

LITERATURE

Visitations from Denmark: The Prince and Paramanik Reflections on Linguistic Identity, Literature and Society-III

RIGHT Honourable Sir, on his second visit, the Prince kept oppressively close to his own predicament. He talked about things he might very well have talked to you about had you ever experienced a similar failure as mine.

tional fear of ghosts and Horatio's pathological sanity. The entire universe had become the nasty sty of an enameled bed upon which Forms dissolved as fast as winds broken in-advertently.

the pale cast of thought or to the inevitable result of the dreadful contagion getting the better of my drive for action which is more or less the same thing. But no, dear: my Delay had nothing to do with what I may have said or seemed to have betrayed in my frenzied quest for Form

thought ever get in the way of her being unnamable by her husband's friend behind her husband's back? No. Mere thinking, even if it operates within a rarefied consciousness, does not usurp the place of physical action.

quence of my inexhaustible power to articulate myself. Articulation — the creating in language of Forms that can move out to meet the flux on its own terms—is, as you must have understood by now, the only civilised form of redemption from a reality which is haphazard and discontinuous, more dangerously so in what you nowadays call the Third World.

Form-disturbing point in the arras and got enmeshed in reality. That's how, instead of becoming a great tragic poet like my creator, I ended up being a great tragic hero left for ever at the mercy of critics actors producers and a certain hallucinated Bengali-medium ideo-dirt.

Songs of Love Soulfully

by Abul Ashraf Noor

Life is a trail of songs Telling me more than Words can express As a listener I wish to have them soulfully with my beloved within and without.

Juvenilia

by Shakib Ahsan

There isn't much left to miss you around What remains is more to last a lifetime You are hopelessly after I am quite better, I sit and stare in the dreams you are so alive.

A Devastated Soul

by Nurun Nahar

How can one forget the crime you did to me Was I so unknown to you? Did you not feel anything deep inside you — the fact; How to face reality if it unravels and comes to the forefront.

THE funeral was in full swing, and I managed to wriggle out of a few prying eyes. Behind me was the mango grove that shriveled under the pall of the foggy white. Suddenly, I could see a figure in silhouette stalking towards the source of the muffled groan that broke in the eerie silence of the night.

must've passed out. When I came to I felt a persisting pain in the back of my neck. "Hi, cuz!" a familiar voice said to me. I got up and squinted at the figure a few feet away from me.

ried to catch Mr Khan but failed. Somehow they must've found a connection between him and I. "But what about the accident, the body?" "Oh, just a coincidence, the poor fellow, his family must be worried sick by now."

said, I recognized his voice from the night before. "I told you before I have no idea what you're talking about," Nafis said firmly. "What? I asked, a bit annoyed. "Do you know how I got out of this place the last time?"

die for a stupid disc." A mischievous grin spread across his face. "What?" I asked, a bit annoyed. "Do you know how I got out of this place the last time?"

The next day after all the hullabaloo of the disc and Nafis's adventure had somewhat died down I was sitting on the balcony thinking about it all when Nafis came in with two glasses of coke in his hand. I took one from him and sipped it.

Alive!

A Short Story by Hana Shams Ahmed

close to my house", he grimaced in the air, "but just as my luck would be, they caught me in my own backyard."

go into your house. We'll give you just another hour to think about it. Discuss it with this nosy cousin of yours," he pointed at me. "Maybe she'll be wiser than you. And if you decide not to tell us about it then you really will have your funerals. Real soon."

BOOKS

I NEEDED, 'decentralisation' is a popular epithet worldwide. Observers have seen more often than not that the leaders of most emergent countries have been enthusiastic about improving 'decentralised administrative structures' in their respective countries out of the centralized structures they inherited at independence or liberation.

principles and practice of local government towards the ultimate goal for balanced development nationwide. The advocates of the decentralised administration contend that local authorities pose problems of government on a small enough scale for the individual citizen to take an intelligent and effective interest.

national level. They also serve as training ground for future national leaders. The book under review, entitled *Decentralised Administration in Bangladesh* is a comprehensive study on Bangladesh's decentralisation process, including politics and prospects, made by Mr Quazi Azher Ali. The study

seems truly comprehensive in that it probes the decentralisation of government administration in Bangladesh as an endemic process. The author also traces how the country's historical antecedents, its politics, inherited administrative structure, economy, geography, and so on, have moulded the decen-

tralisation process. One important quality of this study is its anecdotal value. The author's observations and evaluation of developments seem to have been largely based on his professional experiences in and personal knowledge of the decentralisation process. He was a member of the prestigious administrative cadre both in the then Pakistan and Bangladesh. He held responsible field and policy management posts under both the governments. He oversaw and overviewed the process and politics of decentralisation. He did pursue overseas studies and serve as well important international organisations at different stages of his service career which in effect helped him get exposed to high quality ac-

demically and professional knowledge of such important disciplines as development economics, public administration, and development administration. So, the reader will find as usual certain assumptions in the preface of the book, postulated by the author on the basis of his long service experience and overseas studies and visits.

reader comprehend *per se* the problems of Bangladesh. Chapters one and three seem in part an attempt to amplify the theoretical setting of the rest of the study against which the subsequent assessment of Bangladesh's decentralisation process is made. In the remaining chapters, the author narrates the evolution of local-level democratic politics, proliferation of official-controlled government and semi-government agencies — including an attempt to decentralize judicial system in the 1980s, structure, functions and environment of district administration — highlighting the role of deputy commissioner in particular, decentralisation of planning and development administration, and the criticisms that were and are generally levelled against the traditional field administration in Bangladesh. In conclusion, the author notes certain valued comments in the light of his understanding and interpretation of the issues he covered in the study.

Underscoring a Vital Need

BOOK REVIEW

Decentralised Administration in Bangladesh by Quazi Azher Ali University Press Limited pp. XV + 326, price Tk. 350.00.

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DECENTRALISED ADMINISTRATION IN BANGLADESH

Quazi Azher Ali



W HAT exactly the state of 'poverty' means? Well, initially the poverty-oriented situation implies to destitution. According to Azharul Huq Choudhury, poverty signifies the conditions of life, limited by low nutrition, illiteracy, disease, squalid surrounding, low life expectancy as beyond any reasonable definition of human decency. So, he gives room to a sizeable portion of his book — *Poverty* — defining the situation, sketching a world-wide historical point of view.

to be very specific. On the other hand, in other developing countries, this realisation has poured out some quick and outstanding results in alleviating their people's pauperism. That's precisely Choudhury endeavours to elaborate in his book.

development issues, Choudhury divides his publication into chapters, categorically making it like truly a research-paper. In the sub-chapters, *World Bank and United Nations Development Programme*, the pen-man fully depends on these two world bodies' points of view on poverty; as he quotes from Robert McNamara, who was the World Bank president in 1956 and who was the first person from the Bretton Woods institution to awaken the international communities to the harsh realities facing the poor all over the world: "The brain of the poor is irreversibly damaged, bodies stunted, and their vitality sapped. Many of them suffer from debilitating disease that likely to have long-lasting effects." A very real and acute

observation on the part of an international-level organisation.

mutually beneficial partnership where research, learning, instruction and application up to the point of implementation are all integrated into one. So, the writer says, the advancement of creative ideas through education is most crucial to the way people of Bangladesh will live in the century around the corner.

Here in this section, Choudhury elucidates why education is necessary for a poor country's social and economic advancements, taking it for granted that Bangladesh's education doesn't serve the real purpose — 'to pull the country out of poverty'. And by doing so, he cites examples of some of the developed (rich) nations, emphasising on "Japanisation" of Bangladesh's educational system. This is the only development-related suggestion he puts forward as a researcher.

The contents of the book seem to have been organised in due format to assess the author's postulated assumptions. It consists of eleven elaborate chapters, excluding a select bibliography, index, and as many as thirteen highly informative appendices. Chapter one is a brief assessment of the concepts of decentralisation. Chapter two describes basically the geographic features of the country, including population. In Chapter three some definitions and general requirements in public administration have been stressed and highlighted. While the contents of Chapter four are designed to enable the

BOOK REVIEW

Poverty: Education and Social Change by Azharul Huq Choudhury Quest, Page 111, Taka 100

Poverty Education and Social Change

Azharul Huq Choudhury

Reviewed by Ekram Kabir