

## High Cost of Moscow Diploma

FOR the third straight year, Indian student Mitai Mitra must eke out an existence on the paltry 166 rouble monthly stipend provided by the Soviet government to allow her to study at Moscow's Pushkin Institute.

Mitra is thankful for the meagre sum, however. Many of her fellow students from the Third World could not afford to return to their studies when their subsidies were cut and their tuition bills were suddenly charged in hard currency.

Moscow schools and colleges have not been immune to the winds of change blowing through the country. They have been forced to find free market answers to problems caused by the government's decision to slash funding to the foreign student programmes.

These programmes were originally devised to reinforce links with Third World and

communist states worldwide. But as the world abandons communism and the Soviet Union tightens its belt, they have been the first to go.

"We've had so many economic problems," said Sergei Ivanovich, vice-director of international relations at Moscow's Pushkin Institute, renowned for its Russian language programmes.

Ivanovich claimed his school earned one million dollars last year by its new policy of charging US\$435 a month in fees and not accepting rouble payments.

The majority of students are now paying hard currency, said Geetika Sharan from Bihar, India, who started her Ph. D. in Russian literature at Moscow State University with the aid of a private sponsor this year. She says she is one of the lucky ones. There are far fewer students from Third World countries, she adds.

A teacher at Moscow's International Lumumba Univ-

ersity, who asked not to be identified, said her division enrolled 600 students in the last academic year, most of whom came from socialist countries.

But this year, the roster showed 125 students, only seven of whom attended the

**Third World students in the former Soviet Union, many of them on meagre scholarship grants, have been hit hard by the changes sweeping the country.**

first day of school in late August.

Foreign embassies and educational institutes in Moscow support these figures and conclusions. Cuba sent 2,200

students this year — almost half last year's number — to study in the Soviet Union, according to Miguel Gonzales at the Cuban embassy in Moscow.

Students from impoverished Vietnam were hit particularly hard. Two years ago, 600 Vietnamese students attended universities here. Fewer than 300 are expected this year, said educational director Chan Van Khung of the Vietnamese embassy here.

"It was a decision on the Soviet side to lower the numbers," said Khung, whose government persuaded the Soviets to keep paying the 160 rouble monthly stipends to Vietnamese undergraduates, though subsidies for post-graduate students have been cut.

The winners among the former foreign students in the former Soviet Union are the former East Germans who, should they wish to continue their studies in Soviet univer-

sities instead of transferring to the generously appointed German colleges, can claim full support from their unified government.

"No student from the ex-German Democratic Republic has to leave because of support," said Enno Barker, press attache for the German embassy.

Despite this offer, fewer than 700 German students opted to study in the former Soviet Union this year. Every one of the Pushkin Institute's 150 East German students on last year's roster failed to turn up for the start of this academic year.

The decline and fall of the communist empire also means that a Soviet degree is no longer the job-seeking advantage it once was in formerly Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe.

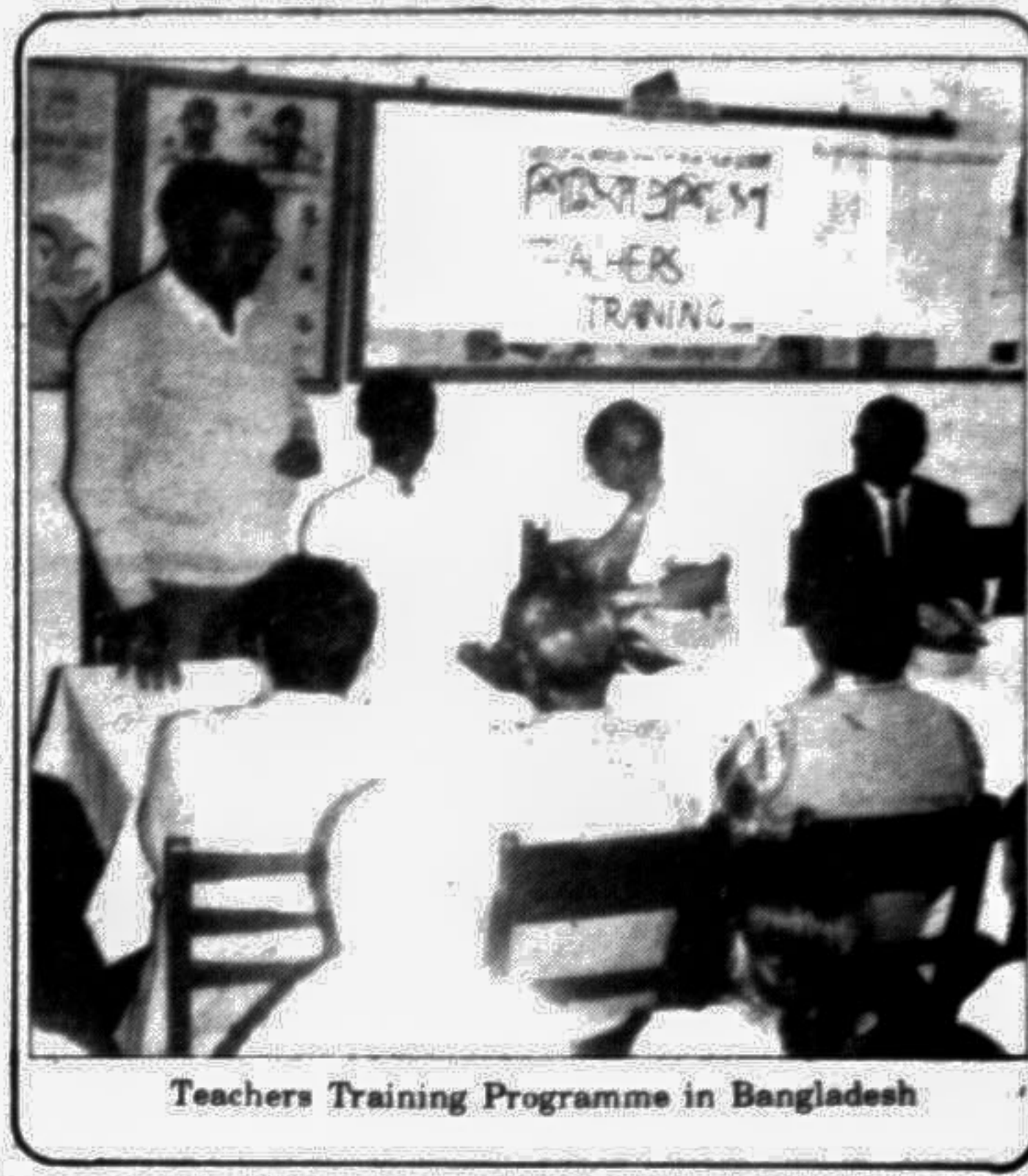
"Students find it no longer useful to study here under the changing political conditions," said Barker. Some former communist countries like Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria have stopped their student exchange programmes anyway.

The Pushkin Institute, whose barren walls and dimly lit halls are a hangover from the Soviet era, is one of the many schools that must cope with these ideological shifts.

This year, one of its three divisions welcomed 56 students from the West and 181 students from other nations compared to last year's 32 westerners and 445 students from what it then deemed as socialist countries.

Victor Nikolaevich Petrenko, director of Russian language programmes for the state department of education, says his department's decline is the direct result of the changes in former satellite countries, where Russian has definitely become out of fashion.

The result is an international surplus of Russian teachers, which add to the list of qualified people seeking teaching jobs in the West and the hard currency incomes worth a king's ransom at home. This is where the demand is nowadays, says Petrenko. —(IPS)



Teachers Training Programme in Bangladesh

## A Research Institute with Steady Ethos

A profile on a research institute is rarely an attractive subject for the print media. In spite of the lacklustre nature of the theme which partly explains a generally lukewarm readership, the greater blame for this sort of reaction can perhaps be laid at the door of an inappropriate approach which sometimes tends to become pedantic. The situation may probably turn out a little better with more simple treatment of the topic.

With that belief which is not without a tinge of diffidence, a research institute with its objectives and achievements is here introduced. The research institute in question is the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs. It is a sort of "think tank" devoted mainly, among other things, to the promotion of studies and research in law and international affairs.

Placed in a beautiful locale with tranquil environs, at Dhanmondi residential area,

### AS M Nurunnabi

The institute was established in June, 1972 under the pioneering initiative of Dr F K M A Munin, former Chief Justice of Bangladesh Supreme Court.

The institute has been operating as a forum for providing scholars and experts to re-

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late to one another and to facilitate the formulation of common policies in important areas of law and international affairs in an interdependent world order. It has among its patrons and members eminent personalities including judges, lawyers, jurists and academics.

The mainstay of its finance rests on grants made by the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs. Though the available funds put some financial constraints on any projected expansion of the activities of the institute, the limitation has not been allowed to affect the quality dimensions of its manifold on-going activities.

The donor agencies, such as the Asia Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the USAID play a useful role by offering specific project grants. Organisations such as the American Cultural Centre, the British Council and other foreign missions donate books, journals, periodicals. These go a long way in enriching the institute's library. The research grants given by the donor

agencies help to undertake original research in specific areas by the institute's qualified staff researchers.

The institute has a list of research publications which covers a broad spectrum of current burning issues. The institute's other publications include (a) a biennial journal, featuring articles on international law and international affairs, (b) Bangladesh Supreme Court Report which is a quarterly publication bringing out the decisions of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court and (c) a monthly magazine focusing on areas of current interest.

Besides, the institute organises seminars and lectures on international law and international relations.

The institute also undertook certain important projects on areas noted below: (a) project on delay in court and court administration funded by the Asia Foundation, (b) project on SAARC also funded by the Asia Foundation with the

cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (c) project on Bench Guide Book for use by trial judges on Civil Procedure, (d) project on gender differentials for industrial women workers in Bangladesh, and (e) project on international relations.

A very important part of the institute's project activities related to the Judicial Officers' Training Programme initiated in 1985, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Law and Justice and funds provided by the Asia Foundation. Under this programme a good number of judicial officers of the ranks of Subordinate Judges and Assistant Judges have received training so far.

Research organisations of a nation represent an aspect of its intellectual heart throbs, so to say. To make it cover a long mileage in its run, there should be greater active interest in their development on the part of all dedicated to the goal of extending the frontiers of knowledge.

## BAI Promises Bright Future

by M Zahidul Haque

ANGLADESHI Agricultural Institute (BAI) which is also known as Bangladesh Agriculture College, situated at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka is the country's oldest agricultural education institution. It was founded by the great leader Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazul Haq in 1938. Since then BAI has been contributing significantly in the agricultural development of Bangladesh through producing agricultural graduates.

At present, the BAI is marching ahead to gain its autonomy status which the authorities had decided to sanction. The inter-ministerial committee formed for the purpose of awarding autonomy to BAI and other two agricultural colleges has prepared the draft ordinance. Meanwhile, it is gathered that certain people are still in dilemma concerning the agriculture colleges' autonomy issue. Even the Institute of Post-graduate Studies in Agriculture (IPSA) which has already gained autonomy status and the charter for awarding degree has yet to get its final clearance from the authority. Some quarters are thinking whether the degree-awarding autonomous institutes will be successful in maintaining a minimum standard. But in reality, if autonomy is given to all agricultural education institutes and colleges, it will help in initiating a competition among the institutes to raise their respective educational standard. Of course, the responsibilities of the teachers will increase enormously. They will have to intensify their efforts in producing high calibre agricultural graduates. The students of different institutes will also have to get themselves more attentive to their studies for the sake of their own existence in the field of agricultural occupations.

As we know that the au-

tonomous IPSA is currently running M.S. courses in different discipline of agriculture quite efficiently, even better than the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU), Mymensingh. The autonomy status will greatly help in reducing session jam and campus violence as well. Since fewer number of students will be studying in these institutes, less troubles are expected. At present, BAI is under the academic control of BAU. In BAU, there are a lot of internal problems. As a result, students of BAI are suffering. Sometimes BAU postpones examination on different grounds and also delays in publishing results. For instance, the BAU has yet to announce the result of final B.Sc. Ag. (Hons) examination which was to be announced long ago from now. It may further delays in announcing the result, many students might lose the chance of sitting in the next BCS examination.

**Administration**  
The BAI is now under the administrative control of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI). The BARI being the country's largest agricultural research organization, it has its own problems. So, BAI being BARI's educational wing remained neglected for long. The BAI has so many administrative drawbacks. For instance, BAI is running without a permanent principal for the many years. Some senior professors had been doing the job as principal in-charge. Currently, Prof. M Q Zaman is holding the charge of principal, who is a professor of plant pathology in the institute. The professors and associate professors have yet to get their proper pay-scales. One senior teacher of the institute, Mr Selim Akhter told this correspondent that he became associate professor 12 years

ago vide the order of the President of Bangladesh but he hasn't yet received his genuine pay-scale. There are the physical problems in BAI. Although a cent per cent residential institute, there is no sufficient number of teachers and staff quarters in the campus. The institute lacks a pucca boundary wall. Due to the shortage of fund, the construction of the girls' hostel has not yet been started. Mentionably, a year or two back the ECNEC took a decision to admit foreign students in BAI but no step to materialize this decision has been taken yet.

### Good work

Despite many problems and limitations, the academic activities of BAI is going on with due spirit. A large number of BAI graduates have so far qualified BCS examination and joined in various cadre services. The graduates of this institute are working in all types of government and non-government agricultural organizations at home and abroad. The current students are trying their best to keep BAI's academic atmosphere congenial. The political consciousness among the students of BAI is getting a fair shape through perpetuation of friendship and tolerance between students.

The students are also continuing their extra-curricular activities side by side their academic pursuit. Recently an Islamic Cultural Competition was held under the auspices of Bangladesh Agricultural Institute Central Students' Union (BAICSU). More than 200 students took part in different events.

The Rovers' Scouts of BAI has just completed the annual training camp while Kishan Theatre of BAI staged a drama — "Muntasir Fantasy" by Selim-al-din in their freshers' welcome ceremony held on Sept. 26.

## Present Position of Polytechnic Institute in Bangladesh

by Z Abedin

*Polytechnic students have started terrorism within the Polytechnic campus and other areas. The campus has become a focal point for political parties.*

In the early 50s, Ford Foundation established a Polytechnic Institute at Dhaka. This was at first known as East Pakistan Polytechnic Institute. The aim for establishing the institute was to meet the mid-level engineers in the industrial sector and other field of engineering. After a time the name of East Pakistan Polytechnic was converted to Dhaka Polytechnic Institute. At that time, Polytechnic Diploma holders proved themselves as one of the potential personalities for the industries and other engineering services. In the light of that, and for the rapid development in the industrial sector, and for the need of technical persons in the engineering field, Pakistan Government established Polytechnic Institutes in most of the districts of the erstwhile East Pakistan.

At that time, Polytechnic teachers and specially instructor posts were equivalent to the professors of the government colleges at present the professors of the Government Colleges were redesignated as

assistant professor and the recruitment of the instructors are under the direct control of the PSC. Just after Liberation, the government temporarily filled up the some instructor's post, on adhoc basis, from junior instructors. Most of the promoted instructors failed to compete the PSC several times, for promotion to be an instructor. This was the first setback for deteriorating the standard of the education in Polytechnic Institute.

In 1978 all the promote instructors were regularised on humanitarian grounds, by defying the established recruitment rule set for the post of instructors. After that instance, the promotion quota was established through the bargaining agent of the Polytechnic teachers' representatives, now popularly known as "Bangladesh Polytechnic Shikshak Samitee".

In 1973 another incident was made in the Directorate of Technical Education for promotion of their favourite persons to the teaching post as junior instructors from clerks. After examining the case by Bangladesh Public Service Commission, most of the promote junior instructors, who were promoted from the clerks, were reverted to their original post of clerks. Yet among the promotes some of them were managed to retain the post of junior instructor by defying the PSC's objection. It is a matter of wonder that the promoted clerks who retained the post of junior instructor had prescribed the qualification for the post of junior instructor.

In 1974 some junior instructors were appointed on adhoc basis (without taking any interview) by political backing, and recommendations by

Professor Yousuf Ali, it is reported. Some of them have no minimum qualification for the post it is believed. For that reason they had not ever received any interview card for a regularisation of the post.

In 1982 after proclamation of military rule in the country, the government decided to regularise all the adhoc appointees on humanitarian grounds. If they had the qualifications for the post, they served on adhoc basis. But Directorate of Technical Education regularised all the adhoc appointees. In this case qualification bar was overlooked for special favourite persons of the Directorate. Soon after Commercial Technology attached, with the Polytechnic Institute, demanded a separate identity and a different establishment and for introducing B B A course.

After taking over the charge as Chairman, Mr Bhutyan, in Collaboration with 'Bangladesh Polytechnic Shikshak Samity' introduced what is a popularly known as 'Carry Over System'. For introducing this system Polytechnic 'Shikshak Samity' played a pioneer role for producing quantity production instead of quality production. In this system one student can be promoted in the final year without passing any subjects in the first or second year classes. Polytechnic students took full advantage of the system, they become very unmindful of their studies, and unruly and diverted themselves in the political activities.

Polytechnic students have started chaos within the Polytechnic campus and other area. For the terrorism activities Polytechnic students become important for the opportunist political parties. At the last stage, the Polytechnic campus become the focal point for the political parties, and harassment of the student of opposition group. Unfair means in the examination is a very nominal matter in Polytechnic scene. Ideal teachers and students become concerned with the front of the illegal force.

Recently the teachers association managed to promote some teachers, showing the general recruitment rule for caderism. It is a matter of great regret that about one hundred engineers working in the Polytechnic Institute as junior instructors i.e. one step lower post proscribed for the engineer. All the engineers are frustrated by the order issued by the authority. It may be mentioned here that present Director General, in charge, was promoted from the post of junior instructor to Chief Instructor after qualifying the A M I E which was equivalent to the degree of an engineer.

The situation that prevails in the Directorate show that the Directorate is not interested in following the PSC and BCS cadre rule, set for the cadre services in the country.

The senior official of the Directorate including DG (in-charge) are interested in satisfying the present teachers' association instead of establishing law and order and implementing the Government rule set for the Government service.

If this condition prevails, the situation of technical education will be a serious national problem.

## English : Language of the World

by Arjuna

A British writer named Michael Wynne-Parker has written a book entitled "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and it is all about the English language and its impact among sharply divergent, sometimes hostile people in many parts of the world.

It is very readable and contains anecdotes and quotations as well as historical insights concerning the language dating back a hundred years ago.

The author was particularly interested about the hold the

left our shores, our affection for it will remain undiminished. And we shall go ourselves, and send our youth, to the sources from which it springs and bring back with us the beauties enshrined in it.

"Bridge Over Troubled Water" is very readable, laced with anecdotes and quotations and gives you an insight into the history of the last 100 years. The author writes about his life and how he became involved as president of the Council of the English-Speaking Union of South Asia

He adds that with the revolutionary changes in Eastern Europe and Russian being no longer a compulsory second language, many people in countries like Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia would adopt English as a second language. They would soon be looking for teachers of English.

He likewise told me that ESU teaches English free to those who cannot pay. It has its own textbooks and adopts the Kalan system of teaching — partly written, partly spoken. He is confident within 90

**English is not a mere link language in the Commonwealth states. It has taken deeper meaning, often gaining acceptance as a cultural heritage akin to their own customs and traditions.**

English language has in the states and countries of the old British Empire, though the Empire had long been cast away from these places.

He said it has become the language of communication between Hindus and Muslims, Chinese and Malays and Sinhalese and Tamils, among other peoples.

In fact, he added, English is not a mere link language in these Commonwealth states. It has taken a deeper meaning, often gaining acceptance as a cultural heritage akin to their own customs and traditions.

Mulk Raj Anand, an Indian savant, has this to say: "The real English we know was never the language of our conquerors, for it is not they who cherished or brought it into our lives; no, it was the language we ourselves took from the heart of England, not as an act of submission but through genuine love of the graces. And after the last Englishman has

and governor of the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth (ESU) "at the grassroots" as chairman of the Norfolk branch of the life and exciting times of the founder of the ESU, Sir Evelyn Wrench; his own interest in Sapphires which originally brought him to Sri Lanka and the establishment of an ESU branch in that enchanting land.

Wynne-Parker, who was in Colombo recently for the opening of the ESU's South Asian headquarters, told me the English language today belongs to the world. It is the language of commerce and the language of travel.

With Britain's entry into Europe, he foresees an "English-Speaking Union of Europe." There are already ESUs in France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Finland. There are ESU branches in the USA and soon Japan will have one.

hours a student can be reasonably proficient.

His book records that 400 million human beings learn English as babies and 1.36 billion live in countries in which English is the first language of choice. Consequently, almost half of all the commercial deals conducted in this overpopulated world are conducted in English. "Korean executives in Bangkok doing deals with Italian executives use English."

The book further notes: "More inhabitants of the Chinese mainland are today learning English than the entire population of the United States. Why? Is it just because Britain and America together create such a vast pool of potential profit?"

"In fact there are other reasons. Eighty per cent of the world's information stored in computers is in English. There is no arguing with computers."

—Depthnews Asia



Underprivileged children learning to read and write in the rural areas of Bangladesh