

# Dhaka Day by Day

## A Foreigner's Attempt to Improve Text Books

by Fayza Haq

"Textbooks contain different kinds of information and knowledge e.g. learning how to read and write, calculate, history, geography and information that conveys moral values," says Dr Nico den Tuinder who had been working for the National Textbook Board for two years. In Bangladesh the books that make children literate are extremely important as they help them find the way around. They will make them less susceptible to be cheated in every day life. They are the vehicle of practical knowledge and advancement in life and can help the children rise above their origins," he says, dwelling on the importance of text books.

"Textbooks in Bangladesh are not very attractive yet. They often mix up different parts of education: they try to impart knowledge of moral value along with basic literacy. This may not be all that interesting. Students should be given stories of other children in Bangladesh with whom they can identify themselves and not just abstract people from Bangla-desh history. There should be direct implication for every day life. Text books are written by scholars who give abstract notions of environment - physics and chemistry for instance. Children of eight and ten may not be fascinated by knowledge of abstract physics or biology.

"It is apparent that things are not always properly explained. Important things are sometimes left out. At times, unimportant matters are elaborated. A chapter may deal with animals, birds and reptiles may not bring out the fact that what distinguishes a mammal is that the young one is born alive and it sucks the breast," he adds.

"Some textbooks are based on the literary way of language. Full sentences and paragraphs are provided. Some information could be given in diagrams, tables and pictures. Reading small pieces makes it easier to learn. Texts and illustrations should be mixed. Again, at times there are spelling mistakes and mismatched illustrations. Sometimes the illustration just

decorates the page instead of being informative," he continues.

"The text books should be supplemented with story books but I wonder how far that is possible among the poor and lower middle class masses of Bangladesh," he adds.

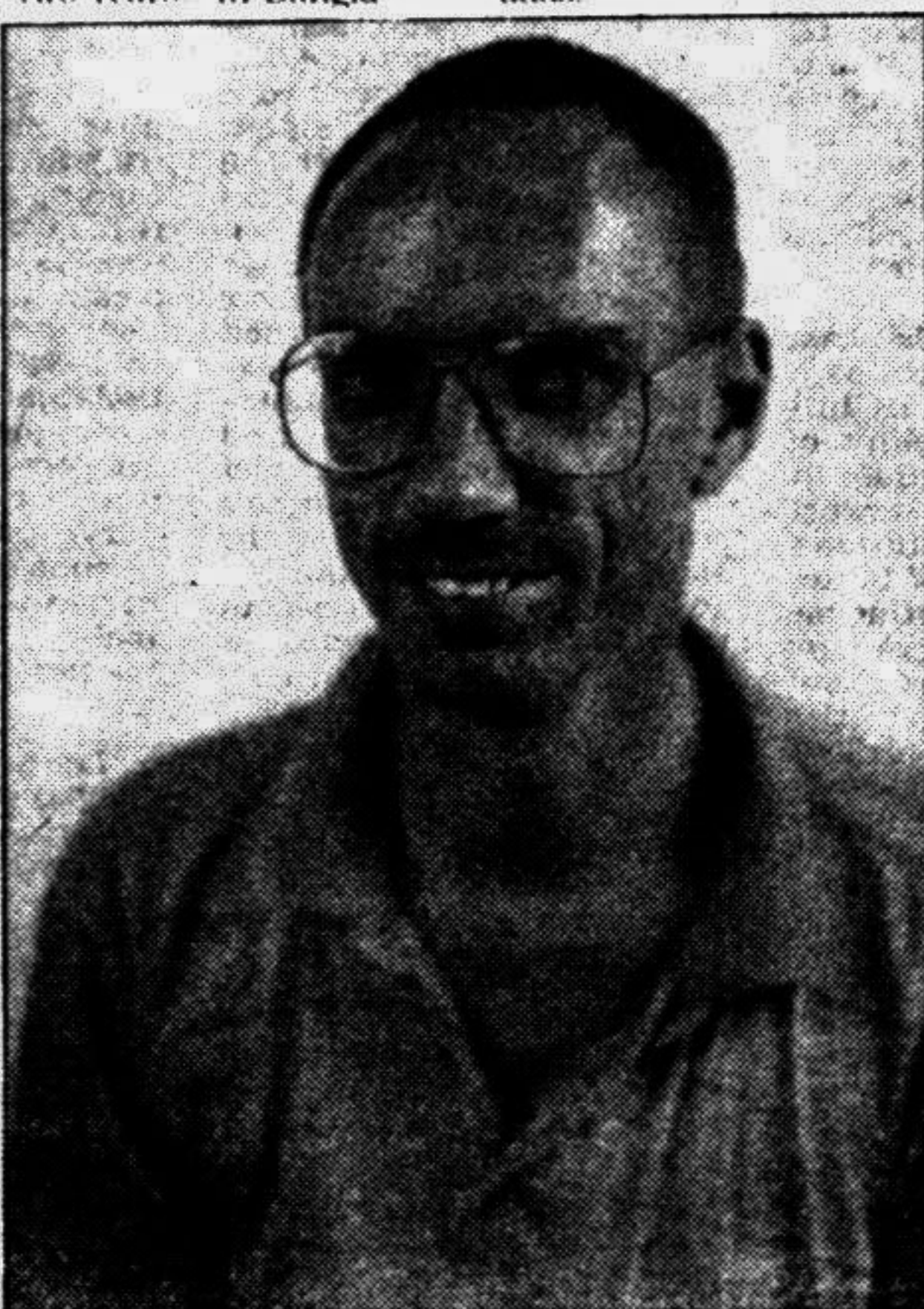
"Two years ago when I was preparing to come here, I felt Dhaka would be dull and so I brought 70 books to read in the evenings. I was informed that in Bangladesh there was a desperate struggle for life. No one informed me of the films, theatres and concerts that could be enjoyed here. A lot of the credit has to go to foreign organisations such as the Goethe Institut and the Alliance Francaise. The Shilpakala Academy also contributed a lot to entertainment. Also, organisations like the Zahir Rehan Film Society has also done a good job. It is a pity that when there are superb cultural performances such as in the case of Tagore's

dance dramas they have little information about it. It is here in Dhaka that I saw some of the films I've always wanted to see, such as, 'And God Created Woman'.

"The day trips close to Dhaka and to places like Pabna, Sylhet, Mainamati and Cox's Bazar have been enjoyable. The Mirpur Botanical Garden is also peaceful and eye soothing. The restaurants also provide good food," he says about his experience in Bangladesh.

"What makes living in Dhaka fascinating is that you see the whole city changing before your eyes. The number of the rich appear to increase to create more markets for products and entertainment. There are new shops with modern concepts such as 'Bookworm', institutes for computers, slimming, and karate have come up along with boutiques. The way the city changes is an experience you can't get in the western world. I learned that Bangladesh is not the ageless disaster prone country, which people in the west think it is," he says in conclusion.

Dr den Tuinder came as a consultant for text book editing from Rotterdam.



Dr Nico den Tuinder

## CIDA increases aid to Dhaka

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will increase and diversify its assistance to Bangladesh, official sources said yesterday, reports UNB.

The agreement was reached in official-level meetings between the two countries in the city this week.

Canada has been providing financial assistance to Bangladesh for its development activities particularly rural upliftment and energy sector since early 70s.

Director (South Asia) of the Canadian Foreign Ministry Terry Calfer left city yesterday concluding a four-day visit to Bangladesh.

He held two rounds of talks with the Foreign Ministry officials here, covering bilateral matters as well as regional and international issues of common concern.

Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Khairul Anam led the Bangladesh side at the meeting which also discussed the Canadian offer to help upgrade the training institute of the ministry.

During the discussion, Calfer briefed the Bangladesh side on Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien's recent visit to four Asian countries, including India and Pakistan.

Two Canadian ministers are expected to visit Bangladesh shortly, the sources said.

## VOA Fan Club quiz lottery winners

Thirty entries were selected as winners of the Voice of America Fan Club quiz competition in a draw recently, says a press release.

The winners are: M Abdul Latif, 81/1 Arambag; Zubayer Ahmed, Kismat Majibag, Sylhet; M Monirul Haq Moni, Circular Road, Barisal; Mahbubur Rahman Chowdhury, 142 Kazlashah, Sylhet; Khan-dakar Tawfiq Alam, Bachelor Staff Quarter, DU; SaJJad Hossain Sabuj, 93 Central Road, Dhaka; M Afzal Ahmed, Babul, Zakigonj, Sylhet; Utpal Kumar Majumder, Arpara, Shalikh, Megura; Uttam Barai, Jagannath Hall, DU; M Babul Mia, 154 Shukria, Zindabazar, Sylhet; M Saydur Alam, Sadarai, Chattak, Sunamganj; M Akmal Hussain, 2 Ali Noki Deouri, Sat Ranja, Dhaka; M Titumir Alam Roman, Rehana Villa, Sylhet; Mohammad Kamruzzaman, Ka/2/28 Bangladesh Bank Colony, Dhaka; M Shafiqul Islam, Shamsheer Nagar road, Moulvibazar; M Ziaur Rahman, Baurkapan, Hobiganj; Laki Dutta, 47 North Circular Road Dhaka; M Akhlaq Uddin Ronpara, Jamalpur; Foyzul Arefin Patel, Banglabazar Pachbaria, Noakhali; Abdus Shahid, Rashidia Library, Baleganj, Sylhet; M Shariful Islam, Shankarpur, Daserbazar, Moulvibazar; M Faruk Hossain, 312 Khilgaon, Dhaka; Nibaron Pal, Matrivandor, Keramatnagar, Moulvibazar; Dilwargazi, 55 Green Road, Dhaka; M Faisal Arman, 2/12 BOF Gazipur Cantonment, Gazipur; M Zahurul Islam Khan, 41, Falguri, Sylhet; Mokhlesur Rahman, Banigram, Sylhet; Masud-uz-Zaman Chowdhury, Hajiganj Chittagong; Sanjoy Kumar Sharma, Salya Pharmacy, Noakhali; M Badrul Islam Akhand, Taher-Lambu, Moulvibazar.

## UNAB greets Arafat

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) yesterday congratulated Yasser Arafat on his being elected as first Palestinian President, reports UNB.

In a statement, UNAB secretary general Syed Ahmed Hossain said the victory of Yasser Arafat was the victory of the freedom and peace-loving people of the world.

## Death condoled

The executive committee of the Dhaka University Alumni Association condoled the death of the association's life-member educationist AFM Abdul Huq Faridi at a meeting held on Sunday, says a press release.

The meeting observed one minute's silence to pay respect to the deceased and prayed for peace of the departed soul. It also expressed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

## Govt teachers meet Biswas

A delegation of the Bangladesh Government Secondary School teachers' Association called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports BSS.

Talking to them, President Biswas emphasised the contribution of the teachers as the builders of the future citizens of the country.

Earlier, in a memorandum, the members of the delegation appealed to the President for his support in raising their post to first-class gazetted status.



The draw for the VOA Fan Club Quiz Competition was held in the city recently.

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230697	9550697
232188	9552188
<b>833165-FAX</b>	<b>9562345-FAX</b>
869431	9563694
864383	9563691
869432*	9563695
869433*	9563696
864382*	9563690

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## 24 hrs inside Biman : A traveller's tale

Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton, USA

Little did the passengers, who boarded Bangladesh Biman's New-York-bound flight 009 around midnight on January 5, know that they were condemned to staying inside the aircraft for the next 24 hours!

On arrival at the New Delhi Indra Gandhi International Airport, after a two and a quarter hour flight from Dhaka, the passengers were politely informed that due to local restrictions, transit passengers were not going to be allowed into the terminal building. At this time the passengers were in the aircraft for about three hours, therefore this did not cause more than mild dismay.

The passengers reached Brussels thirteen and a half hours after boarding the aircraft at Dhaka. Out came the same message over the intercom, "due to local restrictions..." The passengers were livid! This meant that they were going to have to spend 24 hours inside a progressively stuffy and unhealthy aircraft.

The local Bangladesh Biman officials that came to meet the aircraft at Brussels' docking gate, were evasive at best. They blamed the Belgian authorities for the passengers' woes. The Belgian officials around put the blame on Bangladesh Biman. "The passengers are entitled to the facilities at the airport," they said. "However, it is the responsibility of Bangladesh Biman to issue them transit passes." Privately, some Biman officials told some passengers that the real reason why the passengers were confined is that some passengers loiter about in the airport and do not return on time. This causes delay and costs Biman money.

Of course there are more reasonable solutions. If procrastination is a problem Biman can easily warn transiting passengers that unless they return by a certain time, the plane will depart for New York without them. Somehow, passengers were left with the feeling that was not the real reason. Biman officials adopted boxing legend Muhammad Ali's 'rope-a-dope' tactics. They were content to let the passengers vent their frustrations, with the hope that once the plane left for New York, all will be forgotten. Clearly, Biman's strategy is to make a fistful of dollars, by causing inconvenience to passengers, if necessary.

Here are some advice Biman better heed. Between New Delhi and Brussels, we were served "croissant and Danish pastry." The concoction Biman served was neither croissant nor Danish pastry. The foreign passengers were seen to be snickering as they tasted the half-baked, inedible, floury stuff. Has Biman forgotten that our cuisine is our strength? Stick to polao, somosa, curry and kabab, please.

The plane's audio entertainment was barely audible over the background noise. The music actually played, bore no resemblance to what was listed in the inflight magazine. "Diganto!" The Runa Laila song, listed in "Diganto," never came. There were many foreigners travelling with us, who depend solely on English announcements. The English announcements by the pursers were very poor. There is no excuse whatsoever, for an international airline, operating on an international route, to be ignorant of the international language. Even Bangladeshis had difficulty comprehending half of what Biman announced, in English.

The last leg of the journey, from Brussels to New York, was not pleasant. The unhealthiness of having to breathe recirculated air caught up with passengers. The women felt nauseated, and finally, because of short-cuts at New Delhi and Brussels, Biman landed in New York early. That in itself is not bad. However, unlike other airlines, Biman does not give out arrival and departure times at New York's Kennedy Airport over the phone (the line is always "busy"). Consequently, very few relatives had come to the airport to greet their parties.

(Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed is a Rhodes scholar from Bangladesh, who currently lives in New Jersey, USA.)

## What's on today....

**Zahir Raihan Film Society:** The society has arranged the screening of the 11 episodes of the film 'Heimat' (The Homeland) by German film maker Reitz. The eighth episode of the film will be screened today. Venue: German Cultural Centre. Time: 3 pm.

**Bangladesher Samajantrik Dal:** The body will organise a protest rally. Venue: Jatiya Press Clubs. Time: 3:30 pm.

**Nari Uddug Kendra:** The kendra will organise a workshop on 'Habitat-II'. Venue: Drik Gallery auditorium. Time: 2 pm.

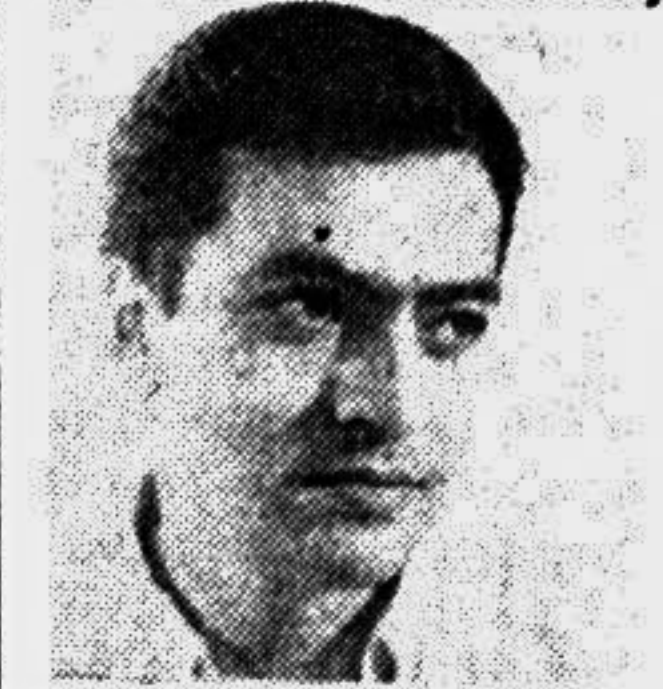
## Legal aid for Awami League activists

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami Lawyers' Council has offered legal support to the members of the Awami League and its front organisations who have been served with "false" cases.

In a joint statement Tuesday, the Council's convenor Advocate Sahara Khatun and member-secretary Advocate Abdullah Abu requested the repressed party activists to contact them with details of the cases at the Awami League central office between 6 to 7:30 pm during Ramadan.

## 8th death anniversary



The 8th death anniversary of Khalid Ibrahim will be observed today (25-1-96) at his Banani residence. All his relations, friend's and well-wishers are requested to attend the milad mahfil after Asar prayer.

**ভোরে কাগজ - রেডকাউ**

বিশ্বকাপ ক্রিকেট কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতা

প্রথম পর্ব চলছে

খেলা দেখার টানটান উত্তেজনা, মাথাটা খাটানোর মজা আর অনেকগুলো আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার -

প্রথম পুরস্কার : রডিন টেলিভিশন অথবা ২৫ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

দ্বিতীয় পুরস্কার : বেঙ্গিকারেন্ট অথবা ২০ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

তৃতীয় পুরস্কার : সিডি প্রেন্সার অথবা ১৫ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

চতুর্থ পুরস্কার : ১০টি, ১ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

পঞ্চম পুরস্কার : ২০টি, ৫০০ টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

প্রথম পর্বের কুইজ চলবে ১৩ ফেব্রুয়ারি পর্যন্ত

আবার ১৪ ফেব্রুয়ারি থেকে সমান পুরস্কার নিয়ে দ্বিতীয় পর্ব

**আজই কুইজে অংশ নিন**

**আজই মোহর গো গা দেখুন**

ভোরে কাগজ-এ প্রশ্নপত্র, নিয়মাবলী ছাপা হচ্ছে প্রতিদিন

**ভোরে কাগজ**

## Save the Children (UK)

(an international NGO with a mission to create lasting benefits for children) seeks a

### MEDICAL TRAINER

for one of its Rural Project. This post is a part of unqualified allopathic practitioners programme which aims to demonstrate their potential in providing effective and sustainable PHC in hard to reach communities of rural Bangladesh. The post is a managerial one (salary Tk. 7,500.00 to 12,500.00 per month depending on qualification and experiences). The successful applicant will join a team, taking responsibility of curriculum development including training need assessment, imparting training including followup, programme and clinic management and research activities on unqualified allopathic practitioners programme.

#### The Applicants should have:

- medical degree/diploma
- understanding of community health problems and having technical skills in patient management at community level;
- good communication skill with both literate and illiterate people;
- trainers skill preferably with participatory appraisal approaches;
- understanding of rational use of drugs (Prescribing and administration) and rural set up of health services (both public and private);
- ability to produce reports, case studies and documents in both bangla and english;
- preferably with experiences of data collection for surveys;
- ability and interest to stay at remote rural areas and working with rural people;
- strong commitment to work as a member of a team.

To apply please send a detailed letter in support of your application with a full CV to

The Deputy Field Director  
Save the Children (UK)  
House 28, Road 16 ( New)  
Dhanmondi R/A Dhaka  
or Fax (2) 817278

before 10 February 1996. Applications from suitable women candidates are especially encouraged. Only short listed candidates will be contacted for interview. No other correspondence will be entered into.

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