, shelter-deprivation, illiteracy, communalism and violent militancy. And the nation is now repaying the debt of blood of 15 August in that way.

Translation: Dr. Helal Uddin Ahmed

Courtesy: Press Information Department

He is Much More With Us Today

Asad Chowdhury



How many times can a lone life bivouac on an alien land
When neither mighty snowstorm nor heated chasing sand prevails there?
How many times can the distressed folk become refugee?
With patience and courage in heart
They regarded the broken specs with thick frame
and the pipe that fell down yonder
as their lighthouse
For the way to freedom was far long to go.
Well, how a dead person can extend his helping hands
Show the right path
and correct destination?
This is how to tread one's way without a pause.
One who embraced marred, stained golden Bangla
With great affection
With full-throated voice I proclaim
'My golden Bangla
I love thee...'

Translation : Saera Habib

Courtesy: Press Information Department



Significance of Eid-al-Adha And Its Celebration in Bangladesh

Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman Khan



The holy Kaba and its surrounding areas

The significance of Eid-al-Adha in the Muslim Ummah is very important, valuable and instructive. It lies in the self-sacrifice, abnegation and dedication of the Muslims, and teaches us to be self-devoted and self-denying. In addition, the significance of Eid-al-Adha brings us together on the same platform and makes us forget the difference between the rich and the poor; the high and the low and thereby brings oneness in thoughts and ideas and strengthens the faith in Allah and the unity in the Muslim Ummah. Furthermore, it inspires us to be loyal and submissive to the Almighty, and purifies our soul and heart and makes our mind happy. It also promotes social ties, friendship and unity among the Muslims and brings opportunities to the devotees and adorers of Allah to offer their prayers together to the Almighty in a big and significant congregation. On this occasion, the payer is offered for the wellbeing of the people and also for the salvation of the departed souls. The Muslims on the prayer mats with folded hands shed tears and offer prayers sincerely to Allah for the peace and prosperity and to end the sufferings and privation of mankind. Thus, this significant occasion of Eid-al-Adha brings Muslims the opportunity to promote universal brotherhood and religious spirits all over the world. So, it is hoped that realizing the significance of Eid-al-Adha, the Muslims will uphold and maintain the significance and spirits of it forever.

Origin of Eid-al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice)

Eid-al-Adha or the festival of sacrifice and its significance originated from the event that Allah commanded Ibrahim (Abraham), one of the prophets, to sacrifice his beloved son Ismail (Ishmael) in the name of Allah and, upon having the commandment in a dream, Ibrahim (A) with the full consent of his son Ismail started making preparation to submit to the will of Allah. They were proceeding to Mina, a dry and rocky place near Makkah (Mecca), where the slaughter would take place. During that holy journey, Satan (the devil) tried its best to tempt and dissuade them from carrying out the commandment of Allah. But they were determined to execute the order of the Almighty. So, Ibrahim (A) drove Satan away by flinging and throwing pebbles at him. However, they finally foiled the ploy of Satan and reached Mina. When Ibrahim (A) was ready to slaughter his son Ismail, Allah was pleased to intervene by sending his angel Jibrail (Gabriel), who then put a sheep in the place of his son. Ibrahim (A) was astonished to see that his son was unhurt, instead a sheep was slaughtered. Thus, Abraham passed the test to carry out God's commandment. Since then, the commemoration of the festival of sacrifice of animals has become part of the rituals in Islam. From that event of sacrifice, the solvent Muslims observe Eid-al-Adha to show honor and obedience to the willingness of Ibrahim (A) and the commandment of Allah. Thus, the observance of Eid-al-Adha originated from that event and came to be prevalent and in vogue in the Muslim Ummah. Eid-al-Adha continues for three days from the date of its observance.

Significance of Eid-al-Adha

The significance of Eid-al-Adha is treated and regarded as an important ritual part of Islam since the event of Ibrahim (A) and his son Ismail (A) at Mina as mentioned above. It is the Islamic festival to commemorate the willingness, steadfast loyalty and unprecedented faith in Allah of Hazrat Ibrahim (A) to follow Allah's commandment to sacrifice his dearest possession i.e. his son Ismail. It is the second Eid of the year, coincides with the end of Hajj.

Eid-al-Adha is the golden opportunity to the Muslims to honour and commemorate the event that took place at Mina more than 4,000 years ago (Source: The World Book of Encyclopedia) in connection with Hazrat Ibrahim (A) and his son Ismail (A). Some rituals that originated from that event are interconnected with the Eid-al-Adha (Sacrifice feast) and the Holy Hajj (Pilgrimage). On the occasion of Hajj and Eid-al-Adha millions of solvent and sound Muslims from all over the world gather in the biggest congregation at Mecca and offer their prayers together to the Almighty for the wellbeing, peace, prosperity and happiness of mankind.

On the day of Eid-al-Adha Muslims all over the world gather at Eid Jamat (congregation) in their respective localities and pray to Almighty Allah to relieve and eliminate human sufferings and afflictions and make the people peace-loving and the world a peaceful one. The people also pray for forgiveness of their sins and to strengthen faith in Allah.

On this occasion, the Muslims find the opportunity to purify and cleanse their heart and mind by dispelling malice and enmity from the mind. Moreover, it may be hoped that even people other than Muslims will come forward to the festive occasion, bury the individual and collective differences and give peace a lasting chance, and the total peace will bring about development and promote the spirit of



Cattle Market on the occasion of Eid-al-Adha

good relations among human beings on earth. This is how the Eid-al-Adha brings about continued peace in the Muslim Ummah as well as among the mankind in the whole world.

Eid-al-Adha prayer is very significant and meaningful for the Muslims in this sense that it is an annual reunion of the Muslims all over the world. And this reunion promotes brotherly relations and universal brotherhood among the Muslim communities of the world.

On this occasion, in commemoration and in honor of the event that symbolizes the highest loyalty and submission to Allah, the solvent Muslims perform this outstanding act of virtue in different parts of the world by performing Qurbani i.e. sacrificing animals like cows, sheep, camels, goats etc.

For the solvent Muslims 'Qurbani' is 'Wajib (Obligatory)'. Here solvent means, if a person owns 7.5 tola gold or 52.5 tola silver or equal amount of money or possessions other than the essential items that are equivalent to at least the current value of 52.5 tola silver on the days of Eid-al-Adha (3 days), he or she will have to sacrifice animals in the name of Allah.

Animals chosen for sacrifice must be of certain age, and free from any physical defects. The animal for sacrifice must be physically sound and must not be blind, lame and horn-broken. It must be free from diseases. The sacrifice begins following the prayers of Eid-al-Adha and it continues up to the sunset of the next two days.

A camel, cow, buffalo, ox, bull-ox aged not below two years can be chosen to sacrifice on behalf of one to seven persons maximum, while a lamb, sheep or a goat aged not below one year can be sacrificed on behalf of one person only. Meat, hide, bone or any part of the body of the sacrificed animals religiously are not permitted to sell for those who sacrifice the animal. In this connection the Holy Quran clearly mentions:

“It is not their meat
Nor their blood, that reaches
God: it is your piety
That reaches Him: He
Has thus made then subject
To you, that ye may glorify
God for His guidance to you:
And proclaim the Good News
To all who do right.” (22: 37).

The ultimate meaning of piety (taqwa) is that, if it is needed, a faithful Muslim can sacrifice all that he possesses even his own life for the sake of Almighty Allah.

When the flesh of the slaughtered animals are cut into pieces, the whole amount of meat is divided into three equal shares; one-third is given to the poor and the needy people, another one-third is given to the neighbours, friends and relatives, and the remaining one-third is kept for the consumption of own family. This distribution of meat gives spiritual pleasure and satisfaction to the Muslims. The poor and the needy people, who hardly get the opportunity to have meat round the year, also get pleasure to have a share of meat this time.

Eid-al-Adha gives a great opportunity to the rich and the solvent people to discharge their responsibility towards the poor and the needy by distributing meat and other food items. Therefore, we find that Eid-al-Adha promotes humanity towards the poor and marks the cordiality and heartiness between the rich and the poor.

Eid-al-Adha is a glorious day of redemption, and on that day the faithful believers repent of their past misdeeds and seek redemption, expiation, salvation and



Largest eid congregation of the country at Sholakia



Muslims embrace each other after Eid prayer

deliverance from sins and vices. God is very forgiving and may kindly grant His mercy and bestow His blessings upon them without measure for their religious performance. The day is also regarded as one of the virtuous days of forgiveness because the faithful Muslims assemble in the congregation of the day, and they all wholeheartedly pray to gracious God for forgiveness and strength of faith. On this historic, eventful and memorable day, the Muslims forget the differences in status between them, and the destitute and the vulnerable people in society. The well-to-do gracious Muslims treat the destitute and the vulnerable people to improved food and drink and become cordial, friendly and amiable to them. Thus, Eid-al-Adha brings solemnity, religious fervour and a significant change in the mind of the Muslims all over the world.

In the Dark Age or in the era of Jahiliya, idols were smeared with blood of the sacrificed animals and the meat was distributed as the propitiatory offerings. There have been instances of human sacrifices and slaughters. But animal sacrifice on Eid-al-Adha has abolished and eliminated this unethical and gruesome and grisly practice of human sacrifice forever, and it has also rooted out the custom of smearing and rubbing idols with the blood of sacrificed animals. The act of Qurbani in the name of Allah is clearly different from the rituals practiced in the Dark Age by the idol worshippers.

In spite of considerable, potential, profound and religious significance of the Eid-al-Adha, certain interested quarters of the society may have adverse comments and observations on the issue of the festival of sacrifice of animals. They may comment in this way that a very large number of animals are sacrificed and killed all over the Muslims world on the occasion of Eid-al-Adha every year. As a result, a considerable number of livestock decrease and diminish. And this

festival causes tremendous adverse effect on livestock, and brings about economic depression and wastage of national resources. They may put forward these arguments against the sacrifice of animals. Their arguments apparently may be convincing and conclusive. But truly and sincerely speaking, those arguments can easily be refuted and deemed as unacceptable and disagreeable. Firstly, if we look at the issue deeply and deliberately, we find that the commandment to sacrifice animals came from Allah. It is obligatory for every solvent Muslim to sacrifice animals and they cannot avoid it nor can they disobey it. Secondly, in support of the feast of sacrifice, it may politely and meekly be presented that after the Eid-al-Adha, the rate of animal slaughter in different markets and bazar of towns and villages for daily consumption of the people within the next one month or two is very low. It is because the meat that is collected and preserved is used for day to day consumption for the next one or two months. As a result, the sacrifices of the less number of animals in the next one or two months make up for the sacrifices of the animals on the day of Eid-al-Adha. Consequently, no adverse impact comes upon the livestock or the national resources rather it is the main source of earnings for many farmers,

who rear the cattle round the year only to sell those on the occasion of Eid-al-Adha and thus they contribute to increase the number of cattle of the country. Moreover, the tannery and leather industries of the country have been developed depending on the hides collected mainly from this occasion. From a report published in the dailies recently, it is learnt that Bangladesh earns about 200 crore (2 billion) taka per year from exporting wastage like horns, hoofs, bones, animal fats etc. that comes from the sacrificed animals.

Now, we may focus as to how Eid-al-Adha is celebrated in Bangladesh.

Celebration of Eid-al-Adha in Bangladesh

Eid-al-Adha is celebrated with due solemnity, religious fervor and enthusiasm in Bangladesh where about 90% people are Muslims. This occasion is celebrated on the 10th of Dhu al Hijjah (Zilhaj). It is celebrated throughout the country in a befitting manner. The Muslims of rural and urban areas get up from bed early in the morning. After offering Fajr prayer they take bath in the morning and put on new or clean dress and cap and use perfume. Then they start going to Eidgah, the venue of prayers. Usually the congregational prayer is held on an open field otherwise in mosques. The prayer of Eid-al-Adha consists of two rakats, which is wadib (obligatory) performed by six additional takbirs behind the Imam.

The National Eid Congregation is held in the National Eidgah adjacent to the High Court in the capital while the biggest congregation of the country is held at Solakia in Kishoreganj District. People from home and abroad come here to offer their prayers. The two city corporations arrange more than 400 Eid congregations in the capital city.

At the end of the prayer, the Imam appeals and seeks blessings and supplication from the Almighty for the peace, prosperity and happiness both for the Muslims and the country. Following the prayer, they embrace each other and exchange Eid greetings and come back home. Then they slaughter the Qurbani animals and divide the whole meat into three equal parts and distribute as per Islamic system.

In Bangladesh, three days are declared as the government holidays, which include



Special dishes prepared in Eid-al-Adha

the preceding day and the following day of 10th Zilhaj. On the day of Eid, people of both rural and urban areas visit their relatives and exchange their Eid-greetings. People of the urban areas visit different amusement parks and centers while the people of rural areas usually visit fairs held on the occasion.

The radio and television put up special programs on this occasion. Discussions at various levels are held marking the significance of the day. In the urban areas, the roads, streets and the public and private buildings, in the capital and in the divisional and district towns including the upazila headquarters are officially decorated with national flags and festoons and illuminated by lights to grace the occasion.

On this day improved diets such as semai, feni, sweets, biriyani, kabab, polao, roast etc. are served at hospitals, prisons, orphanages, safe homes, and shelter centers. The district administration, upazila administration and city corporations across the country, organize and draw up many programs including charity show to celebrate and observe Eid-al-Adha in a befitting manner.

On this occasion honourable President, Prime Minister, and leader of the opposition give messages wishing continued peace and prosperity of the people and the country.

Conclusion

Eid-al-Adha purifies our mind and heart and guides us to be pious. It broadens our mind and promotes our humanity to help the poor and the needy. Eid-al-Adha helps to dispel enmity, ill-feeling, malice and jealousy, and instead it fills our mind with love and sympathy. It spreads the universal brotherhood and reminds the rich Muslims of their bounden duty to the poor and the needy. It abolished and eliminated the custom of human sacrifice and smearing the idols with human blood. Eid-al-Adha is very much effective, and it has a significant role in moulding our lives and teaching us the practice of self-sacrifice, benevolence and complete submission to the will of Almighty Allah.

Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman Khan, Former Joint Secretary to the Government



Nazrul's Rebellion and Islamic Ideals

M. Mizanur Rahman

Our most revered National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam (1899-1976) was brought from India to Bangladesh on 24th May, 1972 and rehabilitated with the honor of 'National Poet' by the then Prime Minister, and the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Kazi Nazrul Islam was a born-poet having multi-faced genius. He was not only a great poet but also a novelist, play writer and writer of short stories. Moreover, he was also a prominent music composer of different classical music, ghazals, modern and folk songs, palagans (narrative opera), letto-folk songs and Islamic & Shyama devotional songs.

In this article Nazrul's rebellion thoughts along with Islamic ideals reflected particularly in the poems have been discussed in brief.

Nazrul was, basically, a romantic poet per excellence but he was born and brought up at a time when alien misrule by the tyrant British Imperialist and colonialist pervade all over the Indian subcontinent.

Nazrul became rebel in his literary arena to fight against all types of social ills like tyranny, injustice, hypocrisy, fanaticism, zealotry and bigotry.

His first anthology of poems *Agni Bina* (The Fiery Lyre) was published on 25th October 1922 in which a poem, '*Bidrohi* (The Rebel)', which was written in 1921, inspired and exhorted the readers all over India tremendously.

However, the poem '*Bidrohi*' was reciprocally published in 'The Moslem Bharat' and 'The Weekly Bijli' in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on 6th January in the same year i.e. Since then Nazrul became the famous Rebel Poet of the whole Indian subcontinent overnight at the age of 22 years only. As a young rebel poet his image turns to be fantastically overflowing in the history of Bengali poetry.

Till now this poem made Nazrul 'the poet of the Universe' also, due to its universal appeal as he should be popularly acclaimed for its excellent idiomatic stance, forceful characters and revolutionary traits. So unique this poem is even in the world of poetry ever known till now! In this poem Nazrul used a huge Hindu-Muslim and Greek mythological words to signify the moral sense of mighty human identity along with its daring features and exceptional power of egoism.



Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu was Present as the Chief guest at a function 'Lakho Konthe Bidrohi Kobita (Poem Bidrohi in thousand voices)' a Cultural programme organised by Banshori and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps at the gymnasium grounds of Dhaka University on May 1

The famous poem '*Bidrohi*' consisting 122 lines in total, in which the first three lines start as follows:

Bidrohi

Bolo Bir –

Bolo unnoto momo shir !

Shir nehari amari notoshir oi shikhor himadrir !

Here is the translation of the whole poem given below:

The Rebel

Say, 'O Hero',
 Say, 'My head's ever raised high!
 On seeing my head
 the peak of that Himalaya bows down!

Say, 'O Hero'
 Say, 'Tearing apart the firmament of the universe,
 overwhelming planets
 unlike the sun, the moon and the stars
 piercing through the cosmos
 and the heavenly seat of Khoda
 and of the cosmic earth,

I, becoming
 ever wonderment
 of the creator of the Universe,
 have risen myself!.

The Rudra (fierce) Bhagawan (God) shines
 on my forehead.

That's the brilliant victory
 of kinship.

I'm the eclipse of twelve suns
 of the doomsday! I, sometimes remain quiet,
 and become extreme despot sometimes!
 I'm adolescent of the sunny blood!
 I'm the destroyer God's pride!
 I'm the passionate air of God.
 I'm the restless flowing water!
 I'm the great roaring of the ocean!
 I'm shining, and I'm brilliantly shone!
 I'm the restless water rolling on
 unlike sparkling wave's rolling,
 as if, swinging cradle's billowing!
 I'm the virgin's unwound braid of hairs
 with anguish of youthful eyes,
 I'm the elixir of love of lotus hearted
 sweet sixteen, for I'm carnally happy!
 I'm in the state of apathy as the agitated one-
 a sigh of cry at the heart of the widow
 and the anguish of the dejected ones.
 I'm the anguish of all those remain ever destitute
 but of the way-laid homeless peoples.
 I'm the heartache of the disparaged
 where agony of poison injects humiliated mind.
 I'm sensitive and ever agitated at heart
 with the deepest sorrow and grief.
 I tremble stealing kiss of the virgin
 while touching her for the first time!
 I take a quick glance at the secret lover,
 feigning but looking at her all on a sudden!
 I'm the smart maiden's love in jingles bangles!
 I'm ever child! I'm ever juvenile!
 I'm the youthful shy of the country girl
 with marks of the upper and the lower bosoms
 tightly wrapped!

 I'm the Nor'easter!
 I'm the vernal breeze of the Indian musical mode!
 I'm the depth of the musical mode
 of the minstrel, a song 's sung in a bamboo flute!
 I'm the thirst of the passionate noon!
 I'm the scorching sun and I'm the oasis of the desert!
 I'm the shadowy imagery of dark greenery!
 I move on in ecstatic joy!

 O! What madness! I go mad! Suddenly
 I realize myself, all my barriers have been shattered!
 I'm the rise! I'm the fall!
 I'm the consciousness in mental obsession!
 I'm the victory flag at the gate of the universe
 on the triumphant standard of the Human!



Padma Bhushon award given to Nazrul in 1960 by Indian Government

because they need light, more light!
 They do not want this oppression and
 helplessness in the conflict.
 They say that if they pray together to Him,
 He will bestow upon us the pleasure
 of everyday's Eid on this dusty world.
 They want to bring rainbows from the seven skies;
 Allah is the great benefactor.

So He gives what one needs.
 Those who like to bring conflicts and bad time
 You will see that they will get what they desire.
 Let them go on their way. Let's go on our way.
 They want the reign of demon,

We want Allah's reign
 where always remains
 joyful pleasure except war.
 We will not feel anything wanting there;
 Everything will be filled in by our Lord.
 Whereas the vultures pick up quarrel
 with the corpse among themselves
 because it's their choice!

Let Allah save us that
 we should never go that (sinful) way.
 One Allah is our Lord. He is exquisitely beautiful!
 Let all bad become good on earth and good be best;
 This malicious darkness goes off by the light of love;
 Let all badness go out from the mind of the human beings
 and Lord's light lit everyone's room and everyone's way.
 They are thugs who loot
 the properties of others creating riots,
 they are greedy, they will not look into the path of Allah!
 How fearless and clean and sacred that path is!

The ghosts want ugliness in the rhymes of day and night
 and as such they want badness,
 conflicts and bad smells of melted corpses!

Those soldiers of Allah are yet to come
 who will strike and drive them out from the country.
 Those are bad traders who are ever known looters.
 They are the vampires.

Never go into their fold,
 for they spread the net around them
 but they are yet to see the sea-waves of lives.
 In each night and in each breath at day and night
 Dul-dul horse takes you to ride on its back
 and Allah will give you a sword in your hand.
 Those who sleep in idleness and in cowardliness
 they will neither see sun nor moon, they're decrepit.

Those who are ever young men,
 Come on young at heart, spell out all lethargies
 They throw mud,
 with scented flowers and say, Allah is Zindabad!
 (Allah is ever alive!)

Nazrul's in-born spirit of Islam played a great role to bring about humanitarian aspects of his revolution against the unjust tyrants of the world. His poetic accomplishment in "The Rebel" above has its symbols and metaphors used to signify the greatness of humanity.

Nazrul's rebellion was against the violation of universal human rights. He urged upon all for the establishment of equality among all human beings in society irrespective of their different religious faiths i.e. Caste and creeds, along with equal social, economic and political rights, and equal human status as enunciated in Islam in the truest sense of the terms.

In Islam unjust war or killings are strictly prohibited. The religion of Islam dictates peace of entire humanity irrespective of colors or creeds, and difference of faiths of human beings. That's the reason why the Quran also dictates the unity of mankind of the entire world in oneness irrespective of faiths for there should not be any conflicting chaos and confusion. The Muslim has become a nation to that end. So Kazi Nazrul Islam deliberates in another poem titled 'Amra Sei Se Jati (We are that Nation)' as follows:

We are that nation who sacrifices life for faith.
 We make this world of our own by dint of equality and fraternity.
 Out of the depth of dry dreary desert
 We have brought soothing streams of peace to this sunburn thirsty earth!
 We break barriers between high and low to give loving laps to all equally.
 That nation we are who feels Islam is not for the Muslim alone.
 Only s/he is a Muslim who is the protagonist of truth
 Resigning his \her self for Allah.
 A Muslim does not distinguish
 between the rich and the poor.
 We are that nation who gives women equal rights with men.
 We brought light of hope tearing apart the cover of darkness
 and everyone here is treated on equal footing.
 That nation we are! (Partly)

In Islam human equality is ensured so Nazrul sings of that human equality in all his poetic notions. As he stated in his poem 'Samyabadi (Equality)' :

"None is high or low, all men (and women) are equal,
 and none is either king or subjects of anyone.
 We all share happiness and sorrow equally. None
 has the right to hoard. Would some shed tears
 to put light on to another's room to enlighten the fate

of the few keeping the millions remained ill-fated?
It is not the law of Islam.” (Partly)

He also stated in the same poem

‘I sing of equality,-
where every barrier has been shattered and converged in oneness
where Hindu-Buddhist-Muslim-Christian converged in oneness.’

As we see in “The Rebel”, he proclaimed the song of life,

“I must rid the world of the war-mongering race... In vehement disdain I must extirpate the world in chains to create blithely once again that delightful world. Tired of war I, the great Rebel, would remain at peace only then, when the anguished cry of the oppressed would no longer rend the sky and air and the tyrant’s lethal weapons would not rattle in the battle field...I, the great Rebel, would remain at peace only then.”

Above all, Nazrul prayed to Allah for peace and happiness of mankind throughout the world. He never expects that anybody in the name Islam should do wrongs or unjust work against anybody whether he is Muslim or non-Muslim, he must be treated first as human being related to everything created on earth for his comfort, peace and happiness.

In recognition of his contribution to Bangla literature and culture, Dhaka University awarded him the honorary degree of DLitt at a special convocation on 9 December 1974. Earlier, in 1960, Nazrul was awarded ‘Padma Bhushan’, the third highest civilian award in the Republic of India in the field of Literature and Education. In January 1976 on February 21, the great poet was awarded the 'Ekushey Padak'. On 29 August 1976 the poet died at a hospital in Dhaka and was buried at the premises of Dhaka University central Mosque.

Poems, as above, are translated by the author. M. Mizanur Rahman is a poet, essayist, and columnist

Writer M. Mizanur Rahman honoured



M. Mizanur Rahman (4th from left) receiving award

Poet, Essayist and Columnist M. Mizanur Rahman, one of the regular writers of Bangladesh Quarterly, has been honored by Nazrul Academy for his outstanding contributions recently. On 25th May 2017 (11 Jaistha 1424 B.S.), the birth anniversary of our National poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, Nazrul Academy, Dhaka arranged a cultural function at the Silpokala Academy (Art & Dance) auditorium in which M. Mizanur

Rahman, Editor of the research oriented magazine ‘Nazrul Academy Patrika’, was awarded with a crest and flower bouquet for his outstanding contributions towards the development of the Nazrul Academy. The function was presided over by Abdul Hannan, Vice President, Nazrul Academy, while Zakir Hossain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture was the special guest. The function was conducted by Mintu Rahman, General Secretary, Nazrul Academy, Dhaka.



How Accreditation can support in achieving SDGs

Md. Abu Abdullah

Accreditation is an attestation of the competence and impartiality of conformity assessment bodies to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. These bodies include but are not limited to calibration laboratories, medical laboratories, testing laboratories, inspection bodies, providers of proficiency testing, producers of reference materials, and bodies that certify management systems, products and persons, or undertake verification and validation.

It is an impartial and objective process carried-out by third-parties that offers the most transparent, the most widely accepted, and the least discriminatory route for the formal recognition world-wide of credible and trustworthy conformity assessment results.

Accreditation can support in achieving 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 associated targets that constitute the core of the Agenda for Sustainable Development. These provide a new development framework that seeks to transform the world and guide all global, regional and national development endeavors for the next 14 years.

Accreditation supports governments and organizations in the process of enhancing energy efficiency and improving economic performance, while reducing consumption of resource and emissions and preventing unsafe, unhealthy or environmentally harmful products from entering the market place.

Accreditation of laboratories

Industries, whether they are from environmental, clinical, chemical, construction, forensic science, electrical, food or other sectors, routinely require laboratory testing or calibration services in support of their work. Accreditation provides a means of evaluating the competence of these laboratories to perform specific types of testing, measurement and calibration, and thus formal recognition that the laboratories meet the criteria of the internationally accepted standard ISO/IEC 17025 (or ISO 15189 for medical laboratories). Accreditation bodies use this standard to assess factors relevant to a laboratory's ability to



produce precise, accurate test and calibration data, including the technical competence of staff, validity and appropriateness of test methods, traceability of measurements and calibrations to national standards, calibration and maintenance of test equipment, the testing environment, sampling and handling of test items, and quality assurance of test and calibration data.

Out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, six i.e. goal 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 13 are connected with the accreditation, which are described below:



Goal 3. Good health and wellbeing

Health is a crucially important social and economic asset and a cornerstone for human development. Whilst the provision of universal health coverage remains a major global challenge, the use of accreditation within the health and social care sector can help drive up the quality and consistency of services provided.

Medical laboratory services are essential in the diagnosis and assessment of the health of patients, and encompass arrangements for requisition, patient preparation, patient identification, collection of samples, transportation, storage, processing and examination of clinical samples, together with subsequent result validation, interpretation, reporting and advice. Results need to be accurate, timely, linked to the correct patient and processed with respect for ethics, confidentiality and the safety of the patient. Accreditation to the internationally recognised standard ISO 15189 enables laboratories to demonstrate their competence to deliver these services reliably.

Also Point of Care Testing - where testing is carried out outside the controlled and regulated environment of a medical laboratory, to enable patients to still be able to trust the results. Reference material producers are to demonstrate that they are competent to produce necessary reference materials (such as blood, urine or serum), allowing laboratories to verify their ability to measure accurately.

Medical reference measurement laboratories to enable the accuracy and traceability of some measurements in medical laboratories need to be demonstrated. Accredited certification to ISO 9001 for organisations that provide of health and social care services demonstrate continuous support to quality. Accreditation of inspection bodies inspecting health related services. Medical devices under accredited certification to the international standard ISO 13485 demonstrating manufacturers address regulations and have commitment to safety and quality.



Goal 6. Safe food and clean drinking water

Food and water safety is an essential part of everyday life. Accreditation provides assurance that consumers, suppliers, purchasers and specifiers can have confidence in the quality and safety of goods and in the provision of services throughout the supply chain. Samples, products, services, management systems or personnel can be evaluated against specified requirements by

accredited laboratories, certification bodies, and inspection bodies to check that products are fit and safe for consumption.

Food and water testing for a wide range of chemical and microbiological scopes, packaging and environmental testing, sensory analysis, plant health and veterinary microbiology. Certification schemes ensure food and water suppliers throughout a supply chain complying with agreed requirements, such as those for food safety management systems farm assurance schemes, products certification food labelling organic certification and Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point (HACCP).



Goal 7. Enhancing the use of energy

The application of energy-efficient production processes and technologies, along with enhanced utilisation of renewable energy sources which will provide an opportunity for countries to follow a low-carbon and low-emission growth path, powered by innovative, smart and locally relevant energy solutions, is a challenging aspiration for the future.

The provision of energy involves complex supply chains and processes, often involving cross-border trade and the transportation of volatile substances. The commercial development of alternative renewable sources of energy needs to be environmentally-friendly, and demonstrate value in terms of cost, reliability, durability and performance.

Testing of gas, fuels and oils is meant to ensure that they meet their intended purpose, including testing for sulphur content, correct additives in the right concentrations or the presence of bacterial contaminants or fuel degradation levels.

Testing new technologies such as tidal and wind energy, wind turbines and solar panels is intended to measure performance, durability, safety, and environmentally-friendly considerations. Safety inspections of energy-related installations include petro-chemical, solar energy, marine and wind farms, energy efficient lighting, smart infrastructures, nuclear installations and coal-fired power stations. Certification of energy management systems is required to help businesses improve energy-related performance and identify energy opportunities.



Goal 8. Health and safety in the workplace

Health and safety are well recognised factors as having an impact on sustainable development -- from eradicating poverty through job creation, sustainable livelihoods, technology and skills development, food security and equitable growth to ensuring sustainable consumption and production through dealing with environmental concerns related to health and safety in the workplace.

Businesses face increasing social, commercial and regulatory pressures to assess and control hazards and risks from their operations. Accreditation ensures that employees, purchasers and regulators have confidence in the provision of services that have an impact on health and safety.



Goal 9. Accreditation in industry and manufacturing

Industrialisation is one of the main drivers of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Industry is also the most dynamic driver of prosperity and collective wellbeing. Industrial development is, therefore, a key objective intrinsically woven into the architecture of the SDG's 2030 Agenda. Manufacturers need to ensure that products are of consistent high quality, that they comply with regulations and standards,

and meet specifications. Accreditation enables consumers, suppliers, purchasers and regulators to have confidence that products placed on the market are safe and meet the manufacturers claims made about them.

Certification in a range of areas that provide supply-chain confidence for those operating in the manufacturing sector is required in respect of a host of products. These involve:

- ❑ Testing of food products, plastics, fuels and oils, detergents, paints and coatings, toys and consumer goods, textiles, glass, cosmetics, construction products, and electronic goods.
- ❑ Safety testing of products including children's cots and components, toys and their packaging, prams, bicycles, sport equipment. Textiles, leather goods, ceramic and glass wear, and articles intended for use with food.
- ❑ Chemical analysis and determination of physical parameters to ensure safe use of chemicals. Inspection is conducted throughout the manufacturing supply chain including design and manufacturing inspection of items of equipment, production capability assessment, the construction of pressure systems, storage vessels and tanks, process plant and systems, and the carriage of dangerous goods by rail or road.



Goal 13. Waste management and recycling

A sustainable environment for communities in the future needs cleaner energy, reduced pollution, and more effective chemical and waste management solutions to benefit from increased industrialisation while safeguarding people and the environment. Accredited testing, certification and inspection provides assurance that waste management and recycling are being managed effectively.

Proficiency testing provides for testing of a range of environmentally related activities including drinking water, industrial waste water, effluents, agricultural soils and sediments. Inspection of activities that have an environmental impact include manufacture of paper, wood containers, glass,

bricks, ceramic tiles, coke and refined petroleum, and re-cycling. Quality Management System certification provides a foundation for consistency of procedures across business in accordance with specific national or regional waste management regulations.

Accreditation of certification bodies

Third party certification of management systems is a frequently specified requirement to operate in the global market place. It can demonstrate compliance to a standard, a code of practice or regulatory requirements, and is frequently used in most areas covered by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Accreditation of certification bodies against the international standard ISO/IEC 17021 provides an independent evaluation of their impartiality, competence and consistency.



There are specific ISO certification standards, such as -- Quality Management System certifications (ISO 9001), Information Security Management (ISO/IEC 27001), Environmental Management (ISO 14001), IT Service Management (ISO 20000), Food Safety Management (ISO 22000), Supply Chain Security Management (ISO 28000), Business Continuity Management (ISO 22301), Health and Safety Management (OHSAS 18001), Information Technology Service Management (ISO/IEC 20000-1), Supply Chain Security Management (ISO 28000), Energy Management (ISO 50001), Asset Management (ISO 55001).

Accreditation may also be applied to certification used to provide third party assurance that a particular product meets the specified requirements of products standard (ISO/IEC 17065) or that persons meet the requirements of a particular personnel certification scheme (ISO/IEC 17024). More recently, greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies have also been accredited (ISO 14065).

Accreditation of inspection bodies

Inspection, which is the examination of a product design, product, service, process or installation to determine conformity with general or specified requirements, is an essential part of ensuring the operational safety of many items that the public use in their daily lives. Examples of activities which benefit from accreditation include inspection of boilers and pressure equipment used in the workplace, cranes and passenger ropeways, offshore structures for oil and gas exploration and production, mechanical equipment, as well as non-destructive testing, inspection of meat, dairy products and other food production, bio-security and border control inspections. Accreditation bodies use the criteria of the internationally accepted standard ISO/IEC 17020 to assess factors relevant to an inspection body's ability to produce consistently reliable and impartial inspection results.



Accreditation benefits both a country's domestic economy and its international trade. For governments and regulators, it could be used as an efficient monitoring tool. For business, it could be used for greater acceptance of product and services and a tool to avoid multiple testing. While for consumers, it ensures greater public confidence in goods and services in the marketplace.

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IPU assembly: A success for Bangladesh

Mobassera Kadery

different countries and representatives of different associated organisations attended. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) calls for fact-finding missions by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to the countries like Philippines, Turkey and Venezuela and some other countries on the closing day of the conference. IPU pushes for increased access to investigate human rights violations of MPs. It expressed concern about the cases of MPs in Cambodia, Malaysia and the Philippines in particular.

It is a great honour for Bangladesh to host the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference, the largest meeting of parliamentarians, for the five days held on 1-5th April 2017 in Dhaka. More than 1,200 persons attended the 136th assembly of IPU arranged by the Bangladesh Parliament and the IPU. Among them 607 MPs from 126 countries, 46 Speakers, 36 Deputy Speakers and 191 women MPs took part in this International Conference.

The main focus of the gathering was on ways and means to end political and economic disparity for promoting democracy and human rights. A lot of issues including women empowerment, gender parity, health and education have been discussed during the five-day assembly of the IPU. The participants have gone back with good memories of our country.

This conference has heightened Bangladesh to a new elevated position, where Members of Parliament from



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivered her inaugural speech in the IPU assembly at South Plaza at National Parliamentary Complex on 1 April 2017 in Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the IPU executive members in a photo session

Bangladesh has been a member of the Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) since 1972. Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP, present President of the IPU, is the 28th President of IPU, who has been elected to the position on 16th October 2014 for a term of three years. Bangladesh Parliament (Jatiyo Sangsad) is a unicameral legislature consisting of 350 Members of which 300 members are directly elected and the rest 50 are reserved for women. Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury MP is the first woman Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament and she is also the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) elected on 9th October 2014 for three years.

Agenda of the assembly were as follows

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 136th Assembly.
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on Redressing inequalities: Delivering on dignity and well-being for all
4. The role of parliament in preventing outside interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.
5. Promoting enhanced international cooperation on the SDGs, in particular on the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development.
6. Reports of the Standing committees
7. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on sustainable Development, Finance and Trade for the 138th assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
8. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and rules.

The IPU conference has opened up a new avenue for the international cooperation especially in trade and commerce sector. A number of delegations from different countries like Canada, Mexico, Iraq, Thailand, Ukraine, Sweden, Botswana, Mali participating in the 136th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference called on foreign minister A.H. Mahmood Ali at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center (BICC) during the last couple of days. During all those calls on, the foreign minister and the delegation leaders along with the other members interacted on different bilateral and international issues. The discussion covers strengthen bilateral cooperation in trade, economy, education, technology culture and other fields of mutual interest and enhance people to people contact. The foreign delegates also praise Bangladesh for holding such a huge event nicely and providing them with warm hospitality in a secured environment. The delegates

also express that in the coming days the bilateral relations with Bangladesh to continue to be strengthened.

In the IPU assembly Bangladesh has arranged a fair of Bangladeshi product in the BICC premises. In the fair lot of Bangladeshi product like garments, ornaments, pharmaceuticals, leather items, handloom, clay items, tea, and jamdani saree were displayed and sold. Economic diplomacy is very important in today's world. The IPU conference has a significant impact in this regard which eventually foster the volume of trade in future. Moreover this fair has showcases the history, culture and heritage of Bangladesh at a glimpse. So this conference has displayed a positive Bangladesh before the outside world. This is an achievement of this programme.

The global parliamentary community has called for urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen. In an emergency item was adopted 136th Assembly of the IPU, the Organization's Members committed to pressuring their governments to fund humanitarian relief operations to avert these type of crisis. IPU Members called upon the international community to take immediate action to prevent this potentially unprecedented famine and looming humanitarian catastrophe. They urged relevant governments to end hostilities and take every step to ensure unhindered humanitarian access.

The IPU resolution declared that the United Nations should commit the resources necessary to provide humanitarian support and nutritional relief. It stressed that particular attention needs to be focused on the most vulnerable groups, especially women, children and the aged.

Parliamentarians also called for more investment in mitigation activities that support vulnerable countries in adapting to climate change.

Rising levels of inequality undermine human rights and opportunity for all, having a direct impact on human well-being and setting the stage for economic, social and political instability. In response, in 2015, the international community agreed to take decisive action. Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals, calls on governments to "reduce inequalities within and among countries".

Articulating key areas of concern and possible interventions, this goal includes the following core targets:

1. By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 percent of the population at a rate higher than the national average;
2. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of



Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury delivered speech in the IPU assembly on April 2

all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status;

3. Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by



IPU President Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP presided over the meeting of Governing Council on April 5

- eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard;
4. Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve and action in this regard;
5. Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulation;
6. Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions;
7. Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

The general debate at the 136th IPU Assembly will advance awareness and discussion on these issues and indicate a way forward toward the implementation of Goal 10 of the SDGs. Parliamentarians are invited to share their national experience in tackling economic, social, and political inequality, its impact on the poor, women and vulnerable groups, as well as, more critically, concrete policy proposals to effectively address the problem, both within and among countries. At the IPU Assembly, the parliamentarians of different countries have raised their voices to fight discrimination, violence and gender disparity. So the 136th IPU Assembly has made a very significant contribution towards redressing inequality and all sorts of violence as well as to establish equity based society across the globe.

This conference has brought a great confidence and faith of global community towards the advancement of democracy in Bangladesh. Parliamentarians of different countries responded to Bangladesh's progress in various sector through their participation in the assembly. They also praised the advancement of Bangladesh made under the vibrant leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and they perceived Bangladesh not only a model for development but also a model country for parliamentary democracy practice.

Mobassera Kadery, Senior Information Officer, Press Information Department



Effective Communication in Business: A Study of Efforts to Overcome Barriers

Mohammad Masudur Rahman

takes time and effort to develop these skills and become an effective communicator. The more effort and practice someone puts in, the more instinctive and spontaneous communication skills will become. Effective business communication is considered as technology in today's business world (Lesiker & Flatley, 2005)

Communication is what it does—bringing people together by establishing commonness among people. The message—verbally or non-verbally developed idea, the medium-carrier of the message and the environment—surroundings in which communication takes place, bring about this commonness, a situational relationship for a common purpose. The word communication is derived from the Latin word, 'Communis', which means common (Chaturvedi, 2006). Communication may be understood as transfer of information, idea, opinion, attitude etc. from a sender to a receiver with a view to making it understandable to the latter. It can be defined as the process of effective transmission of information from one person to another (Khan & Taher, 2014). Communication can be defined as the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one

Communication is the process of transmitting information from sender to receiver. Communication is about more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. Effective communication is also a two-way street. It's not only how to convey a message so that it is received and understood by someone in exactly the way intended. It's also how someone listens to gain the full meaning of what's being said and to make the other person feel heard and understood.

Effective communication combines a set of skills including nonverbal communication, engaged listening, managing stress in the moment, the ability to communicate assertively, and the capacity to recognize and understand own emotions and those of the person are communicating with. Effective communication enables to communicate even negative or difficult messages without creating conflict or destroying trust (Porges, Stephen W., 2011). While effective communication is a learned skill, it is more effective when it's spontaneous rather than formulaic. Of course, it

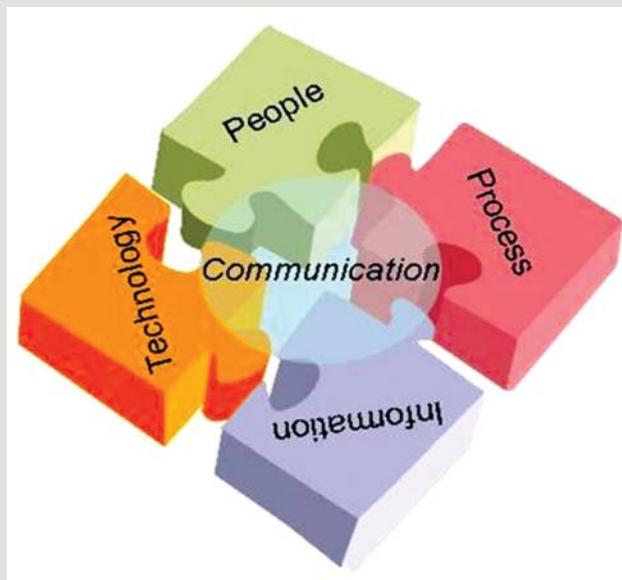
person to another (Keyton, 2011). Effective communication is meant the process of sending a message in such a way that the message received is close in meaning to the message intended.

Communication process involves some steps i.e. thought, encoding, transmission, reception, decoding, understanding and feedback (Heinz & Koontz, 1994). Every step in the communication process is necessary for effective and good communication.

The process of communication begins when one person (sender) initiates a thought. The next step is to encode the meaning of the thought into a form appropriate to the situation and the receiver. After encoding, the message is transmitted through the appropriate channel. In the fourth step the message is received and decoded by the receiver via such senses as eyesight and hearing. After the message is received, it must be translated into understanding to the receiver. In many cases, this meaning prompts a response, i.e. feedback. The cycle is repeated when a new message is sent through the same steps by the original sender (Khan and Taher, 2014).

Two common elements in every communication exchange are the sender and the receiver. The sender initiates the communication. The sender is a person who has a need or desire to convey an idea or concept to others. The receiver is the individual to whom the message is sent. The sender encodes the idea by selecting words, symbols, or gestures with which to compose a message. The message is the outcome of the encoding, which takes the form of verbal, non-verbal, or written language. The message is sent through a medium or channel, which is the carrier of the communication. The medium can be a face-to-face conversation, telephone call, e-mail, or written report. The receiver decodes the received message into meaningful information. Noise is anything that distorts the message. Different perceptions of the message, language barriers, interruptions, emotions, and attitudes are examples of noise. Finally, feedback occurs when the receiver responds to the sender's message and returns it to the sender. Feedback allows the sender to determine whether the message has been received and understood (Lunenburg, 2010).

Obstructions or hindrances that disturb smooth flow of a message from the sender to the receiver may be termed as communication barriers. Because of the complexity of the communication process, problems arise at every stage resulting in distortion of communication. Four types of barriers are process barriers, physical barriers, semantic barriers, and psychosocial barriers (Eisenberg, 2010).



Inter connectivity of the elements of communication

Process Barriers

Such barriers may lead to distortion of communication. The following situations may be observed to be considered:

- ❑ **Sender barrier.** A new administrator with an innovative idea fails to speak up at a meeting, chaired by the superintendent, for fear of criticism.
- ❑ **Encoding barrier.** A Spanish-speaking staff member cannot get an English-speaking administrator to understand a grievance about working conditions.
- ❑ **Medium barrier.** A very upset staff member sends an emotionally charged letter to the leader instead of transmitting her feelings face-to-face.
- ❑ **Decoding barrier.** An older principal is not sure what a young department head means when he refers to a teacher as "spaced out."
- ❑ **Receiver barrier.** A university administrator who is preoccupied with the preparation of the annual budget asks a staff member to repeat a statement, because she was not listening attentively to the conversation.
- ❑ **Feedback barrier.** During a meeting, the failure of administrators to ask any question causes the management to wonder if any real understanding has taken place. Because communication is a complex, give-and-take process, breakdowns anywhere in the cycle can block the transfer of understanding.

Physical Barriers

Any number of physical distractions can interfere with the effectiveness of communication, including a telephone call, drop-in visitors, distances between people, walls, and static on the radio. People often take physical barriers for granted, but sometimes they can be removed. For example, an inconveniently positioned wall can be removed.

Semantic Barriers

The words we choose, how we use them, and the meaning we attach to them cause many communication barriers. The problem is semantic, or the meaning of the words we use. The same word may mean different things to different people. Words and phrases such as efficiency, increased productivity, management prerogatives, and just cause may mean one thing to a university administrator, and something entirely different to a staff member. Technology also plays a part in semantic barriers to communication.

Psychosocial Barriers

Three important concepts are associated with psychological and social barriers: fields of experience, filtering, and psychological distance (Antos,2011). Fields of experience includes people's backgrounds, perceptions, values, biases, needs, and expectations. Senders can encode and receivers decode messages only in the context of their fields of experience. Filtering means that more often than not we see and hear what we are emotionally tuned in to see and hear. Filtering is caused by our own needs and interests, which guide our listening. Psychosocial barriers often involve a psychological distance between people that is similar to actual physical distance.

Importance of Communication in Business

As we found in this research work most of the employers have opined that one of the biggest challenges managers face is communication. And yet, communication

is also one of the most critical aspects of leadership. Without good communication, managers can fail to gain commitment from employees, fail to achieve business goals and fail to develop rapport with the people on their team. In short, they can fail as leaders no matter how good their intentions may be.

Front-line employees simply don't need the same level of communication skills as leaders do. But when employees rise to leadership positions, they must learn to connect with a greater number of people more effectively to get the job done.

According to the perception of employers and employees, successful communication by administrators is the essence of a productive organization. According to them the following are the major areas where communication breakdowns most frequently occur in organization:

Sincerity. Nearly all respondents assert that sincerity is the foundation on which all true communication rests. Without sincerity—honesty, straightforwardness, and authenticity—all attempts at communication are destined to fail.

Empathy. The collective opinions of the respondents and other existing research show that lack of empathy is one of the major obstacles to effective communication. Empathy is the ability to put one's self into another's shoes. The empathetic person is able to see the world through the eyes of the other person.

Self-perception. How employees see themselves affects their ability to communicate effectively. A healthy but realistic self-perception is a necessary ingredient in communicating with others.

Role perception. Unless people know what their role is, the importance of their role, and what is expected of them, they will not know what to communicate, when to communicate, or to whom to communicate.

Efforts to distort the message. Pitfalls in communication often occur in our efforts—both consciously and unconsciously—to distort messages.

Images. Another obstacle to successful communication is the sender's image of the receiver and vice versa. For example, on the one hand, administrators are sometimes viewed as not too well informed about teaching, seen as out of touch with the classroom, and looked on as paper shufflers. On the other hand, some administrators view teachers as lazy, inconsiderate of administrative problems, and unrealistic about the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Such views lead to a "we-they" attitude.

Vehicle for message. The vehicle by



World wide communication system made easy the interaction among people

which we choose to send messages is important in successful communication. In most cases, the vehicle to be used is defined by the situation.

Ability to communicate. Some of the ways we communicate raise barriers by inhibiting discussion or causing others to feel inferior, angry, hostile, dependent, compliant, or subservient.

Listening ability. Frequently, people fail to appreciate the importance of listening, do not care enough to become actively involved with what others are saying, and are not sufficiently motivated to develop the skills necessary to acquire the art of listening.

Culture. Our cultural heritage, biases, and prejudices often serve as barriers to communication. The fact that we are Bangladeshi or American or white, young or old, male or female have all proved to be obstacles in communicating effectively.

Tradition. Past practice in an organization helps us determine how, when, and what we send and receive. For example, an administrator who has an authoritative style may find that his staff will not share information readily. If a new administrator with a collaborative style replaces the authoritarian one, the new administrator may find that it takes a while for his colleagues to speak out on important issues.

Conditioning. The manner in which communication is conditioned by the environment influences the accuracy of messages sent and received. If we work for administrators who set a climate in which we are encouraged to share information, we soon become conditioned to communicate accordingly.

Noise. A major barrier to communication is what communication experts call noise. Noise consists of the external factors in the channels and the internal perceptions and experiences within the source and the receiver that affect communication.

Feedback. Feedback improperly given can impede communication rather than improve it. Administrators and followers both need more training in how to use feedback more productively.

Findings of the Study:

- ❑ The respondents believe that successful communication by stakeholders is the essence of a productive organization. They have also opined that one of the biggest challenges managers face is communication.
- ❑ According to the respondents, managers can enhance their communication skills with commitment and practice using a few key strategies that can help determine what, when and how to communicate effectively in business. Sincerity is the foundation on which all true communication rests. Without sincerity all attempts at communication i.e. —honesty, straightforwardness, and authenticity—are destined to fail.
- ❑ Lack of empathy is one of the major obstacles of effective communication. An empathetic employee can see through the eyes of the other person. Empathy is considered as the ability to put one's self into another's shoes.
- ❑ It has been observed that employees of some of the organizations do not clearly know what their role is, the importance of their role, and what is expected of them, they do not know what to communicate, when to communicate, or to whom to communicate. It is essential to know the employees about their precise roles in the organization.

- ❑ Distorted message is considered as pitfalls in communication. It is recommended to avoid it consciously.

- ❑ The appropriate use of the proper channel of communication is seen absent in organizations. The medium by which we choose to send messages is important in successful communication. In most cases, the medium to be used is defined by the situation.



Effective communication needs a healthy relation with colleagues

- ❑ We have examined that employees in some organizations do not care enough to become actively involved with what others are saying, and are not sufficiently motivated to develop the skills necessary to acquire the art of listening.
- ❑ The human element is still most important in communications. For example, a professional writer will be better trained if he acquires some knowledge of the psychology of communication and of motivation.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Effective communication is a two-way process that requires effort and skill by both sender and receiver. Employees at times assume each of these roles in the communication process. Several communication theorists (Cheney, 2011; Keyton, 2011; Tourish, 2010; Murphy, 2003, 1997) have drawn together some guidance of good communication, which are applicable to the sender and also for receiver. Communication depends on the ability not only to send but also to receive messages. So the ability to listen effectively greatly enhances the communication process. Many of us are not good listeners. The role of the sender will be on the lines stated below:

1. Clarify ideas before communicating. The more systematically administrators analyze the problem or idea to be communicated, the clearer it becomes. This is the first step toward effective communication.
2. Examine the true purpose of each communication. Before communication, they must ask themselves what they really want to accomplish with their message—obtain information, initiate action, or change another person's attitude.
3. Consult with others, when appropriate, in planning communications.
4. It is needed to communicate for tomorrow as well as today.
5. It is to be sure that actions of the organization should support the

communications. In the final analysis, the most persuasive kind of communication is not what administrators say, but what they do.

The receiver has greater responsibility to make communication effective. The role of the receiver will be on the lines stated below:

1. Avoiding premature judgment. The receiver must avoid making premature judgment about the sender and the message.
2. Putting the talker at ease. Helping a person feel free to talk. This is often called a permissive environment.
3. Stop talking. This is first and last, because all other guides depend on it. One cannot do an effective listening job while she or he is talking.
4. Providing responsive feedback. Responsive feedback refers to the understanding of the message by the receiver and a spontaneous reply.
5. Effective listening. Effective listening involves being receptive to both information and feelings.

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Bangladesh: A Gastronomy Tourism Destination

Ziaul Haque Howlader

Bangladesh's traditional cuisines have already acclaimed much fame especially in Europe. Among the many world famous chefs, Bangladeshi chefs have also berthed in the list by virtue of their qualities and skills. The traditional food has reached such a position after crossing a long way. Therefore, we can proudly claim that Bangladeshi traditional cuisines are among the list of world's most delicious food. From the time-immemorial, this part of Bengal was attracted by many travellers from far and wide of the world due its availability of a wide variety of food. In fact, this Bengal though termed as hinterland, was much fertile and farmers used to make a good harvest. That is why, Bangladesh every year celebrates harvest festival since long. Apart from these, the moderate climatic conditions and a good geographical location help this part of Indian subcontinent cultivating various types of crops, spices. These help to diversify its food items. On the other hand, Bangladesh is criss-crossed by many serpentine rivers that help us having more and more fishes. Therefore, Bangladesh is termed as 'Bengalees are of rice and fish'. Rice



Mutton Kacchi biryani, a delicious dish liked by all



Chicken Korma



Shik Kabab (Shish Kebab)



Shrimp Polao



Mustard (shorshe) Ilish



Pabda (butterfish) curry

and fish are our staple food. Fish based food are many in Bangladesh. In addition to these, the six-season of the country yield this nation to prepare food according to the weather. In winter, we can see the more than hundred varieties of pitha (traditional cakes).

Among the many other traditional foods we can enumerate as follows: *Khichuri* (mixed dish of rice & pulses), *Egg Khichuri*, *Chingri Khichuri*, *Biriani*, *Kacchi Biriani*, *Tehari*, *Sada Polao*, *Ilish Polao*, *Korma*, *Kala Bhuna*, *Jorda*, *Firni*, *Borhani*, *Kabab* (shik, boti, reshmi, tikka and shami kebab) , *Mughal porata*, *Jhal fry*, *Lassi*, *Dal puri*, *Alu puri*, *Alu parota* and many kinds of *Bhorta* (mashes) like *shutki* (dry fish), Potato, Brinjal, unripe Banana, Sweet potato, Papaya and Tomato etc.. Bangladesh is also famous for various egg-dishes.

Major fish dishes include Hilsha, Pabda, Rui, Katla, Mrigel, Chital, Airh, Kalbaush, Pangash, Chital, Shing, Magur, Koi, Bain, tilapia etc. Meat consumption includes beef, mutton, chicken, duck, squab, quail etc. Vegetable dishes, mashed (bhorta), boiled sabji (vegetables), or leafy vegetables, are widely served. Seafood such as lobsters and shrimps are also often prevalent.

And the sweet dishes are Doi (sweet yoghurt), Swandesh, Rosogolla, Chamcham, Kalojam, Rajbhog,



Bakarkhani



Porota



Moglai Porota



Dal Puri

Goplabhog, Bundia, etc.). For evening snacks are nan, roti, parota, bakhorkhani, muri, payesh, moa, laddu etc.

Usually almost all the sublime Bangladeshi dishes reveal strong aromatic flavours. A variety of spices and herbs, along with mustard oil or soybean oil and ghee, is used in Bangladeshi cooking. Dal (lantern) is the second most important staple food, which is served with rice/porota/luchi. Fish is a staple in Bangladeshi cuisine, especially sweet-water fish, which is a distinctive feature of the country's gastronomy.



Pitha (cake fried in oil)

According to the UNWTO, gastronomy, as the essence of culture and a major element of intangible heritage worldwide is a growing driver for tourists that remains often untapped by



Sweetmeats



Curd (Sweet yoghurt)

destinations. The interrelation between gastronomy and tourism provide a vehicle for the transmission of culture, which in turn, if properly managed, enhances local economic development, sustainable practices and food experiences. Hence, gastronomy tourism, helps to brand and market destinations, as well as assists in maintaining and preserving local tradition and diversity, harnessing and rewarding authenticity.

Recently the UNWTO experts presented current research and tendencies shedding light on the latest trends and presenting successful models and case studies on four main areas, each addressed in a specific session. These include the challenges of food tourism, best practices, professional training and innovative product development. Bangladesh can also be an ideal gastronomy food destination.

The history says, ancient Bengali diets included rice, fish, honey, dairy and vegetables. The region was an administrative and commercial bastion in South Asia during early Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms, and later Muslim Sultanates. Mughal cuisine developed in Bengal after the establishment of the province of Mughal Bengal in 1576, as part of the Mughal Empire. The historic city of Dhaka played an important role in influencing Bengali food with Mughal elements. The British Empire ruled the region for nearly two hundred years between the 18th and 20th centuries, during which the Bengal Renaissance shaped the emergence of modern Bengali cuisine. During the British rules, Kolkata influenced many Bengali dishes. In the southeast, Arakan cuisine from Burma influenced dishes in Chittagong, particularly dried fish. The partition of Bengal in 1947 resulted in the separation of West Bengal from the Muslim-majority East, causing many shifts in culinary styles.

All these historical rules shape the present Bengali unique cuisine. These unique cuisines can make a great impetus for attracting foreign tourists to savour the taste. Bangladeshi cuisines are hygienic and good for health, except some spicy items. As the European tourists are presently much inclined to test the tasty spicy food, we can promote Bangladesh in the European countries as an important gastronomy destination.

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The Lost Peafowls of Bangladesh

A N M Aminoor Rahman

The peafowl include three species of chicken-like birds (chicken, pheasants and their allies) in the genera *Pavo* and *Afropavo* of the Phasianidae family in the Class Aves of the Animal Kingdom. There are two Asiatic species, the blue or Indian peafowl (originally from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) and the green peafowl (mainly from Myanmar, Indochina and Java), and one African species, the Congo peafowl (native only to the Congo Basin). However, both of the species are now become Regionally Extinct in Bangladesh. Male peafowl are known for their piercing call and their extravagant plumage. The latter is especially prominent in the Asiatic species, which have an eye-spotted "train" of covert feathers which they display as part of a courtship ritual. The term peacock is properly reserved for the male; the female is known as a peahen, and the immature offspring are sometimes called peachicks. Detailed descriptions of these two lost jewels of Bangladesh are given below:

The Blue Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*): The blue or Indian peafowl is well-known throughout the world for the spectacular appearance of the male. This former resident of Bangladesh is the national bird of India which is also known as Indian peafowl, blue peacock, common peacock, common peafowl, peafowl etc. In Bangla it is known as 'Moyur' or 'Deshi Moyur'. According to Haque and Mahmud (2008) no sighting of the species has been reported over the past 100

When I was treated to a feast of colours of the fantastic spreads out train of a male blue peacock in the Metro Toronto Zoo of Canada in 1998- for the first time in my life- I realized why birds are given the title as the beautiful creations of God! I was so excited to see the wide fan of the train embedded with gorgeous eyes showing off gold, brown, green, and black feathers. The male green peacock again proved that they certainly are one of the most amazing creations of God by displaying its spreads out train with vivid colours when I visited a wildlife park in Sandakan of East Malaysia in 2014. In former times we owed these beautiful jewels of nature in the deciduous forests of our country. Unfortunately we could not spare their lives and lost both the species from our country between 1930 and 1983.



Blue Peacock with gorgeous look

years except of a single vagrant at Modhupur National Park in 1982. They claimed that conversion of its habitat and trapping for the pet-trade were the two main reasons for the decline of its population. It is highly unlikely for any individual of the resident population of this large and conspicuous species to

have survived unnoticed in the forests. It is, therefore, considered extirpated from Bangladesh, i.e. became Regionally Extinct. Its global range extends through South Asia.

The blue peafowl is known best for its exquisite train and plumage. If the length of the tail and wing span is included, the peafowl is considered one of the largest flying birds. The length of peacock varies widely from 86 to 212 centimetres (cm) including the fully grown train. The weight of the bird varies from 4 to 6 kilogram (kg). The peahen is smaller at around 95 cm in length and weighs 2.75 to 4.0 kg. The peacock's head, neck and breast are a glossy, iridescent blue, with white patches above and below the eyes, along with a crest of upright, blue-tipped feathers on the crown of the head. By contrast, the back and wings are greyish-brown with brown barring. Undoubtedly the most striking feature of this species is the long 'train' of feathers at the rear, which, in the peacock, can encompass nearly two-thirds of the total body length. Often mistaken for a tail, the train is in fact composed of long tail coverts, while the true tail feathers comprise short stiff quills that help to hold the train aloft. The train is made up of elongated upper tail coverts (more than 200 feathers, the actual tail has only 20 feathers) and has an iridescent arrangement of multiple colors featuring ocelli (eye-spots) at the end of nearly all of these feathers. A few of the outer feathers lack the spot and end in a crescent shaped black tip. When displayed, the male's train spreads out in a wide fan, showing off gold, brown, green, and black feathers. The blue peahen is far more understated, with a whitish face and throat, brown crown, hindneck and back, a white belly and a metallic green upper breast. The train is present, but much shorter and lacks the distinctive eyespots. This species has long, strong, greyish-brown legs equipped for running away into brush for safety. Both sexes are equipped with spurs that are around 2.5 cm long; peacock will use them during the breeding season to ward off other competing males. Peachicks are usually light yellow to brown in color.

There are three variations in the blue peafowl. The white feathered peafowl has completely white feathers from the top of its head to the end of its train, with the ocelli barely visible. It is not albino as it is true breeder (when bred with another white feathered peafowl, all offspring will be white feathered peafowl as well) and has brown eyes. In another version known as pied, random white feathers appear

in the plumage. This results from an incomplete dominant gene. Due to a different mutation, another variation results in dark feathers with blue and green tips, called the black-winged peafowl. In addition, blue peafowl can hybridize with the green peafowl. For the past two decades, a new mutation in the plumage has been discovered almost every year.

Once the blue peafowl perched in the deciduous forests of Bangladesh is now extirpated from the country but can be seen its native range encompasses India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bhutan, and Nepal. Captive specimens are found throughout the world, and introduced, feral populations now occur in Australia, New Zealand, the Bahamas, the USA and some other countries. In its native range, the blue peafowl can typically be found inhabiting the undergrowth in open forest and woodland, usually near a river or stream. It may also occur in farmland, villages, and increasingly, more urban areas. It is found mainly below an altitude of 1,800 m and in rare cases seen at about 2,000 m. While the Indian peafowl is revered in many parts of its range, in others it has suffered from the effects of hunting for its meat and feathers. In some parts of India, it is threatened by retaliatory killings to reduce crop depredation. Nevertheless, this species is extremely abundant and widespread and there is little threat to its survival at present. Although it is now Regionally Extinct in Bangladesh, however, globally it is evaluated as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as its population is stable. Currently, more than 100,000 individuals are estimated to survive in the whole world.

The species is sedentary, terrestrial and gregarious, and very active during dawn and dusk. It is usually seen in small flocks of a peacock and 3-5 peahens or a peahen with 3-5 peachicks. It forages on the ground by walking, turning leaf litter and pecking on the ground in undergrowths near streams in deciduous forests. The blue peafowl is omnivorous and feeds on grains, seeds, berries, worms, insects, lizards and small snakes. This species name in Sanskrit means “killer of snakes” because it eat young king cobras, making them invaluable and often revered. During the night, this species roosts in trees, where there is less danger of predation. The blue peafowl displays highly regular behaviour, often roosting and feeding in the same locations for life, hence the propensity for captive individuals to remain in the vicinity of a single building or garden. Despite its large size and, in the peacock, the lengthy train, the blue peafowl is remarkably agile, and while it can quickly escape from predators by foot, when pressured it will take to the air. The fan-like spread of the tail coverts and the frequent shaking of them, exhibited by the male is a spectacular form of courtship display, and can be induced not only by the presence of female blue peafowl, but also other bird species and even humans.



Beautiful Train (tail feathers) of a Blue Peacock



Blue Peahen

The display is not limited to the males, however, as both the female Indian peafowl and chicks are also known to fan their shorter, less colourful tail coverts as well. The most common calls are a loud 'pia-ow' or 'may-awe'. The frequency of calling increases before the monsoon season and may be delivered in alarm or when disturbed by loud noises. In forests, their calls often indicate the presence of predators such as the tiger. It also make many other calls such as a rapid series of 'ka-aan..ka-aan' or a rapid 'kok-kok'.

The Indian peafowl breeds from January to March in southern India, and as late as September in other parts of its range. During this time, peacocks occupy small, adjacent territories known as leks, where they display to prospective mates. The peahens visit a number of these leks, before selecting the most suitable mate, a decision which is based on the length of the train feathers and the number of eyespots. Favoured peacocks may be surrounded by several dominant peahens which engage in repetitive courtship and mating, possibly as a way of guarding the male from other prospective peahens. The peahen lays 3 to 6 brown-ish oval eggs in a shallow scrape in the ground, or in a tree if predation is intense, which are incubated for 28 to 30 days. The glossy shells have deep, small pores that let in water to keep it moist. Only the peahens are involved in the incubating of the eggs and the rearing of the peachicks. Peachicks are mobile and fully feathered at hatching, can fly in about one week, and rely on their mother for only an additional few weeks. They are initially fed food from the mother's bill, but later taught to forage for grubs and insects. Peacocks and peahens look alike until the peacocks develop their train and bright feathers. It takes up to three years for males to develop a full train. In captivity, birds have been known to live for 23 years but it is estimated that they live for only about 15 years in the wild.

The Green Peafowl (*Pavo muticus*): The green peafowl is famous for the glorious train of the male. The species is less well known, but perhaps even more spectacular than its close relative the blue or Indian peafowl. It is a former resident of Bangladesh which is also



Green Peacock



Green Peahen

blue peafowl but is shorter than that of the Argus bird. The adult peahen is around half the total length of the breeding peacock at 100-110 cm in length. Average weight is 4.5 kg. The green peafowl is capable of sustained flight and is often observed on wing. The species has a more upright posture, a greener neck, and a darker, more golden train. Male has long, upright crest, largely brilliant glossy-green plumage with blackish scales and mostly blackish-brown wings (tinged green) with caramel-coloured primaries. The peahen is duller, lacks train and has blackish-brown upperparts and tail with pale buffish bars and vermiculations. Juvenile (both sexes) resembles female. Unlike the related blue peafowl, the sexes of green peafowl are quite similar in appearance, especially in the wild. Both sexes have long upper tail coverts which cover the actual tail underneath. In the male this extends up to two meters and is decorated with 200 metallic feathers ends in a beautiful brown, green and gold eyespots or ocelli while in the female the coverts are green and much shorter, just covering the tail. Outside the breeding season, however, the male's train is moulted and it can be difficult to distinguish the sexes unless they are observed up close.



Pied Peafowl

known as Burmese peafowl, Green-necked peafowl or Java peafowl. In Bangla it is known as 'Shobuj Moyur' or 'Bormi Moyur'. According to Siddiqui and colleagues (2008), no sighting of green peafowl has been reported since 1930. They claimed that conversion of habitat and hunting were the two main reasons for the decline of its population to zero. It is highly unlikely for any individual of this large and conspicuous species to have survived unnoticed in this country. It is, therefore, considered Regionally Extinct in Bangladesh. Its global range extends through Southeast Asia.

The Green peafowl is a large bird, amongst the largest living chicken-like bird in terms of overall size, although lighter-bodied than the wild turkey and perhaps the longest wild bird in total length. The peacock is 180-300 cm in length including its 140-160 cm train. The train is even longer than that of the male



White Peafowl

In the past, the green peafowl was widely distributed in Southeast Asia including Bangladesh, but is now only patchily distributed in Yunnan of China, west Thailand, Laos, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma and Java of Indonesia. It is now Regionally Extinct in Bangladesh and Malaysia and thought to be extinct in northeast India except in Manipur where individuals are occasionally encountered. Inevitably, the green peafowl is hunted for its extravagant train feathers, but also for meat. Chicks and eggs are collected for the

pet trade. Therefore due to hunting and a reduction in extent and quality of habitat, as well as poaching, the green peafowl population evidently declined dramatically during the 20th century. Globally it is evaluated as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Currently, between 5,000 and 10,000 individuals are estimated to survive in the whole world.

The species is found in a wide range of habitats including primary and secondary forest, tropical and subtropical, as well as evergreen and deciduous. It inhabits the undergrowths of dense forests adjoining or cultivable lands. It may also be found amongst bamboo, on grasslands, savanna, and scrub. The green peafowl is diurnal, sedentary, terrestrial and gregarious. It is usually seen in small flocks of a peacock and 3-5 peahens or a peahen with 3-5 peachicks. It is omnivorous and feeds upon seeds, grains, flower-petals, buds, leaves, berries, insects, worms, snakes and lizards. The species is not migratory, although they wander widely. Peahens and juveniles travel in groups of 2-6 individuals, and do not form pair bonds or harems with males. Although in the wild males are solitary, in captivity, green peafowl form monogamous pairs. It is generally more silent than blue peafowl. The peacocks call with a repeated, territorial 'ki-wao', whereas peahens give a loud 'aow-aa'. The males call from their roost sites at dawn and dusk.

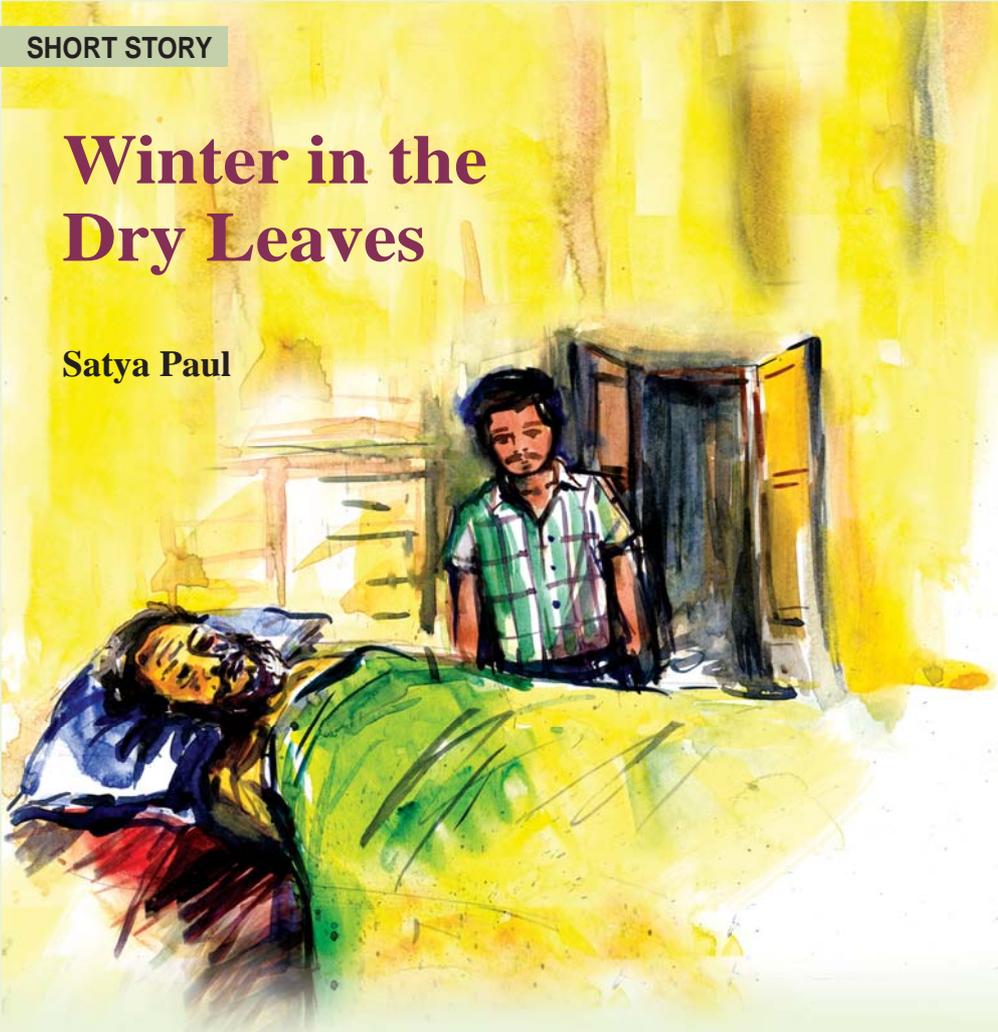
The green peafowl breeds between April and June. During the breeding season, when female peafowl pass through the territory of a mature male, he will court them, dancing and displaying his impressive train in an upright fan-shape. It nests on the ground laying 3 to 6 brown eggs. Eggs are hatched after 26 to 28 days of incubation by the female. The young green peafowl can fly within two weeks of hatching, but will remain with the adults until the next breeding season. Adults moult after breeding, and although males lose their magnificent trains, the wing feathers regenerate so rapidly that they can fly throughout the moult. The average life-span is 6 years in the wild.

Due to a number of reasons mentioned earlier we lost two of our magnificent jewels of nature. Though we will not be able to return them back, but can create awareness for the survival of other species of birds currently living in Bangladesh. We need to protect their habitat also. Along with the government agencies all the people need to come forward to conserve our wild birds for our better livelihood as well as existence. We do not want more extinction of our natural jewels birds and other wildlife.

The writer and photographer of this article is wildlife biologist and Professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University, Gazipur

Winter in the Dry Leaves

Satya Paul



A kind of sealed darkness around him. He lost himself in the heavy wind of cyclone. Somehow he tried to open his eyes but lost consciousness again. Who is this man? Nobody could identify him. Quite a new face. Some damages were apparent all over his body, under his ragged shirt, below the cheeks and on the back. A skin bag was in the grip of left hand. His total appearance failed to attract the attention of every person around him. The sun crept up to the head. People of less interest moved immediately except an old woman. She looked at him with a different interest. A couple of hours passed away. After that the man opened his eyes. The old woman went close and asked, “Who are you, my son?” She pursued but didn’t get any answer. However she requested her nearest neighbour to take this stranger to her house.

The man, left on the street, woke up with a new memory. He tried hard to identify himself but no result. The couple of weeks he spent are nothing but a stone of time. He is now the second man to himself. Once a moon lit night he was passing alone on the veranda. Just then the old woman appeared:

“What’re you thinking my son?”

“What could I think? I have no past in my brain. I don’t know who I am. This is only the truth and the rest of my life is dark...” replied he taking a long breath.

“I’m sorry to make you unhappy again.”

“Here is your valuable thing ”

“What’s that”?

“Here it is”.

She handed him the bag.

In a silent night, he opened the bag and took out his diary into which he wrote about his family. The complete part of the beginning life. He read every letter but every event appeared to him like the things in the foggy morning. Somehow tried to come back to the past. One day he fell into a deep sleep while reading. At the dead of night he woke up and could not sleep. In the next morning he began to describe his past towards the woman. “My village was beside the sea. I lost my parents at the early age. A porter took me as an adapted son. From then I was brought up there. My father was a self-educated man. He could sing, paint and make story very well. Being a porter, he could somehow manage his family let alone giving me education. In spite of that he had a great desire for knowledge. Academic learning was quite impossible for me. My father was only teacher in this great world. He transferred his instinctive spirit of mind into me. It was possible as I was a touchy boy, quite imaginative at the very early age. In fact my father had no issue except me, a floating boy. He with extra-ordinary feelings called me. ‘*Kharkuto*’ with whom he wanted to live in his hard life. He was alone mostly at the beginning of his marriage life. But when he discovered me, he made a place in that world for me. My mother never bargained. She was a routined character. Thus all decorated learning disappeared from me. The porter and his mind were the two existed characters through out my development. By the time the porter reached at the grey age and he arranged for my marriage. I started another new pattern of life. I had no access to any patterned job for me as I had no academic qualification. I opened an open learning centre under a banyan tree. Children of different ages came to me with unusual interests. They used to learn painting, his own composed song, hear moral stories. All guardians were pleased at me and out of complacency they supported me financially. Thus I was spending my familial life. I became a father of three children. I began to knit a new dream about my children. If any one asked about my children, I answered, “To make them complete men by awakening their instinctive qualities.” I believed that no patterned education could fulfil the lack of human mind except this natural learning. Finishing this gray story he went out of the room. The old woman could not prevent. She simply stared at him.

Alas! All the events of his beginning life have turned into another story. He lost every thing in the cyclone except this diary. He informed the old woman, “I want to start again”. She consoled him and encouraged to start. The woman had none in the world. She lost everyone in the liberation war. Gradually she became dependent on Kharkuto and felt the image of her dead son. Kharkuto sang and made excellent story on every night. This rare quality drew the attention of the surrounding people, children. At day he used to give the children the lesson of painting.

Among all the children Kharkuto found a lively image of his lost children. So, when he got them, he forgot every thing. Children used to go to schools or colleges but they never forgot to join with this strange man.

In the mean time the old woman died. The house seemed to be a leaf less tree. Kharkuto is now burdened with age. Once in a moon-lit night he called all the children to tell them a wonderful story. He began, "All the people were waiting for a good day. The storyteller consoled them saying an angel would appear and fulfil all our wants. Miraculously it happened and turned the country a golden one but..." Thus he continued and finished the story on the seventh day. The story ended and all the people left the place except four young men. They came up to Kharkuto and said, "Uncle, we are waiting for the day but which angel will take the responsibility". KharKuto smiled, "It was possible only in that dream story but now you are talking about the real story. You can be the angels of the society. You take the responsibility. I believe you cando. I have added the spirit within you. Remember, if you want to bring the changes, expected to the society, don't compromise with the false. Kharkuto entered the room, his temple and lay down to sleep.

Shuvankar, Sudip, Sujan, Durjoy came out silently. They took an oath of realizing their uncle's dream. By the course of time all they took higher education. Fortunately they were placed in some powerful positions. Shuvankar became the Secretary of education ministry. Sudip became the Inspector General of police, Sujan, Member of Planning Commission, Durjoy, Secretary of finance ministry. All started their material life. One by one all of them began to fight with the reality. Shuvankar proposed for a practical and suitable educational plan but it was rejected in the miraculous darkness. The same thing happened to Sudip, Sujan and Durjoy. No one could understand and even had no right to ask. They dared not to come up to meet Kharkuto. Who is now bedridden due to the burden of age. Because of surrounding pressure and to maintain peace in the family, all of them surrendered to the dark power except Durjoy. He resigned from the job.

It was raining all the day. This rain is quite predictable to every person in the beginning of the winter season. It happens before increasing the sharpness of the coldness. People are hardly seen in the roads and it is quite expected especially in such an isolated village sixty kilometres away from the seashore. Durjoy with all depravity is walking alone in the village path. He is thinking whether he should meet his uncle. He could not guess the time, as the face of the sun was cloudy. He could not understand when and how he reached the yard of Kharkuto. None was there. The door was open. Being hesitated he entered the room hearing the groaning. To his surprise he saw simply a skeleton on the bed and a diary beside him. The poorman stared at him and asked, 'Who is there?' Durjoy said, 'I am Durjoy. I am totally defeated, uncle', saying this he burst into tears. Tears also rolled down from Kherkuto's eyes. However, he said, Don't get lost. Stand up. Take my valuable diary. I have nothing to give you except this. You are Durjoy. Nobody can defeat you. I am leving'. Kharkuto passed away. Durjoy could not cry and turned into complete silence. He arranged for the burial of the dead body.

Durjoy came to learn that Shuvankar, Sudip, Sujan have been the owner of some expensive buildings. They are now the elected MPs from a political party. They are now busy in telling lies and giving false hopes. Durjoy feels extreme hatred for

them. He tried to remember his children with whom he knitted a good dream. His wife has got the second marriage. He could no way bear this pain, nor walk. He wants to look for them but he does not know their present address as they have recently changed their home. How would he find them in this metallic city?

Being exhausted Durjoy thought of connecting with any one of his friends but he changed his mind with great hatred. He decided to leave the city and go back to uncle's home to spend the rest of his life. He reached the station. It was then afternoon. He sat down on a bench and opened the diary. To his surprise he saw some beautiful paintings, songs and an incomplete story.

Out of curiosity he began to read it. He finished the story but some lines vibrated in him again and again. The lines were:

“The common people's dream is not costly.

They want food to survive.

Education for a good drive.

No strife.

But peace and happiness.”

On the other hand some people, so called socialists:

“Give them false hope.

As they false characters.

Policy, not education, for deception

Only for strife.

Peace and happiness within bracket in the name of seminar.

This will continue until real men are created. Only affinity with his love of nature can over come it. There was a little space at the end of the story in which Durjoy wrote:

Uncle, my evergreen character,

You lost every one in a nature's cyclone

But I've lost everyone in the social cyclone created by educated persons like us. How can I overcome it? Natural disaster gave you back your normal consciousness but I have lost it forever within my paralysed senses.

How can I overcome it...? How...? It's a conscious unconscious process. Is it possible ... I can't awake a conscious sleeping person.

When he finished it was the middle of night. None was there except some people lying on the floor. He was only awakened. The bell of the arriving train rang; the winter breeze was blowing. He looked at some pale faces of the sleeping children. Durjoy did not know what to do then. But he only knew, he has to leave this artificial society to bring changes for the days to come.

Satya Paul, Assistant Professor, Bangladesh Navy College, Dhaka

The 72nd Session of the UNGA

Address by

H. E. Sheikh Hasina
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The United Nations, New York, 21 September 2017

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Mr. President,

As-salamu alaikum and good afternoon.

Let me extend my heartiest felicitations on your election as President of the 72nd session of the General Assembly. My delegation assures you of our full support in discharging your priorities on people, peace and planet.

Mr. President,

This is the 14th time I am addressing the UN General Assembly. And this time I have come here with a heavy heart. I have come here just after seeing the hungry, distressed and hopeless Rohingyas from Myanmar who took shelter in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. This forcibly displaced people of Myanmar are fleeing an 'ethnic cleansing' in their own country where they have been living for centuries.

I can feel their pain as I, along with my younger sister, had been a refugee for 6 years after my father, the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and almost all members of my family were assassinated in 1975.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering speech at the 72nd session of the UNGA in New York on September 21

In 1974, in the first ever address of Bangladesh in this Assembly, my father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said, “I know that the souls of our martyrs join us in pledging that the Bengalee nation fully commits itself to the building of a world order in which the aspirations of all men for peace and justice will be realized”.

Mr. President,

We are currently sheltering over 800,000 forcibly displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar. The ongoing atrocities and human rights violations in the Rakhine State of Myanmar once again aggravated the situation at the Bangladesh-Myanmar Border. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas from the Rakhine State are entering Bangladesh to flee violence. As estimated by IOM, in last three weeks over four hundred thirty thousand Rohingyas entered Bangladesh. We are horrified to see that the Myanmar authorities are laying landmines along their stretch of the border to prevent the Rohingyas from returning to Myanmar. This people must be able to return to their homeland in safety, security and dignity.

At the same time, I condemn all kinds of terrorism and violent extremism too. Our government maintains a ‘zero tolerance’ policy in this regard.

I thank the members of the Security Council and also the Secretary General for their proactive attempts to stop atrocities and bring in peace, and stability in the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

I further call upon the United Nations and the international community to take immediate and effective measures for a permanent solution to this protracted Rohingya crisis. In this regard, I propose the following actions:

First: Myanmar must unconditionally stop the violence and the practice of ethnic cleansing in the Rakhine State immediately and forever.

Second: Secretary General of the United Nations should immediately send a Fact-Finding Mission to Myanmar.

Third: All civilians irrespective of religion and ethnicity must be protected in Myanmar. For that “safe zones” could be created inside Myanmar under UN supervision.

Fourth: Ensure sustainable return of all forcibly displaced Rohingyas in Bangladesh to their homes in Myanmar.

Fifth: The recommendations of Kofi Annan Commission Report must be immediately implemented unconditionally and in its entirety.

Mr. President,

In the 1971 war of liberation, we endured an extreme form of genocide. In the 9-month-long war of liberation against Pakistan 3 million innocent people were killed and more than 200,000 women were violated. The Pakistan military launched the heinous ‘operation searchlight’ on 25th March which was the beginning of the 1971 genocide.

The 1971 genocide included targeted elimination of individuals on the ground of religion, race and political belief. The intellectuals were killed brutally. To pay homage to the victims of the genocide, our national parliament has recently declared 25th March as “Genocide Day.”

In Bangladesh, we have already undertaken the daunting task of bringing the key perpetrators to justice through the International Crimes Tribunal. I urge the international community to take collective actions to prevent recurrence of such heinous crimes anywhere anytime. I believe, recognition of past tragedies like the 1971 genocide would guide us to achieve 'never again'.

Mr. President,

Since our birth as a nation, we have pursued peace-centric domestic and foreign policies. With that spirit, Bangladesh has been taking the lead in tabling the resolution on “Culture of Peace” every year in the General Assembly since 2000.

We reaffirm the call for resuming the Middle East Peace Process, and for ending all forms of hostilities and discriminations against the brotherly Palestinian people.

In recognition of the potential role of the UN peacebuilding architecture, we look forward to bold and innovative proposals from the Secretary General on financing for ‘sustaining peace’. I am pleased to announce a token contribution of USD 100,000 from Bangladesh for the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

Mr. President,

As a major troop and police contributing country Bangladesh underscores the importance of upholding effectiveness and credibility of UN peacekeeping operations. We shall maintain our own capability readiness, remain open to further smart pledges, enhance the scope of our peacekeeping training, and deploy more female peacekeepers.

We maintain a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to any allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse. As an endorser of the “Voluntary Compact” on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, I have committed myself to the Secretary General’s “Circle of Leadership” to combat this scourge. I am also pleased to announce a token contribution of USD 100,000 to the Victim Support Fund established for this purpose.

Mr. President,

Terrorism and violent extremism have become a major threat to peace, stability and development. Terrorists have no religion, belief or race. Having been a target of a number of terrorist attacks myself, I personally empathize with the victims of terrorism and appreciate their need for protection.

We denounce the use of religion to justify violent extremism. I have involved families, women, the youth, the media and religious leaders at the community level to offset the spread of violent extremism.

In this regard, I reiterate my calls:

First, stop supplying arms to the terrorists;

Second, stop terrorist financing; and

Third, settle all international disputes peacefully.

I also urge the UN to address the growing threats emanated from the cyber space to prevent money laundering, terrorist financing and other transnational organized crimes.

Mr. President,

We believe in promoting safe, orderly and regular migration. Last year we proposed developing a sound migration governance framework through the “Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”. I am pleased that currently the UN is delivering on the formation of the compacts for migration and refugees.

Mr. President,

The Paris Climate Agreement remains our bastion of hope for climate justice. By recognizing the climate vulnerability, we are building resilience against the grave impacts of climate change. We believe in the potentials of “Blue Economy” in advancing the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and seas.

Bangladesh has achieved exemplary success in building resilience against flood and other disasters. Crop intensification and invention of water resistant crops have helped us achieve self sufficiency in food. We have efficiently responded to the massive flood that has stricken the entire south Asian region this year.

As a member of the High-level Panel on Water, I attach high priority to implementing its comprehensive Action Plan. Bangladesh has ensured access to safe water for 87 per cent of its population by 2015, and we aim full coverage of our population by 2030.

Mr. President,

We believe that there are close interfaces between peace & stability and development. We share the conviction that addressing poverty, hunger, illiteracy, unemployment and inequalities is crucial for building peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

We are committed to implement the SDGs. For that, our Government has adopted a ‘whole-of-the-society’ approach. The SDGs complement our vision to transform Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041.

Even before the adoption of the SDGs we have initiated unique social programmes that reflect the themes of the SDGs, such as Ekti Bari Ekti Khamar (One Household One Farm); Community Clinic; Ashrayan (Shelter project); Digital Bangladesh; Education Support; Women Empowerment; Education for All; Social Safety Net; Environment Protection and Investment and Development.

Our “Voluntary National Review” presented to the UN this year showcased our progress and commitment for achieving the SDGs.

Mr. President,

In 2016-17, Bangladesh's economy posted a GDP growth rate of over 7.24% and our foreign currency reserve reached USD 32.1 billion. We have brought down the poverty level from 56.7% in 1991 to 23.2% today.

Our per capita income is expected to grow to USD 1,602 by the end of the current fiscal year, which was only USD 543 in the FY 2005-06. Our life expectancy increased to almost 72 years. These figures, indeed, are indications of our inclusive development, in which no citizen is left behind.

To ensure inclusive growth, promote investment and employment opportunities for all, we have taken an initiative to develop 100 special economic zones around the country.

Our extensive social safety net measures give coverage to many vulnerable segments of our population, including elderly people, persons with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, and vulnerable mothers under economic hardship.

Special emphasis has been given to unlock the potentials of physically challenged children and people. 103 service and care centres along with 32 mobile therapy vans attend to the needs of persons with disabilities, including those affected by Autism. 18,500 community health clinics are being complemented by medical services through mobile phones and web cameras in districts and upazilas (sub-districts).

There is now a public primary school in every village of the country. 38,331 educational institutions have been equipped with digital laboratories and multi-media classrooms. Special emphasis is being given on promoting technical and vocational education and training for young people.

Mr. President,

Our youth are the main movers in realizing my vision for a knowledge-based 'Digital Bangladesh'. We are working towards creating an environment to allow them to pursue transformative education, find decent jobs, and turn into truly global citizens.

I am happy to announce that Bangabandhu Statellite-1, which is our first ever satellite, is scheduled to be launched this year on our victory day 16th December.

Mr. President,

To conclude, I would like to say, we do not want war. We want peace. We want people's wellbeing – not destruction of humanity. We want sustainable development. Let this be our collective goal.

I thank you.

Khoda Hafez
Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu
Long Live Bangladesh

DEVELOPMENT CHRONOLOGY

Major National Events

July-September

2 July 2017

Japan to provide \$1.59b this year

Interest rate to rise as Bangladesh is now a lower-middle income country

Japan, Bangladesh's largest bilateral lender, is set to provide \$1.59 billion in loans this fiscal year but the interest rate will be increased and repayment period reduced in light of the country's graduation to the lower middle-income bracket.

An agreement was signed on July, 2 between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Economic Relations Division to provide 178.223 billion yen (about \$1.59 billion) for six projects. Japan provided 173 billion yen in loans to Bangladesh last fiscal year.

The interest rate on the new loan would be 0.70 percent and the repayment period would be 30 years with a grace period of 10 years.

In a statement JICA said it will continue to support efforts in Bangladesh to address challenges to overcome social vulnerability and further economic growth such that the country can achieve the middle-income status by 2021. *Source: The Daily Star*

6 July 2017

Implement budget, development projects speedily: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the civil servants to go for implementation the budget and development projects without any delay.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving Annual Performance Agreement (APA) copy for the fiscal year 2017-18 from Martuza Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Information on July 6

She also directed them to take steps to fulfill the basic needs of the citizens, ensure social security and construction of necessary infrastructures, and generate employments.

"We've the largest-ever budget and ADP this time. You'll have to go for quick implementation of those and

completion of the near-ending projects with little funds so that we can take new projects. Remain alert so that no project gets extended like elastic," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing a function in her office marking the signing of the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) of the ministries and their subordinate bodies on July 6.

Nothing that the government's specific goal should be to ensure the country's speedy development, she said the Cabinet members are liable to Parliament while MPs are liable to people.

"Awami League is aware enough in this regard as it never forgets its election manifesto."

She said that every political party should have an effective economic policy to take forward the nation and the countries bureaucracy must act with sincerity to achieve the goal. *Source: The Financial Express*

6 July , 2017

WHO appoints Saima Wazed as Goodwill Ambassador

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's daughter Saima Wazed Hossain has been appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador for World Health Organisation (WHO) for Autism in South-East Asia region for a two-year period.

Earlier, in recognition of Saima Wazed's work for advancing autism in Bangladesh, WHO South-East Asia Regional Office honoured her with the Excellence in Public Health Award in September 2014. *Source: The Financial Express*



Saima Wazed appointed Goodwill Ambassador

10 July , 2017

Cabinet approves Dec 9 as int'l anti-corruption day

The cabinet approved on July, 10 two proposals for observing the 9th December as the International Anti-Corruption Day while 6th April as the International Sports Day.

The approval was given at the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet held at Bangladesh Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

At the outset of the meeting, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina unveiled 71 commemorative postage stamps and the First Day covers with photos of genocide and war crimes of the Pakistani Army and their local collaborators carried out during the Liberation War in 1971. *Source: The Financial Express*

11 July , 2017

ECNEC approves Tk 3,250cr expressway for Chittagong airport

Endorses full campus for Jagannath University at Keraniganj

A 16.5-kilometre elevated expressway connecting Hazrat Shah Amanat International Airport with Lalkhan Bazar-Muradpur flyover has been approved for Chittagong city.

The four-lane expressway with a price tag of Tk 3,250 crore was approved on July, 11 by the Ec nec (Executive Committee of the National Economic Council) in a bid to ease traffic congestion and reduce travel time to and from the airport in the country's second largest city.

As part of this project, by 2020, the under construction flyover from Muradpur to Lalkhan Bazar will be extended upto the airport, explained a planning ministry official.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, chairperson of the Ec nec, issued a directive asking to build a complete campus for the JnU at Keraniganj near the capital with all necessary amenities including residential halls. *Source: The Daily Star*

14 July 2017

Dhaka, Colombo sign 13 MoUs, one deal

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka signed on July, 14 instruments as Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena termed his visit to Bangladesh a 'historic one'.

The instruments -- one agreement and 13 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) -- were signed to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the areas of economy, agriculture, shipping, higher education, information and technology and media.

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina witnessed the signing of the instruments at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) following a bilateral meeting between the two leaders.

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka also agreed to sign Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by this year, aiming to further strengthen and institutionalise bilateral trade cooperation between the two friendly nations. *Source: The Financial Express*



Hasanul Haq Inu, Information Minister, with his Srilankan Counterpart Signing MoU while Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena witnessed the signing ceremony between the two countries at PMO on July 14

16 July 2017

Food grain stock sufficient Says PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, on July, 16 said people will not suffer from any food crisis as there is enough stock of foodgrains in the country.

"We're hearing the footfall of another flood. Some crops have already got damaged in flashflood

but we've enough stock and we're importing more," she said.

The Prime Minister said this while distributing the medals of Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award 1421 and 1422 at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

Citing official data, she said, there are about 1.06 crore metric tonnes of foodgrains in stock in public silos and at the private level.

The PM urged the private sector to supplement the government efforts to expedite the pace of agriculture development.

Earlier, the Prime Minister distributed Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award 1421 and 1422 among 64 recipients. Ten individuals and organisations received gold medals and eighteen individuals and organisations received silver medal.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury chaired the event. *Source: The Daily Star*

20 July 2017

Build knowledge-based society: President

President Md. Abdul Hamid underscored on July, 20 the need for utilise the country's arts and culture to build a knowledge-based society,

"Arts and culture are the mirrors of a country and a nation and that need to be used in building a knowledge-based society," he said.

The President was addressing a function arranged by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at National Theatre Hall in the capital to distribute Shilpakala Padak 2016.

President Hamid said arts and culture play an important role in bringing discipline,



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award to the recipients in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium on July 16



President Md. Abdul Hamid hands over the award to the recipients of Shilpakala Padak 2016 at a function at National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on July 20

nationalism, the spirit of patriotism and tradition of cultural harmony among youths.

Meanwhile, seven cultural celebrities received on July 20 the 'Shilpakala Padak 2016' in seven categories.

President Md. Abdul Hamid formally handed over the award to the recipients at a function at National Theatre Hall

of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Each awardee got a cheque for Tk 0.1 million (1 lakh), a certificate and a crest. The awardees are Pabitra Mohan Dey in instrumental music, Md Golam Mostafa Khan in dance, Golam Mustafa in photography, Kalidas Karmaker in fine arts, Sirajuddin Pathan in folk culture, Syed Jamil Ahmed in dramatics and Mita Haque in music. Source: *The Financial Express*

22 July 2017

PM urges Hajj pilgrims to pray for country's peace

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged the hajj pilgrims to seek mercy of Almighty Allah while offering their prayers in the holy mosques for allowing the Muslims as well as people of other faiths in the country to live peacefully to continue the nation's progress.

'You are going to the holy places. You will offer prayers so that the Muslims and people of other faiths can live in this country peacefully and may Allah allow the wrong interpreters of Islam to come back to the right path,' she said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said this while inaugurating this year's Hajj programme at Ashkona Hajj camp in the capital on July, 22. Source: *New Age*

23 July 2017

PM asks civil servants to be innovative

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged on July, 23 civil servants to work with innovative ideas



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina exchanges greetings with Hajj pilgrims at Ashkona Hajj Camp in Dhaka on July 22

in resolving problems of their respective areas and implementing development programmes keeping in mind local perspectives.

“Government officials should not take their job as a routine service. Each of them must come up with innovative ideas in discharging duties for the

welfare of people and progress of the country,” she said while distributing Public Administration Award at Osmani Memorial Hall coinciding with Public Service Day.

She said Bangladesh will be built in such a way where there will be no local and foreign conspiracy, and no room for bad governance.

"Our aim is very much clear.. we want to establish Bangladesh as a peaceful country in the South Asia, she said. *Source: The Financial Express*

24 July 2017

PM distributes National Film Award-2015

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July, 24 distributed the National Film Award-2015 at a gala function at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

The Prime Minister handed over the awards, the highest state recognition for contributions to the country's film industry, to 31 artistes and performers in 25 categories in the afternoon.

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu presided over the function, while Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the ministry AKM Rahamatullah was present as the special guest.

Those who received the National Film Award-2015 are: film actress Afroza Sultana Ratna (Shabana) and singer Ferdousi Rahman (Lifetime Achievement Award); Best films (jointly) '*Bapjaner Bioscope* (Father's Bioscope)' directed by Reazul Mawla Rizu and '*Anil Bagchir Ekdin* (One day of Anil Bagchi)' directed by Morshedul Islam; Best documentary: '*Ekattorer Ganohotyā O Badhyobhumi* (Genocide and the Mass Killing Site of 71)' directed by Md. Abdullah Al Harun of the Department of Films and Publications (DFP), best film director (jointly): Md Reazul Mawla Rizu and Morshedul Islam.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over the award to the recipients of Public Administration Award 2017 at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital on July 23



Mohammad Ishtaque Hossain, Director General and Abdullah Al Harun, Asstt. Film Producer of DFP, on behalf of the department, receiving National Film Award 2015 for the documentary 'Ekattorer Ganohotya O Badhyobhumi' from the Prime Minister at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital on July 24

Best Actor (main character) (jointly) Sakib Khan for the film 'Aro Bhalobasbo Tomay' and Mahfuz Ahmed for the film 'Anil Bagchir Ekdin'. *Source: The Daily Star*
25 July 2017

PM gives 23-point directive for deputy commissioners

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July, 25 asked the government officials to take a tough stance against corruption to root out the menace from the society.

“We'll have to eliminate corruption at any cost. We'll have to create public awareness and take a strong stance against the threat,” she said, opening a three-day conference of deputy commissioners at her office.

People will not get the benefits of any development project if there was corruption in it, the PM said.

Terming the DCs the representatives of the government at the district level, she asked them to carry out their responsibilities with the mindset of serving people and protecting their interests by taking a stand for truth and justice.

The PM laid out a 23-point directive for the DCs to ensure people's welfare and directed them to be more active in implementing development programmes.

“You'll have to work together with public representatives in establishing good governance at grassroots, strengthen the rural economy further and develop infrastructures in villages, implement the SDGs and tackle natural disasters.”

The DCs must ensure that service receivers are not harassed in any way and go tough against food adulteration, she told the annual conference.

The PM directed them to know the problems and prospects of their areas in detail and inform the central administration timely as the development plans were prepared on the basis of their reports. *Source: The Daily Star*

26 July 2017

Over 4.6m workers went abroad in eight years, says PM

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina said on July, 26 over 4.6 million (46.79 lakh) Bangladeshi workers went abroad in the last eight years since 2009 as her government has taken many initiatives for creating new labour markets.

"We have declared the overseas employment sector a thrust sector ...the government is working for expanding labour market with the support from Bangladesh embassies/high commissions abroad and the ministry of foreign affairs," she said while replying to a starred query from treasury bench member M Ayen Uddin (Rajshahi-3) during her question-answer session in the House.

Spelling out her government's measures for expanding labour markets, Sheikh Hasina said her government set up 29 labour wings at Bangladesh embassies or high commissions, with opening of the latest in Mauritius in October 2016.

In addition to this, she said, a study was conducted on 50 new labour markets including Europe, Australia and Brazil.

The premier said that in February 2015 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia on recruitment of housemaids for the kingdom. *Source: The Financial Express*

29 July 2017

All divisional cities to get safe water supply by 2021: PM

Govt to re-excavate old canals in city

Bangladesh will be able to ensure safe drinking water for its entire population by 2030, says Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the representatives of 23 countries at the Dhaka Water Conference at a city hotel on July 29

The PM also said all old canals in Dhaka will be re-excavated for preserving surface water and water management apart from excavating new one.

On July 29 she inaugurated the Dhaka Water Conference at the Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon in Dhaka.

Works are going on to ensure safe water supply from surface water sources to all the divisional cities by 2021, she added.

Addressing the inaugural session, the PM said Bangladesh ensured access to safe water for 87 per cent of its population by 2015 and that her administration was working for full coverage by 2030.

She said generally the main problems in daily safe water use and management are arsenic and salinity pollution, reduction of groundwater, scarcity of preservation of surface water, misuse of water and pollution by industrial wastes and other sources.

She mentioned that the government were implementing short-, medium- and long-term plans to overcome these problems.

Representatives from 23 countries attended the three-day summit. *Source: The Financial Express*

1 August 2017

ECNEC okays dredging project

PM endorses proposal to revive Mujib's unfinished projects

The government on August, 1 approved a dredging project worth Tk 956 crore aimed at making waterways from Mongla sea port to Pakshi navigable to facilitate transportation of heavy equipments of the nuclear power plant at Rooppur.

The project was approved at the meeting of the executive committee on the national economic council, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Planning Commission.

ECNEC also approved seven other projects including the World Bank-funded 'Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1' for development of the land ports at Shewla, Bhomra and Ramgarh and security system at Banapole.

Planning minister AHM Mostafa Kamal said the projects' cost was estimated at Tk 3,171 crore, of which the government would provide Tk 2,579 crore while the WB would give Tk 592 crore as credit.

While approving the establishment of Sylhet Textile Engineering College at a cost of Tk 110 crore by 2020, Sheikh Hasina endorsed a proposal from the cabinet members to revive the viable projects initiated by the country's founding president, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The planning minister said that many projects taken by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman remained unfinished. *Source: New Age*

2 August 2017

Preserve Dhaka's archaeological sites: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August, 2 asked the authorities concerned to take necessary steps for the conservation and renovation of the archaeological sites in Dhaka city.

She gave the directives at a meeting with the senior officials of the cultural affairs ministry, archaeology department and Rajuk at her office.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's press secretary Ihsanul Karim said archeology department director general Altaf Hossain gave a PowerPoint presentation on the present condition of the 93 archaeological sites in the city.

The Prime Minister gave directives on which sites should be demolished and which should be protected and renovated considering their historical importance, he said. *Source: New Age*

7 August 2017

Cabinet approves seven more missions

Bangladesh will open foreign missions in seven more cities, including Sydney and Toronto.

The weekly cabinet meeting has also approved 17 more missions already in operation.

Apart from Sydney and Toronto, new missions will be set up in Kabul, Khartoum, Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, Bucharest and Chennai, Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiul Alam told reporters.

"Besides these, 17 missions that have been operating since 2014 were retrospectively approved. According to the rules of business, the cabinet's approval is required before setting up a mission," he said.

The missions operating since 2014 are in Athens, Milan, Mumbai, Istanbul, Lisbon, Kunming, Beirut, Mexico City, Brasilia, the Mauritius capital of Port Louis, Copenhagen, Warsaw, Vienna, Addis Ababa, Nigerian capital Abuja, Algiers and Guwahati.

The cabinet on August, 7 also approved a proposal for 'paperless trade' with some countries. The green light to 'Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Crossborder Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific' will enable online trade systems. *Source: The Financial Express*

8 August 2017

Bangamata was source of inspiration for Bangabandhu, says PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on August, 8 Bangamata was the source of all encouragement, power and courage for Bangabandhu to work for the welfare of the people of this country.

She said Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa helped Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from behind the curtain.

Bangabandhu could become the great leader as she was beside him, she said.

"My mother always encouraged him (Bangabandhu) to do politics for the people of this country... she never pulled him back ...she never cared about her own interests...even she never thought what she would get in life," she said.

The Prime Minister said this while addressing a function marking the 87th birth anniversary of Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa at Osmani Memorial Hall. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placing a wreath at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Mausoleum at Tungipara in Gopalganj on August 15

15 August 2017

Nation pays homage to Bangabandhu

The nation observed the National Mourning Day on August, 15 with due respect, marking the 42nd anniversary of the martyrdom of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina led the nation in paying deep homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his portrait in front of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi Road No. 32 in the morning.

After placing the wreaths, they stood in solemn silence for some time showing respect to the great leader.

A smartly-turned out contingent of Bangladesh Armed Forces gave state salute at that time, while the bugle played the last post.

A munajat was offered seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of the August 15 carnage. *Source: The Financial Express*

22 August 2017

Japan's dev assistance to BD will continue, envoy tells PM

Japan will continue its development assistance to Bangladesh in various sectors as it is already providing 600 billion yen for different mega projects.

Outgoing Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Masato Watanabe came up with the remarks when he made a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office on August, 22.

Prime Minister's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

He said Japanese investors have close eyes on Bangladeshi companies and they are keen to invest in building manufacturing industries in Bangladesh.

The Ambassador focused more on economic ties between the two countries and laid emphasis on advancing that further.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said her government will ensure all-out security in all the development projects.

The prime minister said Bangladesh considers Japan as its great friend which always extends its support to Bangladesh.

She particularly mentioned the great contribution of Japan towards rebuilding the war-ravaged Bangladesh after its Liberation War.

She mentioned that her government has acquired 1,000 acres of land in Araihasar upazila of Narayanganj to set up an economic zone there for Japanese investors.

Source: The Financial Express

27 August 2017

PM for exploring new export mkts

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August, 27 called for exploring new export markets as the traditional markets are not in good shape now.

“The recent economic condition of the traditional markets is not good for which the [country's] export in some cases has been on downtrend. Those who will find out new markets, their items will get special incentives,” she said.

The Prime Minister was distributing cheques of compensation to the inheirtors of dead workers and to crippled workers of RMG sector from the central funds of Labour and Employment Ministry at her office.

Prime Minister said, all manufacturing and exporting industries would be brought under the central fund of the Ministry of the Labour and Employment create to provide financial support to the families of the workers who die receive grave injuries in their working places.

"We have already given instructions to the Commerce Ministry to bring all garments exporters under the central fund of the Labour and Employment Ministry," Sheikh Hasina said. *Source: The Financial Express*

28 August 2017

WB to provide \$515m for healthcare project

The World Bank will provide a \$515 million as assistance to help improve health, nutrition and population services in the country.

An agreement was signed to this effect between the government and the global lender at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) in the city on August, 28.

ERD Secretary Kazi Shofiqul Azam and World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal Qimiao Fan signed the agreement on behalf of the respective sides.

WB Country Director Qimiao Fan said, since 1975, the World Bank has been working closely with the government to improve the country's health, nutrition and population services.

Bangladesh has made notable progress in reducing maternal and child mortality rates by more than half since 2000, he said, adding: "We are proud to have contributed to these successes,".

The project will support the government in consolidating progress and filling remaining gaps in basic health services, including provision of quality delivery care in public health facilities for over 800,000 mothers as well as basic immunisation coverage for nearly five million children in Sylhet and Chittagong divisions between 2017 and 2022.

The project will also support the government in meeting the growing demand for quality health services and addressing emerging health challenges such as non-communicable diseases and urban health.

Of the total loan, \$515 million will come from the International Development Association (IDA), the WB's concessional lending arm, and \$15 million will come as grant from the Global Financing Facility. The IDA credits are interest-free and repayable in 38 years, including a six-year grace period, and carry a service charge of 0.75 percent. *Source: The Financial Express*

31 August, 2017

None would remain poor, hungry: PM

More donations to relief Fund

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on August, 31 that her government has already started importing food grains from abroad to ensure food security so that the country faces no crisis of food.

"The aim of our government is that not a single person would remain hungry and homeless and all will get healthcare services and education," she said after receiving cheques for donations to the PM's Relief and Welfare Fund from various government and private organisations.

The PM Sheikh Hasina said that directives were already there to build houses for those who have lost their homes due to river erosion during the flood. Besides, assistance is being provided to the flood victims to rebuild their earthen houses damaged in the deluge, she added.

The premier added that Bangladesh is now marching ahead and it is now a 'role model of development' across the globe. *Source: The Financial Express*

31 August 2017

'Zero tolerance' against terrorism

PM tells US official Alice Wells

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August, 31 reiterated Bangladesh's "zero tolerance" policy against terrorism.

"We won't allow our land to be used for carrying out terrorist acts in other countries," she said when US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice Wells paid a courtesy call on the premier at her office.

Wells, also acting special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, expressed the US's interest in working with Bangladesh to combat terrorism and highly appreciated Bangladesh government's initiatives for curbing terrorism.

Pointing out that the country's media is enjoying total freedom, she said the media

is freely criticising the government and there is no interference from the government here.

Hasina said there are 750 daily newspapers in the country. "We have given permission to 44 TV channels in the private sector and 24 of them are now functioning," she said. *Source: The Daily Star*

10 September 2017

PM opens 2nd submarine cable

The country has reached a new height in internet communication and services as the government commercially inaugurated the second submarine cable with 1500-gigabit per second (Gbps) bandwidth capacity.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurated the landing station at Kuakata and SMW-5 consortium submarine cable system through a videoconference from her Ganobhaban official residence on September, 10.

The longevity of the cable has been fixed at 20 years initially, which may go up to 25 years with its optimum maintenance.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina launched the second submarine cable (SMW-5) and landing station in Kuakata of Patuakhali through a videoconference from Ganobhaban in Dhaka on September 10

Internet business entities will be able to enjoy greater benefits as there will be price cut in bandwidth import with the use of the second submarine cable.

The SMW-5 comprises of a core cable section that will pass through Singapore, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Italy and France.

Besides, there are several branch cable sections connecting Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, the UAE, Pakistan, Yemen, Oman and Turkey.

Inaugurating the submarine cable and its landing station, the PM said the internet speed will get a boost following the linking with the 2nd submarine cable while the people of the country's southern region will get its benefit, making the communication easier. "The second submarine cable will help people get better and speedy internet connectivity at a cheaper rate. *Source: The Financial Express*

18 September 2017

Rohingya Crisis: PM seeks global support at UN

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had talks with some dignitaries, including US President Donald Trump, attending the UN General Assembly when they assured her that they were with Bangladesh over the Rohingya issue.

“On Myanmar issue, we're with you,” Trump told the PM on the sidelines of a high-level meeting titled “Reforming the United Nations: Management, Security, and Development”.

The US president hosted the programme at the ESCOS Chamber of the UN Headquarters on September 18.

UNHCR to help Bangladesh

During a meeting with Hasina, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi expressed his willingness to help Bangladesh address the Rohingya refugee problem.

The PM said all the UN organisations would help Bangladesh, but the registration of the Rohingya refugees would be done by the Bangladesh Army.

The PM at a meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at hotel Grand Hyatt also discussed the Rohingya crisis.

PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said the Palestine president highly appreciated the Bangladesh PM for making a noble gesture to Rohingyas.

“Everybody everywhere is appreciating the Bangladesh Prime Minister for her humanitarian gesture,” Ihsanul quoted Abbas as saying.

'Myanmar must stop atrocities'

Leaders of major countries in a meeting in New York called upon Myanmar to immediately stop atrocities against its Rohingya people and take back its nationals from Bangladesh. *Source: The Daily Star*

21 September 2017

PM places five-point proposal at UNGA on Rohingya crisis

Seeks urgent steps from international community

Calling upon the United Nations and the international community to take immediate and effective measures for a permanent solution to the protracted Rohingya crisis, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed a five-point proposal to the UN in this regard.

"Myanmar must unconditionally stop the violence and the practice of ethnic cleansing in the Rakhine State immediately and forever," she read out the first proposal while delivering her speech at the 72nd session of the UNGA on Thursday.

In her second proposal, Sheikh Hasina said the UN Secretary General should immediately send a fact-finding mission to Myanmar.

"All civilians irrespective of religion and ethnicity must be protected in Myanmar. For that 'safe zones' could be created inside Myanmar under UN supervision," she said in her third proposal.

She also called for ensuring sustainable return of all the forcibly-displaced Rohingyas in Bangladesh to their homes in Myanmar.

In her last proposal, the Prime Minister said the recommendations of the Kofi Annan Commission Report must be immediately implemented unconditionally and in its entirety.

The Prime Minister thanked the members of the Security Council and the Secretary General for their proactive attempts to stop atrocities and bring in peace, and stability in Rakhine. *Source: NEW YORK, Sept 22 (UNB)*

PM urges OIC members to get united on Rohingya

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the OIC member states to show a unity for solving the Rohingya crisis before it is too late.

She also placed some proposals before the OIC, including full implementation of the recommendations made by the Kofi Annan Commission.

"I call upon OIC countries to show a unity to solve the Rohingya crisis before it is too late. Bangladeshis ready to join any initiative that OIC plans to take," she said.

The Prime Minister made the plea while speaking at the Meeting of OIC Contact Group on Rohingya Muslim Minority at the UN Headquarters here with OIC Secretary General Dr Yousef Al Othaimen in the chair on September, 21.

She also placed some proposals before the OIC.

The PM invited the leaders of OIC member states to visit Bangladesh and hear the stories of the Rohingyas how they fled the persecution in Myanmar.

The Prime Minister alleged that Myanmar claims that the Rohingyas are "illegal immigrants from Bangladesh" but all the historical records suggest that the Rohingyas have been living in Rakhine State for centuries. *Source: The Financial Express*

27 September 2017

Rohingya crisis: President for constant pressure on Myanmar

Asking all to stand by Rohingyas, President Md. Abdul Hamid on September, 27 stressed the need for putting constant pressure on the Myanmar government to force it to repatriate their displaced people from Bangladesh.

"We must stand by them (Rohingyas) and extend the hands of cooperation to them in their bad time," he said while addressing a function at Ramakrishna Mission in the capital on the occasion of Durga Puja. "We've to show sympathy to them (Rohingyas)...all national and international organisations should come forward to ensure their safe repatriation to their homeland and their rights to citizenship," he said. *Source: The New Age*

30 September 2017

Hindus bid farewell to Devi Durga

The five-day Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, ended 30 September with immersion of Devi Durga.

The annual festival began on September 26 with the incarnation (Bodhon) of the goddess Durga on the day of Maha Shashti at temples across the country.

As many as 30,077 permanent and temporary puja



Hindu community celebrates Durga Puja

mandaps (makeshift temples), including 231 in the capital, were set up across the country this year.

Bijoya Dashami, marking the victory of good over evil, is celebrated on the 10th day of the bright fortnight (Shukla Paksha) in the calendar month of Ashwin, as per Hindu tradition.

The government provided tight security around the puja mandaps. Plainclothes and uniformed policemen kept vigil in and around the mandaps to avoid any law and order problem.

Talking to BSS, some Hindu devotees yesterday said Bangladesh has set an instance of communal harmony as people of all Hindu faiths have been observing Durga Puja freely for long.

The main traditional puja procession, arranged by Mahanagar Sarbojanin Puja Udjapan Committee, started from Dhakeshwari Temple at 4:00pm and ended at Sadarghat on the banks of the Buriganga. *Source : The Daily Star*



Installation of the first span of the Padma Bridge at the Zanjira point in Shariatpur, September 30

30 September 2017

Padma Bridge: Installation of spans begins

The installation of spans (superstructure) of the Padma Bridge begins on September 30.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader will be present to witness placing of the 3,200-tonnes span between pier-37 and pier-38. This is the first among the 41 spans to be installed for the 6.15km bridge.

They were expecting to install the second and third spans as construction of pier-39 and pier-40 would be completed soon.

The construction work of the long-cherished Padma Bridge started in December in 2015. It is expected to be completed by December next year.

According to project officials, about 47 percent work of the project had already been completed. *Source : The Daily Star*

Report Compilation: Tahmina Begum, Mazharul Hoque, Md. Mamun Hossain



Green paddy field in Autumn



Department of Films & Publications

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