

Dhaka Day by Day

Making Science More Approachable

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

It was an unusual gathering at the small classroom in a Narayanganj school on a warm July afternoon last year. Unusual not so much because of the handful of people, most of whom were students, but because of what they were so animatedly talking about. It was not politics or literature that was the topic of the day but science, a subject so neglected in our country. Moreover, those present at the discussion actually paid Tk 50 per person just to attend this small gathering of science hungry people.

This system of buying tickets to go to a lecture or discussion is a common practice in many western countries. But for Bangladesh it is quite a novel and no doubt, ambitious effort considering the subject of discussion.

Following the tradition of the Greek scholars who felt it their duty to impart their knowledge to others as well as learn from them, a young man called Asif in a sleepy neighbourhood of Narayanganj held his first discussion session in his own home. Charging Tk 25 per ticket Asif managed to attract only one discussant. This was the beginning of a series of discussion sessions on science arranged by Asif and a few of his friends. In 1992 the group held 39 programmes with a ticket fee of Tk 25. The receipts of these programmes amounted to 1,405 taka. In 1993, 83 discussion programmes yielded more than four thousand

taka. 1994 was a particularly fruitful year with a total of 56 programmes earning Tk 11,666. One good news is that he drew and sponsorships that allowed Asif to hold his sessions in various auditoriums, including Biswa Shahitya Kendra in Dhaka in October '95.

The topics discussed have been varied including the possibility of extraterrestrial civilizations, evolution of galaxies, origin of life and the search for a second Earth.

For Asif and fellow associates this venture of creating a network of science enthusiasts has been extremely exciting. The main reason behind the idea of discussion for a fee is to enable the groups to hold such programmes regularly in public auditoriums allowing larger number of participants. "It is a cold truth," says Asif, "that without financial assistance we cannot continue this effort". But if we get it then it will be possible for ordinary people to get acquainted with scientific knowledge.

Asif and his friends have given an open invitation to anyone who is interested in science and would like to be a part of this innovative group. This includes science phobists who have discarded the subject since their school days, for whom science may now become an approachable alien.



Breaking new grounds



German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Carl Dieter Spranger called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday. — PID photo

German minister assures increased cooperation

Visiting German Economic Cooperation and Development Minister Carl-Dieter Spranger said yesterday that economic cooperation between Germany and Bangladesh would further enhance in the coming years, reports BSS.

During his courtesy call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday afternoon the German minister also said the cooperations in different fields between the two countries would also increase. Spranger, who visited Bangladesh on his first official visit to the country, narrated his experience and said he was impressed to see the performance.

The people, he said, was being really benefited from those projects.

The German minister said he was also impressed to see that the German-aided projects had been very successful in recent years.

The German minister said his country had economic cooperation with a number of other countries.

But, he said, the performance of the projects in Bangladesh was better than those in other countries.

The Prime Minister welcomed the visit of the German minister to Bangladesh. Describing Bangladesh-German relations as excellent she hoped the relations would further be increased in the years to come.

The German minister also thanked the Prime Minister for warm hospitality extended to him and the members of his entourage during their stay in Bangladesh.

Those present during the meeting were Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Secretary of Economic Relations Division Mohammad Lutfullah Majid, Secretary to the Prime Minister Abdullah Haroon Pasha, German Ambassador to Bangladesh Bruno Weber and Director General of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation of Germany Bernhard Schweiger.

Later the members of radio, television and press accompanying the German minister called on the Prime Minister at her office.

Biswas greets new Aussie Gov Gen

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has congratulated Sir William Deane on his appointment as the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, reports BSS.

In a message President expressed that the relations between the two countries would further be enhanced during Sir Deane's tenure at the highest office of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Compensation sought

Three teachers' forums in a joint statement Sunday demanded compensation for the family of Anil Kumar Biswas, a teacher, killed while performing poll duties, reports UNB.

They pointed out that in view of non-partisan character of the teachers and on security ground, the government was urged to relieve them of election duties.

The teachers' leaders in the statement also condoled the death and expressed their sympathies to the bereaved family.

Anil, a senior teacher of Sahasraiah High School in Balmat thana of Faridpur district, was attacked by anti-election activists for performing duties in the contentious election held last Thursday. He succumbed to his injuries on Saturday.

Signatories to the statement include Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association chairman Shaikh Amanullah and secretary general Quazi Faruque Ahmed, Bangladesh Teachers' Association secretary general M Sallim Bhuiyan and Bangladesh College Teachers' Association president AKM Zahur Islam.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: The Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association (BFTA) has demanded proper compensation to the family of Anil Kumar Biswas, a school teacher of Sahasraiah High School of Faridpur who died after a fatal attack on him while performing election duty.

Weather

Dry weather forecast

Light rain or thundershower may occur at one or two places over Sylhet division in the next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office said weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Slight rise in night temperature is expected over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions while it may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country.

The sun sets today at 5:56 pm while rises tomorrow at 6:28 am.

Minimum and maximum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	min	max	morning	evening
Dhaka	12.5	30.0	65	32
Chittagong	14.5	29.8	60	52
Rajshahi	11.5	27.0	68	—
Khulna	10.5	31.0	63	59
Bansal	12.5	29.8	80	61
Sylhet	13.8	28.0	68	42
Coxe Bazar	16.2	30.0	62	50

Bangladesh Railway (West Zone) Engineering Department

Tender Notice

Tender Notice No.01/Madhyapara/96 Dated: 08/02/1996

Sealed Tenders are invited from the 'C' class contractor of Bangladesh Railway, West Zone and 'C' class contractors enlisted prior to re-organisation of the Railway into two Zones having proper Registration for Earth work for construction of Railway line connecting up to Madhyapara Hard Rock Mine Project (1) Group 'A' : From Ch. 1.00 to 21.00 & Ch. from Ch. 29.00 to 51.00 (2) Group 'B' : From Ch. 51.00 to 84.00 (3) Group 'C' : From Ch. 84.00 to 160.00 & (4) Group 'D' : From Ch. 160.00 to 211.00. Approximate cost of the works are 5.29 lakhs, 5.22 lakhs, 5.98 lakhs & 5.45 lakhs respectively. Earnest money will be 2% (two per cent) of the quoted rate. Per set of tender documents is Tk. 400/- (Four hundred) (Non-refundable). Tender documents for Group 'A', 'B', 'C' & 'D' will be available for purchase in the office of the Chief Engineer/West/Rajshahi, Divisional Engineer/II/Paksey & Divisional Engineer/Lalmorhat Office up to 27.2.1996 during office hours. Tender documents to be dropped in the tender box set apart in the aforesaid offices by 12.00 hours of 28.2.1996 which will be opened publicly at 12.30 hours on the same date in presence of contractor or his authorised representative. Railway Administration reserves the right to accept or reject the tender as a whole or in part thereof. All other terms & conditions will be available in the tender documents.

for Chief Engineer/West Bangladesh Railway Rajshahi

APPD No. 300 Dt. 10-2-96 D:21



Increased sale of *Senai* was observed yesterday in city markets on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Fitr. — Star photo

BNP programmes on Feb 21

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in a directive yesterday asked its units at all metropolitan, district, town, municipal thana and ward levels to observe the historic Language Martyrs' Day on February 21 with due honour, reports BSS.

The party central programmes included wearing black badges, placing wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at the zero hour on February 21 as a mark of respect to the martyrs of the historic language movement. In the morning, the national flag and the party flag will be hoisted at half mast at the central party office.

All the units of the BNP and its front organisations have been directed to chalk out identical programmes.

Yeltsin receives Bangladesh envoy

Bangladesh Ambassador to Russia Mostafa Faruque Mohammed presented his credentials to President Boris Yeltsin at the Kremlin on February 12, reports UNB.

BSA adds: Bangladesh Ambassador to Brazil Major General A M S A Amin presented his letter of credence to the president of the Federative Republic of Brazil Fernando Henrique Cardoso at the presidential palace recently.

After the presentation, the Bangladesh ambassador had a brief discussion with Cardoso.

The Brazilian president expressed his interest in developing closer political, cultural, economic and industrial ties with Bangladesh.

Australia to provide Tk 1.31 cr to ICDDR,B

The government of Australia will contribute 4,33,000 Australian dollars (Taka 1,31,63,000) to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research: Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) for this year, reports BSS.

Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Kenneth Aspinall conveyed Canberra's contribution to ICDDR,B's director Dr Dermis Habte at an official ceremony in the centre yesterday, a press release said. Australia has been providing financial support to the ICDDR,B since 1978 and till date, had committed about four and a half million Australian dollar towards the centre.

Hanif greets city dwellers

Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif yesterday greeted the citizens of the capital city on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

In a message on the eve of the holy occasion, Mohammad Hanif put emphasis on building a prosperous society by taking lessons from the teachings of the month of Ramadan.

Mayor Hanif hoped that the city dwellers would enjoy the Eid under the spirit of cordiality and Muslim brotherhood. He sought cooperation of all towards activities being done by the city corporation for the development of the metropolis.

He also wished a happy and prosperous life of all on this holy occasion.

Spranger praises BRAC schools

The visiting German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Karleitter Spranger Sunday said that he was very impressed with the performances of the BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) school children and their teachers, reports BSS.

The German minister made the observation after a visit to a non-formal primary BRAC school at Sarikosh during his day-long tour in Tangail.

Describing BRAC schools as very "successful and well-organised institutions" the German minister said "it was amazing to see how a teacher can perform so well after only two weeks of intensive training." "It was visible that the students are enjoying coming to school," he pointed out.

The minister was informed that BRAC at present runs 35,175 schools throughout the country providing a three year basic education to about 12 lakh children. He was further told that to promote female education 70 per cent of BRAC school students are girls.

German financial institution KFW is a major donor to BRAC's non-formal primary education programme.

Envoy to Turkey named

The government of Bangladesh has decided to appoint Mahboob Alam, career diplomat, as ambassador of Bangladesh to Turkey, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday, reports BSS.

He has been Bangladesh ambassador to Malaysia before being appointed for the new assignment.



Homebound people travelling on roofs of buses risking their lives to celebrate Eid with their families. — Star photo



Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Muhammad Nurul Islam giving away the trophy to the best all round new entry sailor at a passing out parade held at BNS Shaheed Mozamam at Kaptal on Sunday. — Star photo

দরপত্র আহ্বান বিজ্ঞপ্তি

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বরঃ ৪৫/১৯৯৫-৯৬ইং

১। এতদ্বারা নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের জন্য দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী অনুমোদিত ১ম শ্রেণীর বৈদ্যুতিক ও যান্ত্রিক টিকাদার, চট্টগ্রাম পল্লী জোনের অনুমোদিত ২য় শ্রেণীর বৈদ্যুতিক ও যান্ত্রিক টিকাদার, যাহাদের কাছাকাছি টিকাদারী ও সুশাসিত ইঞ্জিনারী এমসি/বিসি লাইসেন্স রহিত্যে তাহাদের নিকট হইতে ২৯১১ নং বাংলাদেশ কনসে অফিস দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে। দরপত্র নিম্নবর্ণিতকর্তার এক নির্ধারিত প্রকৌশলী পদবর্তী অফিসের বিদ্যে, সিস্টেম/সুযোগ/স্ববিধা দরপত্র বিক্রয় স্থলে নিকট নিম্নবর্ণিত দরপত্র আহ্বান করে ২৭-২-১৯৯৫/১৫-১১-১৯০২বাং তারিখ দুপুর ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দাখিল করা যাইবে এক একই দিন কোলা ১২-৫৫ মিনিটে জারী দরপত্রাদ্যতঃসে উপস্থিত হইতে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন। দরপত্র কোলা হইবে। প্রত্যেক দরপত্র সীলমোহিতকৃত একটি বায়ে কাজের নাম উল্লেখপূর্বক জমা দিতে হইবে।

ক্রমিক নং	কাজের নাম	প্রাকল্পিত ব্যয় (টাকায়)	জামানতের অর্থ (টাকায়)	কার্য সম্পাদনের নির্ধারিত সময়
১।	চা-বাপান এলাকায় ৭ (সাত) টি জায়গাতে প্রথম কল্যাণ কেন্দ্র স্থাপন প্রকল্পের অধীন মৌলভীবাজার জেলায় কল্যাণ প্রকল্পে অন্তর্গত মনু ডালিম শাহসেন্দেয়ার চা-বাপানে একটি চা-শিখ প্রথম কল্যাণ কেন্দ্র নির্মাণ কাজ। (উপবৃত্তঃ প্রশাসনিক ভবন, ১০০০ বর্গফুট বিশিষ্ট ডাকঘরের বাসভবন, ৮৫০ বর্গফুট বিশিষ্ট জনসংখ্যা ও পরিবার পরিকল্পনা অফিসের বাসভবন, ৮০০ বর্গফুট বিশিষ্ট সেবার অফিস/কম্পাউন্ডার-এর বাসভবন (দুইটি) এবং ৫০০ বর্গফুট বিশিষ্ট ভারমিটার বৈদ্যুতিককবরসহ সার্ভিস সংযোগের কাজ।	টাকা ৩,০৯,৩০৬/-	টাকা ৬,১৮৭/-	৩০ (বাঁটা) দিন

২। সিস্টেম পদবর্তী কর্মীদের অধীন সকল নির্ধারিত প্রকৌশলীর কাছাকাছি অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ২৯১১ নং বাংলাদেশ কনসে অফিসে নকশা (যদি প্রয়োজ্য হয়) কাজের সিডি/ইউ, অতিরিক্ত নর্ডকলী ও নিয়মাবলী ইত্যাদি সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের দরপত্র সলিসি ও প্রতি প্রহের মুদ্রা মং : ৪২৫/- (চারশত পঁচিশ) টাকা মাত্র রাখা অফিসেরযোগে প্রদানপূর্বক জমা করা যাইবে। অফিসী টিকাদার নিকট অথবা তাহাদের প্রতিনিধি প্রতিনিধির ক্ষেত্রে টিকাদার কর্তৃক প্রতিনিধির নাম রাখা সত্যায়িত করিয়া স্বাক্ষরপত্র/প্রকৌশলী-এই পেশপত্রক ২৬-২-১৯৯৫/১৫-১১-১৯০২বাং তারিখ পর্যন্ত জমিন চলাকালীন সময়ে যে কোন দিন দরপত্র সলিসি জমা করিতে পরিবেন। কিন্তু টিকাদার বাজীত অন্য কারো যান্ত্রিক দরপত্র গ্রহণযোগ্য হইবে না।

নির্ধারিত প্রকৌশলী পদবর্তী অফিসের বিদ্যে, মৌলভীবাজার।