

Dhaka Day by Day

A Volunteer Who Turns from TV News Reporting to Grameen Bank

by Nancy Wong

Tatsuya Watanabe came from Tokyo to Bangladesh as volunteer, paying his own fare and contributing his time and considerable expertise to the Joysagar Fish Farm project currently managed by the Grameen Bank.

What prompted this young Japanese whose hobbies include scuba diving, underwater photography as well as karate, to forsake the comforts and diversions of the sophisticated city life to spend some months in the remote countryside of Bangladesh make a fascinating story.

Speaking to The Daily Star, he explained: "I became involved with this fishery project because I believe it is a very good model of managing common resources, and the style is unique to Grameen Bank. The tragedy of community resources like water and forests is that they become separated from the people (human resources). They used to be an indivisible whole until the arrival of the colonial masters who shipped the resources home, leaving their subjects empty handed. This trend unfortunately continued with governments of newly independent countries. This is a wrong approach to resource management for it is only when people have a stake in the resources that they work hard to conserve and get maximum value out of them. They just don't plunder the land as they are fully conscious of the fact that their children and grand children will inherit them and earn their livelihood from them. When the organic link between human and community resources is snapped, then productivity is lost. Joysagar Fish Project is concerned with marrying the two resources - involving people in the management of natural resources."

Management of natural resources is only one aspect of Watanabe's multifaceted career which spans many countries and areas. He received training in this important aspect of development from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston, USA where he earned his MA LD. It was during his nine and half year as a news correspondent with NHK (a Japanese TV network) that he was exposed to development economics, his first degree being International Relations from Tokyo University.

Elaborating on this period of his career when he was posted to Okinawa, he recalled: "After the end of World War II, the Americans used Okinawa as a military base and launching pad to defend democracy and fight communism, particularly during the Korean and Vietnam wars. As the Vietnam war neared its end, the Americans were ready to return the territory to Japan. They had not invested much in the development of infrastructure as it was solely for military use, as a

result of which Okinawa lagged far behind the rest of Japan in economic growth. Okinawa Development Agency was thence established and this was how I became involved with development from a newsman's viewpoint."

So absorbed did Watanabe become in this area that he left NHK to further his interest and enrolled at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

During his career with NHK, this dynamic young man covered important news events in South Korea and Iran. He remembers his "exciting period" in Iran during Khomeini's rule when Iran and Iraq waged war against each other. He found it thrilling as he had never seen armed conflict before (being born after World War II) and was eager to cover the war front; but reporters were not allowed there for "Iran was losing and the authorities didn't want this to be known". Watanabe found life exciting with the piercing noise of air raid sirens and "bombs exploding like huge fire-works in the dead of night." However, he changed his opinion somewhat when one night a huge bomb landed just about 300 meters from his hotel and he was thrown off his bed. More devastating was the damage done to a neighbouring building which was totally destroyed - most unfortunately when a children's party was in progress. The bright side of his tour in Iran was an exclusive interview he managed to sloop with Rafsanjani, who succeeded Khomeini.

Much as being a TV news correspondent offered immense variety and ever-changing locales, Watanabe found such reportage "often shallow and sometimes quite frustrating."

He explained: "After working long and hard on a news event, the editor back home would cut it down to one or two minutes. Besides, nothing I did was ever permanent - viewers don't bother to tape TV news whereas readers of the print media do keep clippings of articles they enjoy or find stimulating."

So being disillusioned, he changed his career to development economics and was recruited by the Asia Pacific Development Centre based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he served for three years. Upon expiry of his contract, he returned to Tokyo and is currently Programme Director of Globalink Research Institute; a privately funded organisation specialising on development. Watanabe looks forward to returning to Bangladesh sometime next May to witness the harvest of fish ponds in Joysagar he helped to grow.

A separate report on the Joysagar Fish Farm project will appear soon in this paper.



Fishing project. Inset shows: Tatsuya Watanabe



Dilip Barua, General Secretary of Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (M-L) addressing the Central workers' rally at the Institution of Engineers yesterday. — Star photo

'Socialism builds a society based on equality, justice'

Central leaders of the left leaning political parties Sunday reiterated their firm conviction that socialism was the only way for establishing a society based on equality and justice, reports BSS.

They said capitalism had always served the interest of certain groups all over the world while socialism had proved its worth by guaranteeing basic needs of the people. The leaders were addressing the central workers' rally of 'Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (M-L)' at the Institute of Engineers here with the party General Secretary Dilip Barua in the chair.

It was addressed, among others, by veteran Communist leader Deven Sikder, CPB President Saifuddin Ahmad Manik, Samyabadi Dal leaders Shahidur Rahman Majumder, Abdur Rob, Lutfar Rahman, Dr Ekhlashur Rahman, Abdur Rashid, NAP leader Moulana Ahmedur Rahman Azmi, Gana Azadi League leader Alhaj Abdus Samad, Ganatrik Dal leader Aminul Islam Badsha and Chhatra Motri leader M A Mushahid.

The speakers called upon all left forces to unite on a single platform with specific programme for realizing the rights of the peasants and workers.

Deven Sikder called for evaluating the past movements and chalking out future programmes taking into account the interest of the majority of the people comprising peasants and workers.

He said the people were yet to get their desired result from the anti-autocratic movement. CPB President Saifuddin Ahmad Manik said "A society based on justice and equality which has been derived from the thoughts of the genius personalities and philosophers cannot be imagined in the capitalist block."

The CPB President said the struggle for socialism would continue. "We must build a model of exploitation-free society from our own tradition and culture," he said.

In his welcome address, Dilip Barua said imperialist and expansionist forces were responsible for continued poverty and other crises. He said the spirit of Liberation War was now shattered due to disunity which helped the vested quarters.

Barua referred to the continued restlessness including terrorism in the political arena and recession in the economy. Barua said the Rohingya issue and push-back operation of India were complicating the political arena of the country but which could be capably handled by the democratic government.

He welcomed the proposed meeting on the Chittagong Hill Tract issue but called upon all concerned to remain alert against a possible conspiracy by foreign forces and their stooges here.

HERE and THERE

Ershad Sena
A meeting of Ershad Sena, Barisal unit, on Saturday demanded the unconditional release of ousted President Ershad.
It was presided over by Md Anwar Mia.

Ratanpur Unnyan Parishad
A non-political voluntary organisation named "Ratanpur Unnyan Parishad Dhaka" was formed Sunday.
An Executive Committee of the Parishad was also formed with Gias Kamal Chowdhury as the President.

Pabna Press Club
A 11-member Executive Committee of Pabna Press Club was elected with AR Shamsul Islam as the chairman.
Yasin Ali Mirhda was made the President while Akhtaruzzaman Akhtar was made the General Secretary.

BHRO
The President of Bangladesh Human Rights Organisation (BHRO), Muhammad Abdul Khaleq in a statement on Sunday condemned the Indian "push back" programme.
He termed it as against human rights.

BTV

Monday

5-00	Opening announcement Al-Quran
5-10	Programme Summary
5-20	News in Bangla
5-25	Recitation from the Geeta
5-25	Sports programme
6-30	Cartoon Film
7-05	Debate
8-00	News in Bangla
8-30	Programme on health
9-00	Shatarupa
10-00	News in English
10-25	Parliament round-up
10-35	Hill Street Blues
11-30	Khabar/The News
11-40	Tuesday's programme summary
11-45	Closing

Sher-e-Bangla Smriti Sangsad
Shere Bangla Jatiya Smriti Sangsad and Bangladesh Jatiya Baktitya Gobeshwana Kendra have taken up joint programmes to observe the 119th birth anniversary of Shere Bangla AK Fazlul Haq on October 26.
The programmes were chalked out at a joint meeting of the two organisations with poet Abdul Khaleq in the chair yesterday.
The programmes include visiting the Majar of Shere Bangla, offering Fateha, laying wreaths and holding a Quran Khwani in the morning and a discussion meeting at the Majar premises in the afternoon.

OP-1 winners
The winners of OP-1 lottery have decided to start a hunger strike till death today (Monday).
A statement of the OP-1 Winners Association of Bangladesh yesterday said that they would commit suicide if not issued US visa.
The statement also strongly protested the US Embassy's version that winning in lottery did not mean winning a visa and termed as false that an affidavit was signed by the applicants.

1st among girls in Arts Group
Salma Begum, who topped the female merit list in the Arts Group in the Higher Secondary Examination of '92 from Dhaka Board wants to takeup teaching as her future career, says a press release.

JU classes resume

By JU Correspondent
The classes of Jahangirnagar University resumes today (Monday) after a 12 day long Durga Puja vacation.

Agility in the campus has been restored with the return of the resident students to their respective dormitories. However, admission in the first year honours classes from the waiting list kept the officials busy during the vacation.

RCA training course opens

A 11-day RCA training course on "Safety Documentation of Research Reactor" will be opened here today (Monday) at the auditorium of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC), reports UNB.
The training course, first of its kind in the country, is jointly sponsored by Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
Education Minister Jamiruddin Sirkar will inaugurate the opening session at 9 am.
The training course will be held at the campus of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment (AERE), Savar, where the only Research Reactor of the country is located.
A total of 14 Reactor scientists from China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan and the host country Bangladesh will participate in the training course.

8th among girls in Arts Group
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With a total of 892 marks including letter marks in psychology, logic an statistics, Salma obtained second position in the Combined Merit List in Arts Group from Viganunnessa Noon, College. Salma also topped the merit list in the SSC examination.

Seminar told 12 pc of total population mental patients

CHITTAGONG, Oct 11: About twelve per cent of the total population has been suffering from various mental diseases in the country, reports BSS.

This was observed by the participants at a seminar held in observance of the World Mental Health Day at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

"To consider the psychic patients as mad is a social crime," they pointed out. Chaired by Principal of Chittagong Medical College Prof Nurunnabi, the seminar was participated by Dr Sayed Mahfuzul Haq, Prof Mahbub Kamal, Dr Mohammad Salehuddin, Prof Sobhagata Chowdhury and Dr Mohammad Sultanul Alam. Dr Mohammad Shah Alam read out the key-note paper on modern concept on psychiatry. The speakers underlined the importance of ensuring proper facilities of modern treatment as well as showing fellow feeling, mutual respect and social compassion to cure the mental patients in the country.

As mental patients depend on various superstitions and ill treatment, they do not enjoy the modern medicare facilities and as such they suffer more, the speakers observed. The participants said experts of mental diseases and psychiatrists should take up coordinated approach to curb the spread of mental diseases. Stressing the need for development of psychiatry department in Chittagong Medical College, the participants also demanded of the government to set up a separate psychiatry hospital in Chittagong.

What's on today . . .

Seminar on Columbus Quincentenary
A day-long seminar to commemorate the Columbus quincentenary will be held today (Monday) at the American Cultural Centre auditorium.
Organised by the American Cultural Centre and the Bangladesh Association for American Studies in collaboration with the Bangladesh History Association, the seminar will include presentation of research papers, discussions and videos on Columbus' voyages to the new world.

US Presidential Debate
USIS will show the televised debate between US President George Bush, Governor Bill Clinton and Ross Perot today (Monday) at the American Cultural Centre auditorium at 7.30 am.

Khetmajur Union
The extended meeting of the Central Committee of Bangladesh Khetmajur Union will be held today (Monday) at its Tophkana Road central office at 9:30 am.

Rotary Club of Gulshan
The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Gulshan will be held today (Monday) at Gulshan Club at 5-30 pm.

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Zakaria new MD of FDC

Group Capt (retd) ABM Zakaria took over as the Managing Director of Bangladesh Film Development Corporation on Thursday, reports UNB.
Prior to his joining FDC he served as Chairman of Khulna Development Authority.
Born in Chittagong, Zakaria passed BSC in 1958 from Chittagong Government College and got the diploma in Aeronautical Engineering from Pakistan Air Force in 1961. He also got his commission in Pakistan Air Force in the same year.

Two dacoits held

The C I D police arrested two dacoits from the Staff Road near Zia International Airport Saturday and recovered one L G, cut-rifle, four rounds of cartridge, two bombs, one 'khur' and one knife from them, reports BSS.
A C I D police press release said here yesterday, the miscreants were coming towards Dhaka city for dacoity after hijacking a baby taxi on gun point from Tongi.

Iranian envoy meets Mannan

Ambassador of Iran in Bangladesh Mohammad Ganji Doost yesterday called on the State Minister for Religious Affairs Prof M A Mannan at latter's office chamber in Secretariat, reports BSS.
They discussed matters of bilateral interest, specially with regard to establishment of a library complex in Dhaka.
The Ambassador showed keen interest in financing the establishment of a modern library complex in the city.

IGP for increasing police patrol on roads

Inspector General of Police A S M Shahjahan Sunday directed for increasing police patrol on roads and highways for checking dacoity and accident as well as ensuring safe movement of traffic, reports BSS.

Namaj-e-Janaza of Abul Ehsan today

The Namaj-e-Janaza of Abul Ehsan, former Additional Chief Secretary, Ambassador to Belgium and the EEC and former High Commissioner to India, will be held at Gulshan Central Mosque after Asr prayers today (Monday), says a press release.



He will be buried at Banani graveyard.
The Quikhwani of Abul Ehsan will be held tomorrow (Tuesday) after Asr prayers at his residence at CES(B)26, Road No. 119, Gulshan, Dhaka.
All friends and well wishers have been requested to attend and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Addressing the senior police officials at their fortnightly meeting at the police headquarters here, he also asked the district police officers to supervise police patrol and make arrangements for establishing check-posts on the important roads and highways to examine the vehicles.
The IGP asked the investigating officers of respective thanas to be more active for proper investigation of dacoity cases and arrest of absconding dacoits.
The existing crime situation of the country and criminal activities that took place during the second half of September was also reviewed in the meeting. It was observed that the number of murder, atrocities on women and violence was fewer than in the previous fortnight.
Additional IGP, DIGs based in Dhaka and AIGs working in the police headquarters were present at the meeting.

Chinese envoy calls on Salam

Chinese Ambassador Chen Song Lu called on LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder at his Secretariat office yesterday, reports BSS.
They discussed matters of mutual interest.
The minister expressed the hope that the existing relation of friendship and cooperation between the two countries would be further strengthened day by day.

Weather

No change in day temperature
By Staff Correspondent
Southwest monsoon in likely to withdraw from Bangladesh within the next 72 hours commencing 6pm Sunday, Meteorological office forecast.

It said light rain or shower may occur over the region of Chittagong and Npakhali and weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country. Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

Out look for subsequent two days: Little change.
The sun sets today (Monday) at 5-35 pm and rises tomorrow (Tuesday) at 5-55 am.
Temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns on Sunday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius	Humidity in percentage
Dhaka	Max 32.5 Min 25.0	85
Chittagong	32.0 25.4	85
Rajshahi	33.5 23.4	88
Khulna	31.1 25.4	85
Barisal	32.8 25.2	86
Cox's Bazar	33.0 26.0	75
Sylhet	31.5 21.7	86
Dinajpur	31.4 23.2	92

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