

The articles, or "posts" (to use Internet parlance) published in this page come from the Bangladesh Internet news group called "soc.culture.bangladesh," or SCB. In this newsgroup, Internet users from around the world, mostly Bengalees, discuss issues relevant to Bangladesh. In "Live from the Internet" the Daily Star reprints these posts verbatim (complete with English language errors) — just as they would appear on your computer screen. They have only been edited for size and relevance to the subject matter.

Debate on Solution to BD crisis...

Zia Hassan
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USA:

I have been carefully reading all the postings in the SCB regarding the current political situation in Bangladesh. It is my understanding/anticipation that:

- 1) The February 15 election is not a solution to the problem.
- 2) Elections must be held within Feb. 23 to uphold the constitution.
- 3) BNP will get a majority in this election (at least 270/300 seats)

People are hooked on this idea of a caretaker government. It won't work. Who gets to play? Who doesn't? Why not? What power does it have to control itself? Caretaker governments are trouble

problems with this one. Constitutional amendment is no simple matter, and I would be willing to bet pounds to peanuts that this part of the process would break down, because the Opposition parties would have no direct role in it.

3) Once the constitution has been amended, the prime minister will dissolve the parliament and hand over power to a caretaker government that will conduct a fresh election in which all parties will participate.

This seems to me to be the

Bilayet Hossain, USA:

Certainly...a caretaker government is not the best arrangement, but I do not see why it is a trouble. What you need are sound electoral practices put into place - proper scrutiny of elections, the creation of an atmosphere in which people can vote freely and the elimination of the things that stop people from being able to do that. (OK, I know they sound like motherhood statements, but they are the only way to go.) The party that gets into power through the democratic process must be allowed to run its term.

Denise Wright, USA: Motherhood or not they are sound advice. But when you say...

...the party that gets into power through the democratic process must be allowed to run its term...are you making a general statement...or are you referring to Bangladesh. Does the party that gets into power through the 'democratic process'...has any responsibility to 'democratic process' beside finishing their term? The three years of the Parliamentary history (1991-1994)...the Zia Govt. has shown very little respect for

- 4) Opposition will reject the election.
- 5) Ruling party will rejoice over their victory.
- 6) Strikes will continue and the Economy, education, etc. will continue to be affected as a result.

Denise Wright
dwright@metz.unc.edu.au
Australia:
This is a fair assessment.

Zia Hassan, USA: their mind to break the agreement. The agreement would be as follows: 1) The Feb. 15 election will go on unopposed without the Opposition parties. (As part of the noble agreement)

Denise Wright, Australia: With you so far...

Zia Hassan, USA: 2) BNP with its majority will form a government "primarily" to amend the constitution to facilitate holding the elections under a caretaker government for the next 12 years or the next three terms (As are the opposition demands, I believe). BNP government will NOT amend the constitution for any other purpose. According to the present constitution, I believe, that it shouldn't take up too much time. Big

only solution at this time. Otherwise I don't see how the Opposition parties can stop the election or how the government can stop the hartals. Denise Wright, Australia: Good to see someone is trying to think constructively about a solution, and of course, if nobody tries, then nothing can succeed. Congratulations on the attempt.

Bilayet Hossain

Certainly...a caretaker government is not the best arrangement, but I do not see why it is a trouble. —Bilayet Hossain, USA

mbhossain@aardvark.uoknor.edu Oklahoma University, USA: I also agree that Zia Hassan's proposal could be a basis for future discussion—and an eventual solution. But as the situation is developing there is little hope. The country is in near anarchy—and even now none of the big players has shown any softness!

Denise Wright, Australia: People are hooked on this idea of a caretaker government. It won't work. Who gets to play? Who doesn't? Why not? What power does it have to control itself? Caretaker governments are trouble.

democratic process...The present impasse developed over a long period...and is the net result of 'undemocratic attitude' of both the Govt. and the opposition. It's the electoral commission that must have the mandate to put clearly defined procedures into place. The Commission is the key, not the political parties.

Bilayet Hossain, USA: I agree. The present commission is behaving like just another bureaucratic organ of the Govt.

Denise Wright, USA: That's what the parties ought to be discussing.



A letter from Potomac



Naveera Ahmed.
POTONAV@aol.com
USA:
Hello Bangladesh!!!!!! I'm from the USA and I live in Potomac, Maryland. I go to Grade 7. You're probably wondering my name. My name is Naveera Ahmed and I am 13 years old. I love to be on America Online and chat with people. I hope this gets published, because I want my friends and family to read this. If any of you read this and want to E-mail me, I'd be happy because, I like getting mail. My screen name is POTONAV. Bye for now, your friend.

HAPPY EID

This is to let my Bengali brothers and sisters "EID MUBARRAK!!!!!!" Have a good and happy Eid.
—Tanveer Islam, USA

Tanveer Islam
romy@infiniti.ccs.t.com
USA:
This is to let my Bengali brothers and sisters "EID MUBARRAK!!!!!!" Have a good and happy Eid. Salam all.

Zafar Akbar
zakbar@cix.computlnk.co.uk
UK:
EID MUBARRAK TO ALL SCB READERS.
PS: HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR TOO

Mohammad Harunuzzaman
mharunuz@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu
USA:
Best wishes to everybody on SCB on the occasion of the Holy Eid! May Eid bring many happy tidings to our beloved country, now besieged by crisis!

Lutful Bari Bhuiyan
73112.3405@CompuServe.CO
USA:
Wishing all SCB netters a happy Eid-ul-Fitr. May Allah keep us in His blessings, always.
Eid Mubarak!

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100664.2730@CompuServe.CO
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Then, what is next?

2A19
ma3@stir.forth.ac.uk
UK:

The most popular and historical general election was held on 15 February despite the severe protest of the opposition parties in Bangladesh. Our democratic govt. has shown their real power of democracy with the help of our most disciplined military. Opposition parties could stop the election if they were equipped enough to fight with military and police.

So what is next? The first lady PM in Bangladesh is very much aware that holding the power with the support (particularly explicit support) of military for a long period of time is very difficult. At least, she has understood it in the recent time of demonstration. But, she also does not want to lose the power. She has already given an indication that she will hold talk with opposition after the election. What does she want to gain from that?

She will put it into this way: The election was necessary to rule the country by constitution and to save the country from unconstitutional (possibly, military) forces. But opposition will not listen to her if she does not quit and form a caretaker govt. to hold another election.

The election was necessary to rule the country by constitution and to save the country from unconstitutional (possibly, military) forces. But opposition will not listen to her if she does not quit and form a caretaker govt. to hold another election. —2A19 UK

opposition, fair enough. If not, she will try to blame the oppositions for all the chaos. And she might

.....(no comment now). But if she quits and form the caretaker govt, why did not she do it before?

This movement has been going on for the last 2 years. She could do it very easily. People could live in peace. Twenty people would not die in 15 days.

Now why didn't she do it? Gorami. And when she realised that she is not doing the right thing, and was losing her popularity, she decided to do something that will regain her popularity. How? Make a crisis and gain out of that crisis.

My question to PM: If you finally agree with the opposition, why did you act like Rozina, and Shabana (the only badhyagoto boy in Bangla chobli)? why did you spend millions of money for a one-party election? Why did not you restore peace? Why more coffin?

Banga-Parichaya: A Multimedia Introduction to Bengal

This software program called "Banga-Parichaya: A Multimedia Introduction to Bengal" is the first of its kind published as a CD-ROM. With this program, you can explore the colorful history and culture of Bengal from 2000 B.C. to the present through a combination of text, sound, slides and video. In addition to the 4000 year old history of the Bengal region.

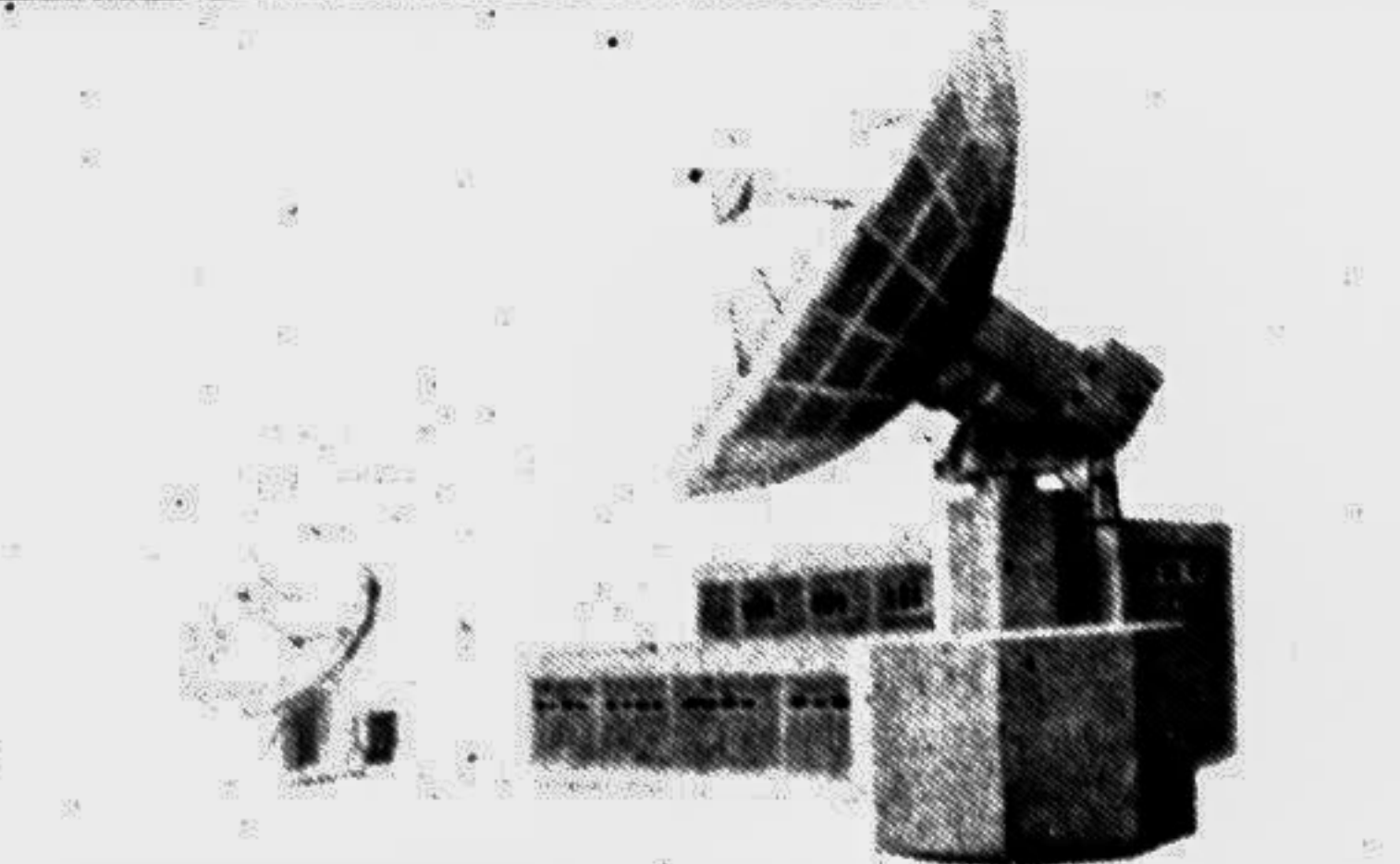
Gautam SenGupta
imacs@aol.com
USA:

A multimedia introduction to Bengal on CD-ROM has been developed to help those who are interested in learning about the history and culture of Bengal.

This software program called "Banga-Parichaya: A Multimedia Introduction to Bengal" is the first of its kind published as a CD-ROM. With this program, you can explore the colorful history and culture of Bengal from 2000 B.C. to the present through a combination of text, sound, slides and video. In addition to the 4000 year old history of the Bengal region (consisting of West Bengal in India and Bangladesh), it features over fifty biographies of famous people of Bengal from ancient past to the present, e.g., Vijay Sinha who conquered Sri Lanka and named it Sinhal, Atish Dipankar the Buddhist scholar and evangelist, poets Jaydeb and Chandidas, Lalan Fakir, Nazrul, Michael Madhusudan Dutta and Rabindranath Tagore, religious figures Sri Chaitanya and Sri Ramakrishna, historical figures like Nawab Siraj-ud-daula, reformers such as Ram Mohun Roy, Keshab Sen, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, novelist Bankim Chandra, religious leaders such as Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo, scientists such as P. C. Roy, Sir J. C. Bose, Satyendra Nath Bose and Meghnad Saha, magician P. C. Sorcar, freedom fighters Netaji and Sheikh Mujib, martyrs Khudiram, Benoy, Badal, Dinesh, Surya Sen and Matangini Hazra, film maker Satyajit Ray, economist Amartya Sen of Harvard, engineers such as Fazur Rahman Khan (designer of Sears Tower in Chicago, the tallest building in the world) and Amar Gopal Bose of MIT (inventor of Bose speakers) and many others. It also features several others from Europe who influenced Bengal in positive ways, e.g.,

Sir William Jones, Sir Charles Wilkins, Nathaniel Halhed, William Carey, Sister Nivedita and Mother Teresa.

In addition, the CD-ROM covers the ethnic composition of the Bengali people, musical instruments of Bengal that come alive at the touch of a button, vocal renditions of songs composed by Nazrul, Rabindranath and others, description of festivals of Bengal such as Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Rath Jatra, Saraswati puja, Holi, Id, Muharam and Christmas. It also covers the Bengali language, its Indo-European roots, influence of Portuguese words in Bengali, Bengali alphabets, numerals, words and phrases of everyday Bengali and their pronunciations, video clips from Chitrangada, one of Tagore's dance dramas, a graduation ceremony at Shantini, Rath Jatra in Calcutta, and temples of Dakshineswar and Belur Math. The CD-ROM was unveiled for the first time at the North American Bengali conference in July, 1995 where it was received with much excitement and enthusiasm by Bengalis settled in the U.S. and Canada. It is being used to supplement the Bengali studies program at Arizona State University. (According to ASU, study of Bengal's ability to assimilate traditional and Western Civilizations can contribute to the shaping of America.) Several other universities in North America have or are in the process of acquiring this CD-ROM for their South Asian Studies programs. The CD-ROM retails for only \$49 plus \$3 for shipping. For more information, please contact: IMACS, 13514 SE 181st Place, Renton, Wa. 98058, Tel: (206) 226 0663. E-mail: imacs@aol.com Also don't forget to visit the Banga-Parichaya Home Page: http://users.aol.com/imacs/bengal.html



The newsgroup, "soc.culture.bangladesh," has been provided courtesy of Agni Systems Limited. You can also take part in this page by sending us your views / questions / comments / inquiries (anything that you want). The Daily Star will then send your responses into the Internet newsgroup free of charge where they will be read and commented on by participants from around the world. Letters should be no more than 100 words in length and titled. Please send or fax your Internet posts to: M.Shamimuzzaman, Page incharge, "Live from the Internet", Daily Star, House 11, Road 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205. (GPO Box no:3257) Fax: 863035.

Internet Off-line

Tips on How to Access Internet Information Through Email

Bangladesh has yet to inaugurate its first Internet server, hence, direct access to the Internet requires a long distance telephone call. But luckily, if you have access to email, much of the information on the Internet is available to you through email as well. With just a few email commands, you can access almost anything.

Below are some of the email commands you can employ to receive specific information via email. Be careful, though, especially if you must pay per kilobyte of incoming email. Poorly composed searches can retrieve hundreds and hundreds of kilobytes of email. Perhaps the best way to get started is to make a friend on the Internet (see the "Internet Expatriate Society" above) and have them search the Internet for you. That way they can inform you of the size of the search results before forwarding them to your account.

So good luck. And as they say on the Internet, "Happy surfing!"

Looking for someone on the Internet? Try sending an email to: mailserve@intermic.net in the subject line write: whois <name>

(Or, for searching the thousands of newsgroups on the Internet to see if they have posted any message. Send an email to: mail-server@rtfm.mit.edu in the body of the message (not the subject line), write: send usenet-addresses/<name> with <name> being the name or keyword of the person or email address you are searching for.)

If you want more information on how to find peoples' email addresses, send an email to: mail-server@rtfm.mit.edu in the body of the email write: send usenet/news.answers/finding-addresses

Looking for specific information on the Internet?

A new service at Stanford University in the US makes it possible to search Internet newsgroups (like soc.culture.bangladesh) for postings that contain keywords of interest to you. You can even "subscribe" and receive a daily list of newsgroup postings that match your search criteria. For more information, send an email to: netnews@bd.stanford.edu in the body of the message, write: Help

Want to join a mailing list for a subject of interest to you? To find out about mailing lists that are relevant to your interests send the following command to: LISTSEV@vm1.nodak.edu in the body of your message, write: LIST GLOBAL/<keyword>

[you must replace <keyword> with an appropriate search word such as Marketing, Education, Environment, Medicine, etc.]

Another helpful document which details the commands used to subscribe, unsubscribe and search mailing list archives can be retrieved by sending an email to:

LJSTSER@ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu In the body of your message, write: get mailserv cmd nettrain f=mail

Looking for files or software to download from the Internet?

Send an email to one of the following addresses: ftpmail@sunsite.unc.edu In the body of the message, you must instruct the computer where to go and what to do. First you must open the ftp site where you want to search, so type: open <site>

Then you must either list the various directories and files at that site with the "dir" command or change the directory with the "chdir" command. If the file you want to retrieve is a text file, you must write: get <file name> If it is a binary file, as are most software and graphics, you must write: binary get <file name>

Then you must end the command string with the word "quit". Now, let's try one example. There's an excellent collection of recipes at the FTP computer with the address: gatekeeper.dec.com and they are located in the directory called "recipes", which is itself located in the directory called "pub". If we want to retrieve the list of these recipe files, we send a message to: ftpmail@sunsite.unc.edu and in the body of our message, write: open gatekeeper.dec.com chdir pub/recipe dir quit

Once we receive the list of recipe files, we can choose one, say, "fishcurry.txt" (text indicates that it is a text file). We then send another email to ftpmail@sunsite.unc.edu, but this time write in the body of our message: open gatekeeper.dec.com chdir pub/recipe get fishcurry.txt quit

Here are some interesting FTP sites you may want to search: ocf.berkeley.edu — directory: pub/library for documents Bible, lyrics, etc. rfm.mit.edu — directory: pub/usenet/news.answers for USENET info oak.oakland.edu — directory: Simtel/mosdos for huge DOS software library. ftp.sura.net — directory: pub/nic for Internet how-to documents. quartz.rutgers.edu — directory: pub/humor for lots of humor files.

Bangladesh in World Cup'98

Musleh
faridm@approach.com
USA:

The draws for World Cup'98 has been done. Asia has been divided into ten groups. Each group champion makes it into the next round from which three qualify for France'98. Bangladesh is in the same group as Saudi Arabia and I think Indonesia so our chances of qualifying are very slim at best. Lets keep our fingers crossed guys. Best of luck to Bangladesh team

Dislaimer

The Internet is a global medium of communication and expression. It is free from all sorts of censorship and restrictions. It is truly a PEOPLE'S FORUM.

The opinions expressed in these columns are the author's own as they appear to all receivers of the Internet. We reproduce them authentically to permit our readers to know what Bangladeshis abroad are feeling and saying.

The Daily Star is not responsible for the opinions expressed in these columns.

INTERNET UPDATE



LIBRARY KIOSK ANSWERS QUESTIONS

An information kiosk in the library of Southwestern College in California answers questions routinely fielded by overworked reference librarians, such as "Where can I find information on (famous person X)?" "We have found that at our reference desk, two-thirds of the questions we get are locational," says the college's dean of instructional services in the publication "Chronicle of Higher Education." The kiosk offers a library tour, including photographs of the actual facility and a floor plan.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Commercial online services are having a difficult time keeping customers and differentiating themselves, as informed computer users switch over to small Internet access providers, "the Wall Street Journal" reports. In tandem with subscriber defection is the problem of Internet content providers who increasingly are setting up their own shops on the Web, bypassing the commercial services altogether. While the number of commercial service subscribers has grown to about 12.5 million over the past decade (doubling in the past year), the number of World Wide Web

users increased eight-fold, to eight-million, in just the past year, according to a survey of the International Data Corporation.

KEY RESUME WORDS FOR '96 Employers of information systems experts in 1996 will be looking for people who know the Internet, client-server computing or networking, according to hiring executives, the publication "Information Week" reports.

BANGLADESH WEB PAGES
http://www.db.toronto.edu:8020/people/hasan/hasan.html
http://www.db.toronto.edu:8020/people/hasan/BD/bd.html

BD/Bdeshi Internet Resources Index Broker:
http://blues.db.toronto.edu:8090/bangladesh-index-db/

To register your URL for indexing:
http://blues.db.toronto.edu:8090/bangladesh-url-reg/

the Banga-Parichaya Home Page:
http://users.aol.com/imacs/bengal.html
Images of dhaka on election day please check this out:
http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9602/bangladesh_index/index.html