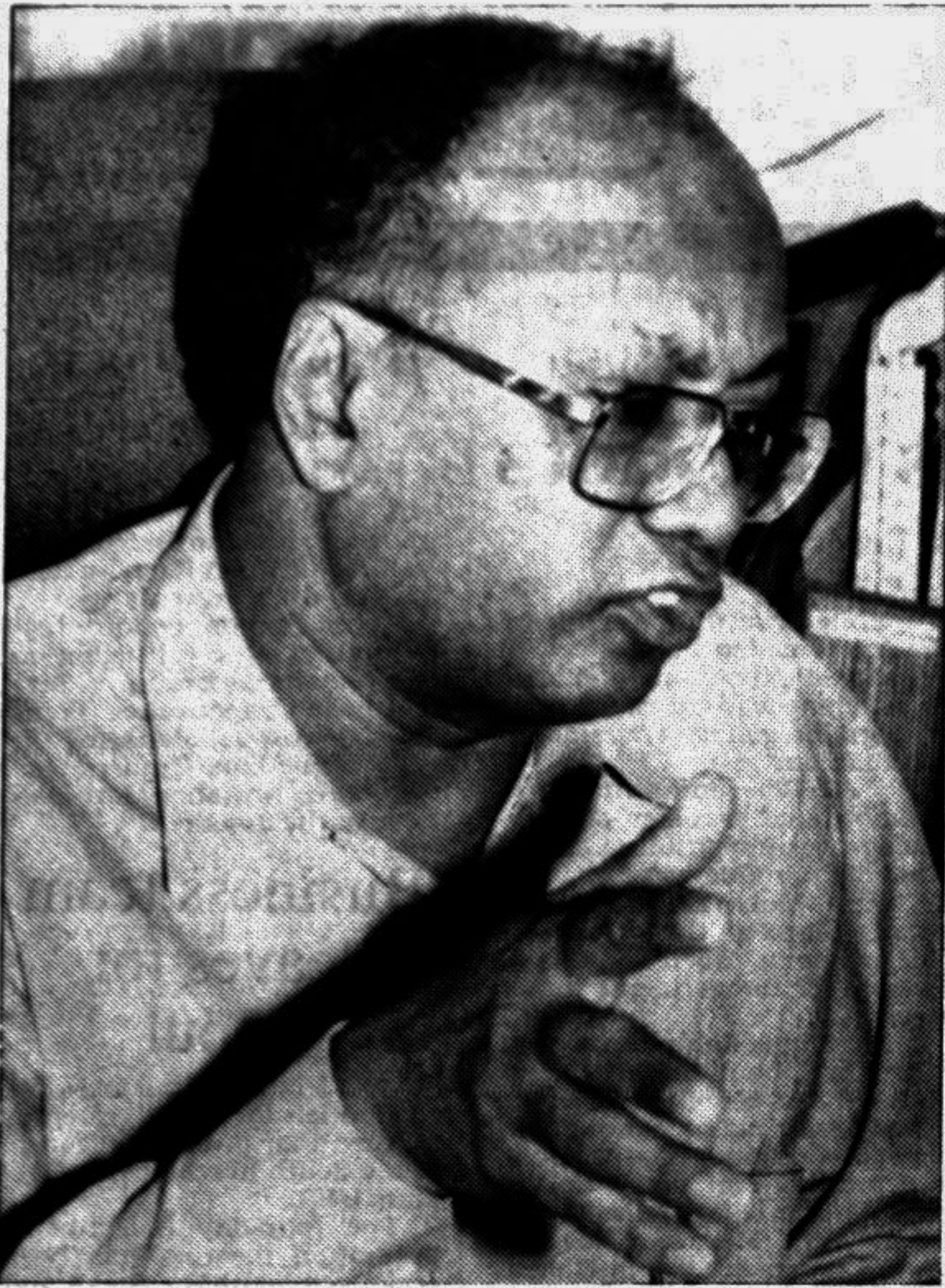


INTERVIEW

'Enough Food does Not Ensure Food for All'



Dr. Mahabub Hossain, who served as director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) during 1989-92, is now head of Social Sciences Division at the Manila-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

He needs no introduction even on the global plain when it comes to his area — agriculture.

A Visiting Scientist at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington D.C. during 1985-87, he provided consultancy services on many occasions to various international organisations including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agricultural Organisation and European Economic Commission.

Author of a number of books, highly commended and widely circulated, Dr. Hossain is read by agricultural researchers and scholars throughout the world. *Green Revolution in Bangladesh: Impact on Growth and Income Distribution, Evaluation of the Grameen Bank, Development Impact of Rural Infrastructure, Rethinking Rural Poverty, Rice research in Asia: Progress and Priorities, Asian Rice Bowls: A Returning Crisis* are just to name a few. His book on Grameen Bank has been on high demand and reprinted six times. *Strategy of Development in Bangladesh*, (co-author) is taught as a text book in many universities. And there are more than 100 articles in the highly acclaimed journals to his credit.

approaching self-sufficiency. Coming to your second point, food self-sufficiency at the national level does not necessarily mean food security. Food security means having capacity of the people to acquire food from the market. In Bangladesh nearly 50 per cent of the population live below the poverty line who lack that capacity although food may be available at the national level. These people need employment and income to attain the capacity. The other aspect of food security is having a balanced nutrition which the poorer section cannot afford. From that point also there is a widespread food insecurity.

DS: In order to reduce food insecurity, countries are being asked to go for the policy of self-reliance rather than self-sufficiency by the World Trade Or-

ganisation which is basically producing only those products in which countries have comparative advantage, and procuring other products from the international market, the cost of production of which is high within the country. But some of the agricultural products are basic needs for which we cannot always rely on the international market. How far do you think the policy of self-reliance is appropriate for agricultural commodities?

MH: From the economic efficiency angle, this is a good policy. But from the political angle, the policy may not be justified because there is a danger for agricultural products, particularly for staple food, to follow that policy. There can be a situation when required amount of food may not be available due to various factors in the international market or

may be available at a very high price. That is one of the reasons why many Asian countries including Japan and Korea did not want to include rice in the GATT agreement. But now all signatories agreed to import at least five per cent of their national rice requirement. We can follow that policy of targeting a 95 per cent self-sufficiency in rice production, (anything) below that would go against the national interest. For other kind of agricultural products, we need to review our policy to see in which areas we have comparative advantage.

DS: Does that mean that we need to go for crop diversification as well as non-crop production which in turn calls for technological breakthroughs?

MH: Over a long period of time only a rice-led agriculture sector will be difficult to sustain. For economic growth, the agriculture sector will have to move from foodgrain production to diversified production. There is a perception in the country that we probably have

reached the technological frontier. I don't agree with that, because if you look at the yield of the HYV rice during both wet and dry seasons our average yield is lower than other countries with similar ecological conditions, for example, Indonesia and the Philippines. There have been improvements in the crop management technologies. The farmers are adapting to new varieties, but with respect to the technologies for better management of the crops I think our extension system has not been able to deliver goods in that respect. Either the linkage between research and extension is missing or the system is not that much effective or may be some of the technologies which have been developed may not be appropriate for the farmers' need.

DS: So there is a need for an increased allocation for research and extension?

MH: Definitely. There is a scarcity of resources in the area of research and extension. In terms of hardware, buildings,

human resources we are well equipped. But there is a lack of incentives among the scientists; they don't get operational support in terms of carrying out experiments, getting supplies, international travels and publication facilities which are all part of scientific development. The government need to invest substantial amount in these areas. The scientists and researchers should be paid adequately so that they can concentrate on creative work, their promotion should be based on actual work, publication and merit.

DS: Over the years the share of public expenditure on agriculture has declined dramatically. Has this affected the agricultural development?

MH: During the First Five Year Plan of the country, about 30 to 33 per cent of total allocation was for the agriculture sector which gradually went down to roughly 19 per cent during the last few years in the last Plan. I don't see this as a serious problem because agriculture is now basically a private initiative. Agricultural development is the combined effort of 12 million farmers of Bangladesh. The role of the government is basically facilitating their efforts. Initially the government played important role in the procurement and distribution of inputs. Over time that function has been taken over by the private sector, therefore, the government need not spend that much money what it used to spend earlier.

DS: If you look at the development experience of the medium developed countries, especially the South East Asian countries, it is a fact that you cannot have an acceleration in development through only agriculture, industrialisation is a must for economic growth. Will Bangladesh have to follow the same formula to achieve economic growth?

MH: Over a long term it is difficult to sustain with agricultural growth of only three to 3.5 per cent. In the Fifth Five Year Plan of Bangladesh, the government has targeted a seven

percent growth of GNP, whereas the present growth rate is only five per cent. To achieve a seven per cent growth we must have to have a double-digit growth in the industrial sector. My worry is that in the medium term we will not be able to achieve a growth of more than three per cent. Over the last 25 years agriculture sector's share has declined from 50 per cent to 30 per cent. But there is nothing to worry about the decline of agriculture sector. It has happened in almost all the countries. It is inherent in the development process. So a straight answer to your question is that for accelerating growth we must focus on non-agriculture sector and within agriculture, on non-crop sector.

DS: Arsenic problem is thought to be the result of the use of shallow tube wells for irrigation. If that is so, then don't you think that we have to review our irrigation policy?

MH: I have not seen any study which really links the arsenic problem with ground water use through shallow tube-wells. Farmers are now setting tubewells at deeper levels, which is an indication of the fact that they are not getting as much water as they used to get earlier. Since we use chemicals for agricultural production, some of those chemicals might also seep through recharge if the ground water level goes down. This might lead to deterioration in the water quality. If that happens there could be other harmful toxic than arsenic. We should investigate this before we come to any conclusion. But I agree with you that we have probably come to a saturation level of the safe exploitation of ground water. There might be severe environmental problems. As we depend on wells for drinking water, there is a danger of severe health problem. We must rethink about the use of water. May be we could think of finding ways to hold the surface water during wet season through pumping from small channels and rivers for irrigation in the dry season.

As the Advisor to the Agriculture Commission of Bangladesh, Dr. Mahabub Hossain is now on a short visit to Dhaka. Dr Fahmida Akter, a BIDS researcher, spoke to him on behalf of *The Daily Star*. Excerpts follow:

The Daily Star (DS): Bangladesh appears to be self-sufficient in rice production. But food security and food self-sufficiency are not identical as the access to food is not equitable. How do you think we can overcome this situation?

Dr. Mahabub Hossain (MH): We are still not self-suffi-

cient in foodgrain production, because for the last five years about two million tonnes of foodgrains are being imported annually, though a large proportion of which is wheat that is used for financing safety-net programmes such as Food for Works, Food for Education and Vulnerable Group Development Programmes. We are (however)

Metropolitan

One dies after falling from building

By Staff Correspondent  
An office assistant died allegedly after falling from a building at Dilkusha Commercial Area in the city yesterday afternoon.  
Police said Abdul Hossain, 27, sustained fatal injuries after falling from sixth floor of Zamari Chamber at about 5 pm. He succumbed on the way to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Hossain worked as a peon at M/s. Adres Ltd.  
However, the details about the reported fall could not be known immediately. Police said they sent the body of Hossain, son of Abdul Ali, to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Asstt Survey Superintendent written test Nov 6, 8

The written test for the post of Assistant Survey Superintendent under Survey Department will be held in the city's Home Economics College on November 6 and 8, reports UNB.  
The admit cards for the examination have already been sent to the eligible candidates, said an official handout yesterday.

Young man killed in road mishap

A young man was killed on the spot and nine others were injured when a minibus turned turtle near Kadampur village on Dhaka-Maowa highway yesterday, reports BSS.  
The dead was identified as Sohag. The injured persons were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mitford Hospital and National Hospital.

958 bottles of phensidyl seized

Detective Branch police (DB) of Madaripur, acting on a tip-off, seized 958 bottles of phensidyl syrup and arrested two persons in this connection from Arial Khan ferryghat under Shibchar thana recently, reports BSS.

Brazilian training ship arrives in Ctg

A training ship of the Brazilian Navy 'Brazil' arrived in Chittagong Sunday, on a four-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh. An ISPR press release said, reports BSS.  
The ship has a complement of 28 officers, 180 cadets and 204 sailors.  
Commanding officer of the visiting ship Captain Jose Alberto Cunha Couto will make a courtesy call on Chittagong City Mayor Alhaj A B M Mohtuddin Chowdhury. He will also call on the Commodore Commanding Chittagong, Commodore A K M Azad and other local high military officials separately.



On the 3rd day of open-air drama festival Shukria O Sangkriti Chitra Kendra staged a play titled *Hai Bangla Hai Behula* at the Suhrawardy Uddyan yesterday. — Star photo

Survey in 3 hill dists 89.73 pc support upcoming peace treaty between govt & JSS

By Staff Correspondent  
Some 89.73 per cent respondents of a survey conducted in three hill districts have said that they supported an upcoming peace treaty between the government and the Jana Sanghati Samity in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).  
However, 4.34 per cent respondents said that they do not support such peace treaty.  
The survey on 750 people, belonging to both Bengalee and tribal communities in Rangamat, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts was conducted by Centre for Development Communication (Cedec), says a press release.

Shafi Ahmed's death anniversary observed

The sixth death anniversary of Shafi Ahmed, former general secretary (GS) of Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU), one of the organisers of our liberation struggle and leader of six-point and 11 point movement, was observed yesterday at Dhaka Community Hospital through discussion and voluntary blood donation programmes.  
Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mohammad Hanif and Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP were present as chief guest and special guest respectively at the function, says a press release.  
Presided over by Professor Kazi Kamruzzaman, the function was addressed, among others, by Professor Mahmudur Rahman, Aminul Islam Basma, Akbar Majid and Matur Rahman Bacchu.  
Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP inaugurated the blood donation programme. In all, 25 persons donated blood on this occasion.

Obituary

Noted social worker and Secretary, Managing Committee of Mohammadpur Preparatory and Girls' School and College Azizul Islam, died in Indiana state of the USA yesterday morning, family sources said, reports BSS.  
He was 78.  
Islam has left behind his wife, two sons, two daughters and a host of well-wishers and friends to mourn his death.  
His quikhwani will be held on October 30 after Asr prayers in his 4/5 Iqbal Road residence in Dhaka.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Sukumar Goswami alias Nilu Goswami, a Hindu priest of Gosai Bari Mandir, Faridabad, Dhaka, died of heart attack Sunday afternoon. He was 51. Goswami's last rituals were performed at Postogola burning ghat Sunday night, reports BSS.  
Goshwami left behind his wife, one son and many disciples to mourn his death.

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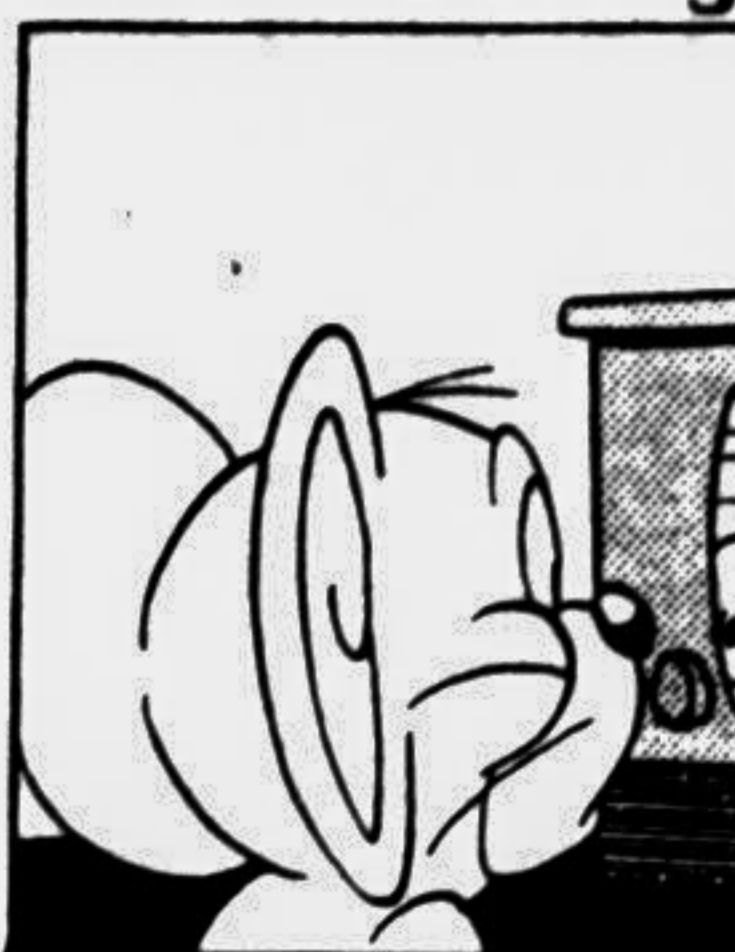
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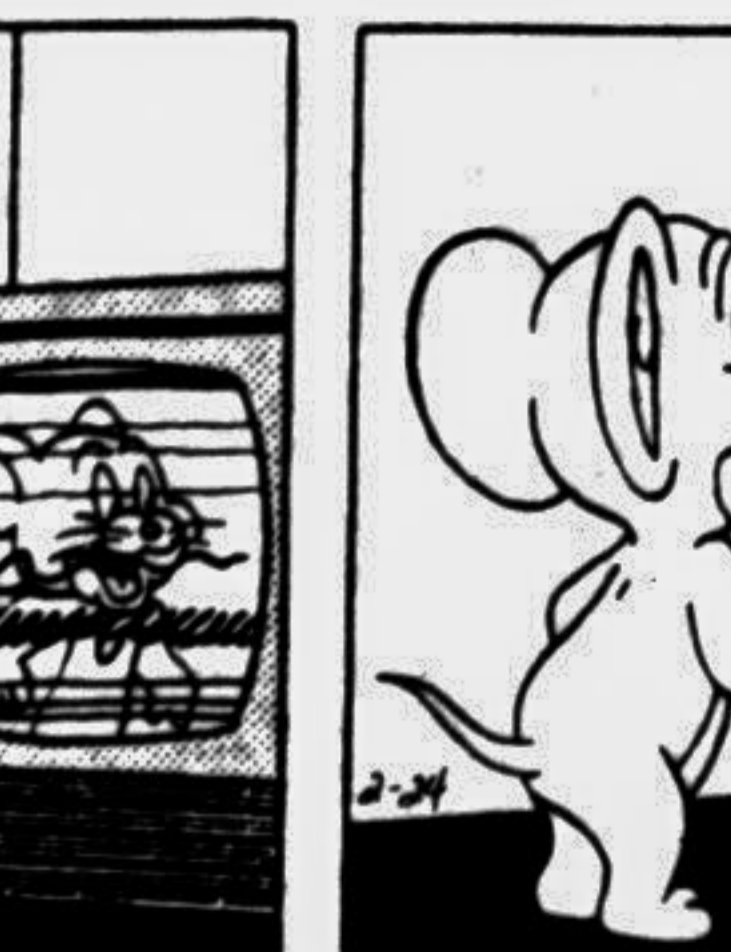
BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE  
Verbatim Text of Cross Examination of 29th and 30th Prosecution Witnesses

Continued from Saturday  
Cross-examination of PW-29, Naik (ret'd) Shehabuddin, in Bangabandhu murder case began when the court resumed on Sunday.  
Following are the excerpts from his examination by advocate Gazi Zillur Rahman, state defence counsel for absconding accused Lt Col (dismissed) Khandakar Abdul Rashid:  
Q: To whom you deposited the ammunition?  
A: Jamrul Islam of the regiment.  
Q: Can you mention the date?  
A: I can't remember it.  
Q: Did you board the trucks voluntarily or were you chosen by the officers?  
A: We were chosen by them.  
Q: You took part in the incident.  
A: I carried out the orders made by my senior officers.  
Examination by advocate Abdur Razzaq Khan, defence lawyer for accused Lt Col (ret'd) Sultan Shahriyar Rashid Khan:  
Q: Did you loot the ammunition from the store?  
A: Ammunition were distributed unusually on that day. I took 10 bullets at the order of my CO. I can't say about others.  
Q: How many soldiers received ammunition?  
A: About 250 to 300 of Artillery and Lancer. I can't say whether any other soldiers had taken before or after.  
Q: Were you present when shots were fired at Serniabat's house?  
A: Major Rashid Chowdhury and other officers opened fire. I saw them.  
Q: Did you hear hue and cry during the brushfire?  
A: Yes, I heard.  
Q: Did you decline to discharge duty at that time?  
A: I might have been shot dead if I declined.  
Q: Did you have any fear when you discharged duty at the radio station?  
A: I carried out the orders of my officers.  
Q: Where did you take part in the Liberation War? Who was your sector commander?  
A: I came to Dhaka from Chittagong and took part in the Liberation War. I can't remember who was my sector commander.  
Examination by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman, defence lawyer for principal accused Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur Rahman:  
Q: Where you in front or back while entering Serniabat's house?  
A: We were behind the officers.  
Q: Can any firing take place without facing any resistance?  
A: No, but on that day it occurred.  
Q: Was there any police at that house?  
A: I can't recall it.  
Q: Were there counter firing at that house?  
A: No counter shot was fired from the house.  
Q: What was your duty at that house?  
A: To ensure security of my officers.  
Q: Did you hear the incident from the soldiers who were directly involved in it?  
A: Yes, from the soldiers who were both directly or indirectly involved.  
Examination by advocate Sharfuddin Mukul, defence counsel for accused former state minister Taheruddin Thakur:  
Q: In which case you have made statement both to police and the court?  
A: In Bangabandhu murder case.  
Q: Did soldiers gheraoe all sides of Serniabat's house?  
A: I can't say whether it was under total siege.  
Examination by advocate TM Akbar, defence lawyer for accused Lt Col (LPR) Muihuddin:  
Q: How many days you came to the court to give witness?  
A: Two days.  
Q: You, being indicated by prosecution, identified Major Muihuddin on the dock?  
A: This is not true.  
Following are the excerpts from cross-examination of PW-30, ASP Abdur Rahman by advocate MA Wahed, state defence counsel for absconding accused Major (ret'd) Dalim:  
Q: You didn't hear any announcement of Major Dalim on radio.  
A: I heard.  
Examination by advocate Sharfuddin Mukul, defence lawyer for accused Taheruddin Thakur:  
Q: Form when you have been residing in Dhaka?  
A: Since 1993.  
Q: From when you have been

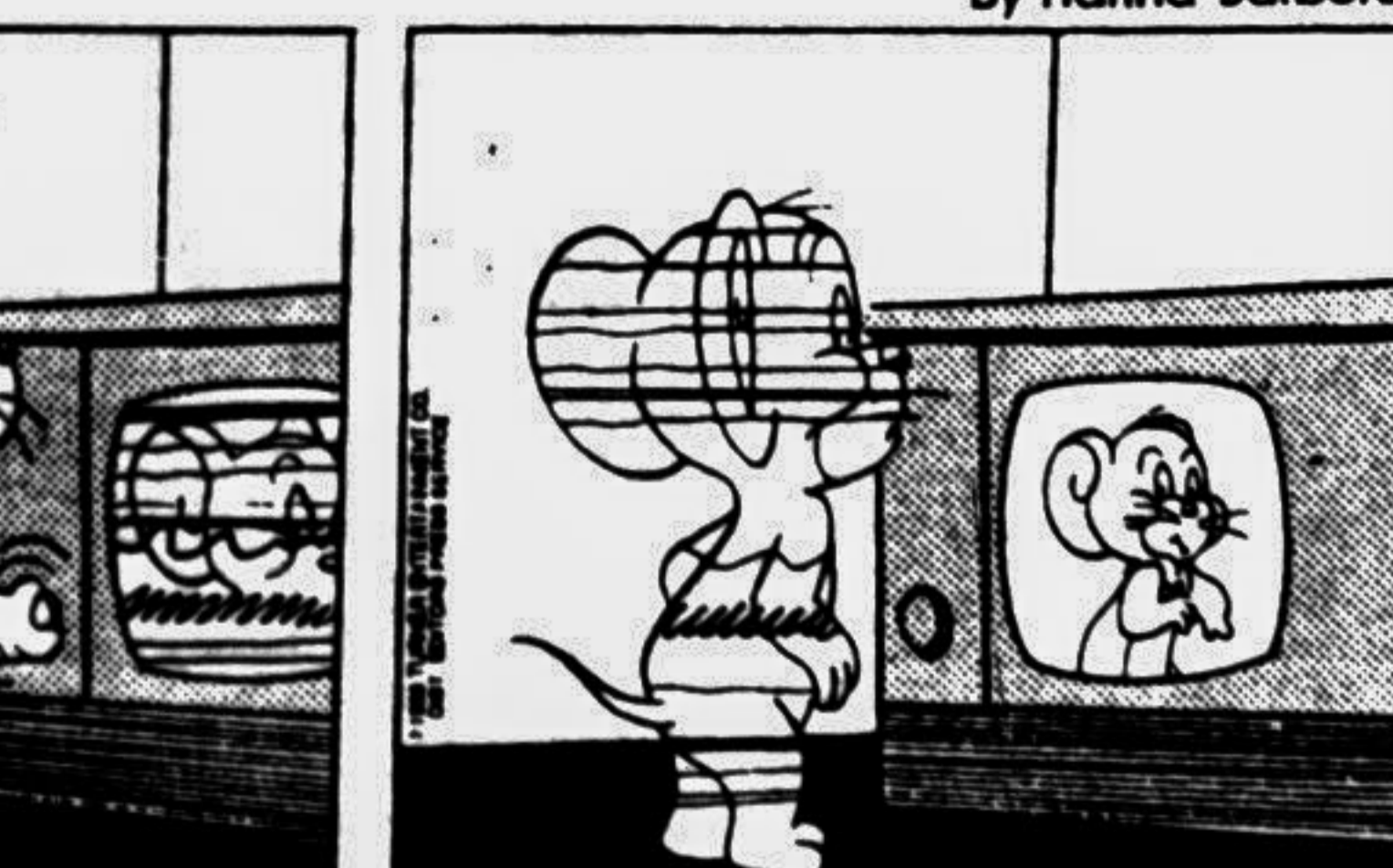
Tom and Jerry



James Bond



By Hanna-Barbera



IAN FLEMING'S James Bond DRAWN BY JOHN McLUSKY



Dry weather is likely to prevail across the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.  
Met Office forecast slight fall in day temperature over the country during the period.  
The country's highest temperature was recorded yesterday 33 degrees Celsius at Sitakunda and the lowest 15.2 degrees at Rangpur.  
The sun sets today at 5:22 pm and rises on Wednesday at 6:03 am.  
Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
Dhaka	32.1	61
Chittagong	32.3	59
Rajshahi	30.0	76
Khulna	31.0	69
Barisal	32.0	76
Sylhet	32.0	69
Cox's Bazar	32.8	67