

From the YEP desk ...

by Rafi Hossain

WITH full of dreams and desire I started my journey to the YEP talk. Within this one year I won't deny that few of my dreams were unfulfilled but it was only my failure. I sincerely ask forgiveness from the Editor of The Daily Star and all those who showed their appreciation when I first started this YEP page.

In every field of life including politics whatever little mistakes we do we should have the courage and honesty to accept it. And if we have the courage and efficiency in this field it will be beneficial for us as well as for the society. In this millennium eve I want that YEP page should come-out in a more attractive way in future. My little praise about our Newspaper may be excused but whatever new challenges our members of the staff are meeting deserve commendation. Our basic problem is neither we can criticize nor can we appreciate.

Lets start our new Millennium with a promise to speak the truth. Let's promise to remain honest. Lets promise to give our country hundred per cent literacy.

At last and not the least what is most important is to give our country an honest leader. Who will show us the path of progress, the path of survival. We are in hunger of a good leader. These are not the sheer utterance but these are our demands from our life.

Keeping in mind the vacancy that has been created in our political field on behalf of YEP we started a survey to find out the most proficient leader who will show us the path of prosperity. We found miscellaneous names from different fields.

We want honest, virtuous, pure and courageous leader in our coming millennium. Our present leaders do not fulfill all those requirements. We are optimistic that in the next millennium we will find someone who will liberate us from the darkness. We want a lively, budding and blossoming atmosphere for our work. To celebrate the New Year, like other countries even Bangladesh have many hopes, fantasies and beliefs.

To see the total arrangement it seems that a great change will come in the next millennium. But will this change ever come? The moment we come out from our house, the feeling of insecurity grabs us. Unbelievable traffic jam, hijack, poverty, hunger and unemployment has become the part of our daily routine. Will this problem remain in the next millennium? Our politicians are constantly keeping us in the fantasyland. But what will be its future? Will they be able to fulfill all the promises they are giving us?

Lets not remain in the illusion world... lets not give false hopes to the people of Bangladesh... lets prove our efficiency in work not in speech.

We want freedom not only in print media but also in the electronic media I think it will be silliness on behalf of the government to restrain the media. We do not want any more strikes. In this millennium lets promise in the name of 'rally', we will not harm our nation.

It seems all that I am saying are futile exercise... Who will be our perfect leader? According to our YEP survey we would like to tell our nations whom we think could show us the light, could show us the path. We want an ideal character or an exemplary whom we could follow in the next millennium I don't want to repeat, how important it is for us to have the "freedom of press", most of us want the authentic news. And in this field "Daily Star" and "Prothom Alo" proves their adequacy in this field. And fortunately these two news papers are from the same house. And of course there are other news papers that are equally reputable.

Mahfuz Anam no matter it is his authenticity or veracity, is an ideal in our society.

In the field of education no doubt Sirajul Islam Chowdhury and Mohammad Jafar Iqbal names come first. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury is not only our good teacher but at this stage he has done a great job regarding environment which deserves appreciation. I want to show my reverence gratitude and love.

Mohammad Zafar Iqbal with his in depth writing has giving us the feeling of genuineness. I would like to show my love and regards to him also.

Dr. Mohammad Yunus is our pride, is our glory, to all of us he is some one whom we can take pride in. We want in the next millennium innumerable Dr. Yunus may emerge in this country.

Though there are many contradictions regarding Dr. Kamal Hossain but we sincerely wish if he could originate a healthy atmosphere in our country our sincere appreciation and support will be always with him.

Salim Al Din and Sayed Shamsul Haq name should come first when we think about our Bengali literature. There are other famous writer who equally claims our encouragement.

Salim Al Din with his own creative style may come out with more gifted work in the coming century.

In the field of Art and culture our "stage drama" is very reputable. Among the "stage artist" Nasiruddin Yusuf will be the best. His direction in the field of drama gives us the real taste of art. To our young generation he is an ideal for us.

Abdullah Abu Syed, he is not only a good teacher but one of the famous TV personality. We will remember him for his contribution in 'Bishwa Shahitya Kendro'.

We show our respect to Angela Gomez.

Mazharul Islam who has brought a revolution in the field of architecture deserves our appreciation.

Youngest among all, who with his creativity has already created a history in our country is Shiehr Bhattacharya. We get pleasure to see his cartoons. My gratitude and love for him would always remain.

We wish the new millennium would bring for us the happiness, prosperity, and tranquility. I wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year.

A Turn of the Millennium Prayer Clean Air, Clean Politics, Good Architecture

by Mamnoon Murshed Chowdhury

HERE in Bangladesh, I wish we could really start all over again from the year 1900, as millions of computers around the world will. We are always talking about the past and it will hardly matter to stretch back a little further and arrive at the beginning of the century, if not at the beginning of time. That way only, we could have another opportunity of ending the millennium on a different, positive note.

A depressing, pessimistic thought on the eve of a new, historic dawn? Can hardly help it.

Just look around you. Or just have a look at yourself. Isn't it sad the way you are entering the twenty-first century? Forget about 'space odyssey', you aren't even sure if you can reach your office in time, and in one piece. The air is poisonous, the environment hostile. Any moment, some zealot crying 'hartal' may hurl a bomb at your rickshaw.

At the hospital, if you have survived, you are likely to be scared for your life again. For here, you get to meet people whose kidneys have been 'mistakenly' removed by qualified surgeons and nothing has happened to any of them. And if you have not survived the bomb attack, then rest assured that it will take some time before politicians allow you to rest in peace. There will be fiery processions with your remains and you will be claimed as a leader of political parties, whose names you could not even spell correctly when you were alive.

So, please wake up to reality. No matter how many millennium greeting cards you have received so far, there is hardly any possibility of a 'Happy New Year' or an outrageously ambitious 'Happy Millennium' in your life. The lead in the air, the bickering politicians including the one-who-left-a-message and the one-who-never-called-back, the concrete jungle called city...this is not your home and this your destiny. But then, do not think that nobody cares if you think that you do not deserve this. The immigration consultant does for sure. He will prescribe the USAs or the Canadas or the New Zealands for you and your family. 'Get out', he will say, 'before it is already too late'.

Still some of us won't ever listen. Some of us will continue to keep wishing that things would be okay one day. The fools among us will be fooled to believe that someday, we shall overcome, and the air will be clean again, and that our politicians will change themselves into Mahathirs and Lee Kwans.

Some architects among us will keep their fingers crossed with the dream of a day when this city will have beautiful streets and squares, surrounded by good architecture, and the future of our cities will rest in the safe hands of visionary, patriotic professionals.

Who knows what the future holds, but the present stinks. That is for sure.

Arch. Chowdhury is a Core Group Member of the YEP Forum and a Partner at Metaphor Architects

Century 2 Century

by Osama Taseer

IT is almost unbelievable that we are fortunate enough to walk into a new century. We are also getting into a New Millennium! The countdown to the Millennium is less than 24 hours away. The whole world is waiting in anticipation, the mankind is almost holding its breath for the dawn of 2000.

The reason I said 'fortunate' is that the massive changeover can as well be the 'Doomsday'. If the much hyped about Y2K bug strikes, we are surely in for an unfortunate fate. The Y2K can render the civilization hapless, we will be back to the days of Lumen powers. Or not?

As a proud Bangladeshi and as a member of the Young Entrepreneurs & Professionals Forum, I wish the Y2K bug strikes, but only strikes at the political and vested groups of Bangladesh. Wishful thinking. But can you blame us? If anybody differs, it shall be certain that he has lost his conscience. Just go through the National Dailies, you will almost feel that we are rolling back one century in the Time Machine.

The 1999 saw the birth and evolution of the YEP Forum. Standing at the threshold of the New Millennium it is time for stock taking. By the high standards which we set ourselves, the progress has been slow, albeit some reasons. But by the overall scenario prevailing in the whole country it is wonderful that we have survived with such a new & utopian thought. In a country where our beloved leaders are still writing and rewriting history, we the young generation feel we are living in a big intellectual Vacuum. Our Lawmakers are still arguing bitterly whether the "Constitution" or the "Parliament" is supreme! When we are so much at pain to get the basic facts correctly, do we expect anything Progressive and Dynamic from the Powers that proclaim their supremacy?

Against this backdrop, the Forum was born. It was not launched. The Forum had to be constituted with the cohesion of thoughts of young Bangladeshis willing to rise above the prevailing situation. So many things need to be done, it sounds almost superhuman. But we have to start some where. The young entrepreneurs & professionals who have acquired competence through their hard work, dedication and education, have come

together to change things. The things happening around us are so alarming that it can no longer be swept under the carpet, the time has come for Change.

All the enlightened and right thinking Bangladeshis now realize that their complacency has been a costly misjudgment. Our "live & let Live" attitude towards matters which will shape the destiny of Bangladesh has thrown the country into an anarchy. Just look around and you will find everything and anything is wrong. The law and order, the traffic system, the industrial sector's progress, corruption at all levels, declining education & moral standards—the list is too long. We no longer want this political culture determining our fates. Politics which does not reflect any ideology at any stage is redundant. It is only a means of exploitation at the highest level.

The last year of the old millennium saw the YEP Forum engage in activities solely aimed at bringing a Unity among the young people regarding different aspects of our professional and social life. Unless we think alike we can not move united for a common goal. Many well wishers and patrons thought that this is another Seminar culture we have started. But no, we were severely handicapped as their was no clear vision how the young entrepreneurs and professionals thought. We have to bring most of the young people associated with our common goals to a point of convergence. Otherwise the whole practice of participatory and democratic norms are lost in that case we become part of the decaying system, instead of breaking away from it.

Some of the activities we engaged ourselves in 1999 were:

- [1] Mock Interview for the prospective employment seekers.
- [2] Conference on opportunities in the IT sector & prospects for the young.
- [3] Conference on Reviving our City—some architectural and planning perspectives on Dhaka.
- [4] Discussion on new horizons in the Tele media: Impacts, Trends & Directions.
- [5] Lecture on European Union & Implications for Bangladesh—in joint collaboration with the DCCI.
- [6] Seminar on Public Interest & Judiciary.

- [7] Discussion on Expectations from our Tele Media.
- [8] Seminar on Employer-Employee expectations in the New Millennium.
- [9] Workshop on starting you own Business: How to get the Finance.
- [10] Workshop on Investment in the Share Market.
- [11] Conference on Career Opportunities & Challenges in the Medical Profession.
- [12] Dialogue on Water and Generation (Youth) in association with Bangladesh Water Partnership.
- [13] Financial support to students coming from poor & landless families to appear in the SSC examination in the post flood period. This Pilot Project was conducted in remote villages of Munshiganj and Sirajganj with personal assistance from Individuals.

[14] Bringing out a page for entrepreneurs and professionals every Friday - The YEP TALK—in the prestigious English daily The Daily Star. This was only possible with the support from the Daily Star.

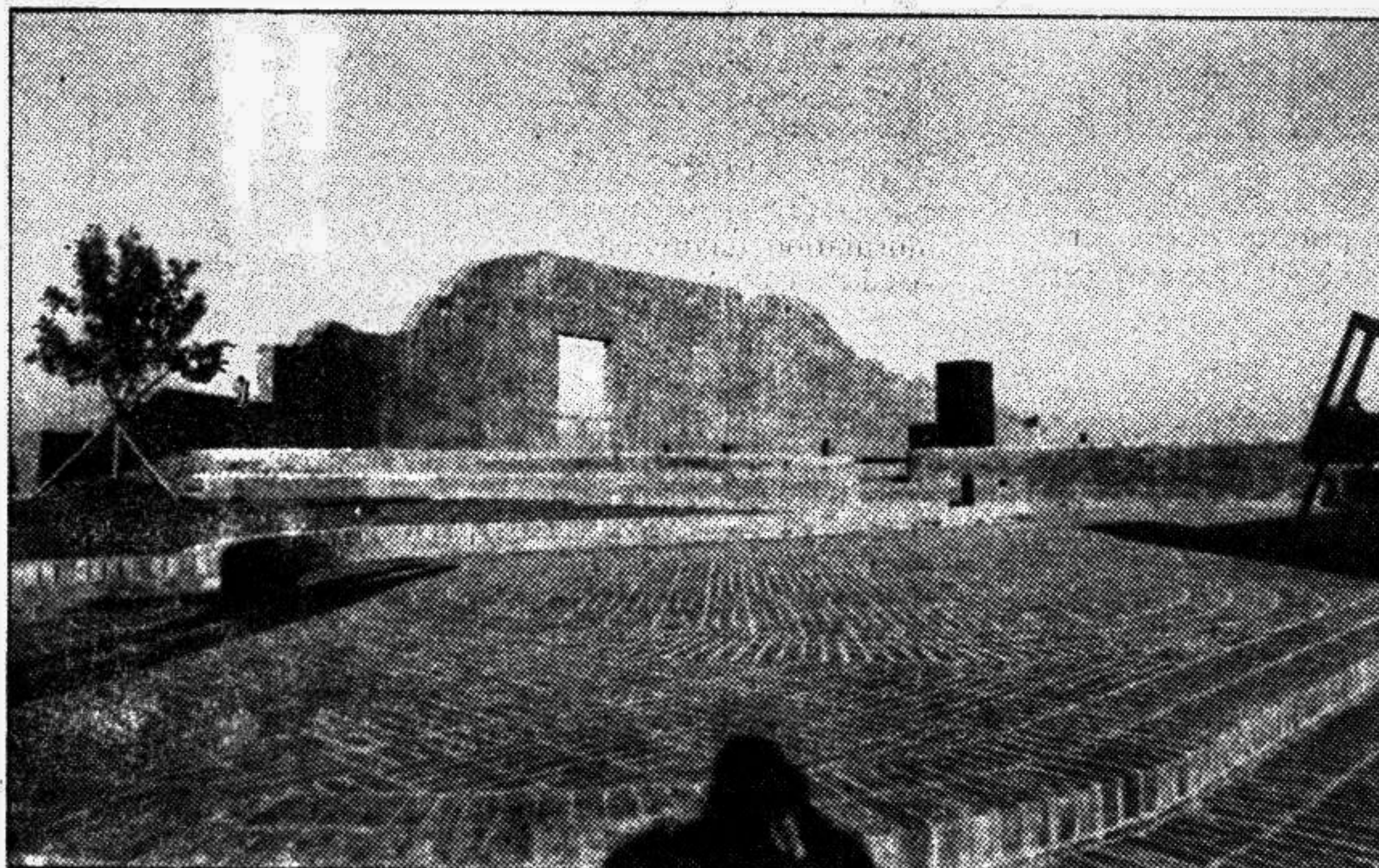
The YEP Forum from their very inception has been extremely fortunate to receive total support from the Daily Star. In every YEP activity. We are also indebted to the British Council for providing us all the logistics and venue support for every event. It is only fair to mention here is that without the patronization of the Daily Star and the British Council, we really could not have come this far in such a short time. The members are thankful for their support and wish they would continue extend the same support in the New Millennium.

The YEP Forum members are now planning for the New Year. We have a vision for Bangladesh in 2000. Our vision is simple, we want an exploitation free society based on values. Our Bangladesh should be built on the hard work of millions farmers, industrial workers, individual professionals and entrepreneurs. The system should be accountable and the people of the country should be the source of all Power. To achieve this we the more fortunate section of the society have to come forward to Give without any personal Gains. The only winner in this endeavor will be - Bangladesh.

The writer is the coordinator of the YEP Forum and an entrepreneur in the RMG Industry.

Rayer Bazar Bodhya Bhumi

by Rafi Hossain and Elora Ferdous



Bhai and Ami ... are feeling about this monument? Do they feel the breath of their fathers in this deserted land?

part of our soul, that freedom which reminds us of our existence. Why we have taken so many years to appraise our victory.

behalf of all young group we do not want the repetition of this sort of brutality at any corner of the world. We want peace. We want tranquility, welfare, prosperity, happiness and bliss.

We do not want any brutality, we do not want the loud declaration of a war. This world is ours. We have to make it Johnson's 'Happy Valley'.

We fully agree with Architect Jami and Farid, like them, even we want to say we don't want to see any more dreadful Monument like Rayer Bazar Baddha Bhumi.

We will make a new world. Including Jami and Farid, we expect this from every individual of our country.

The question which was constantly bothering us how Shaon, Shomi, Anol, Tonmay, Sadi Bhai and Ami ... are feeling about Rayer Bazar Badhya Bhumi monument?

It sad but true it has taken 28 years to buildup this monument after our victory. That freedom which is

We would be entering into a new millennium after few hours. No matter how it is, on behalf of YEP and on

RAYER BAZAR BODHYA BHUMI reminds us of the brutality of the Pakistan army, reminds us how crippled we have become after the war of 1971. We can still hear the mourning sound of the martyrs from the relinquished land of the entrapped land of the Rayer Bazar. One can feel the heaviness of the air that is filled with invigorated smiles of the martyrs. In remembrance of the martyred every part of the land laments, every particle of the sand reminds us the sacrifice of the martyrs.

The art of the monument Rayer Bazar Bhumi gives us the feeling of happiness mingled with the feeling of sadness.

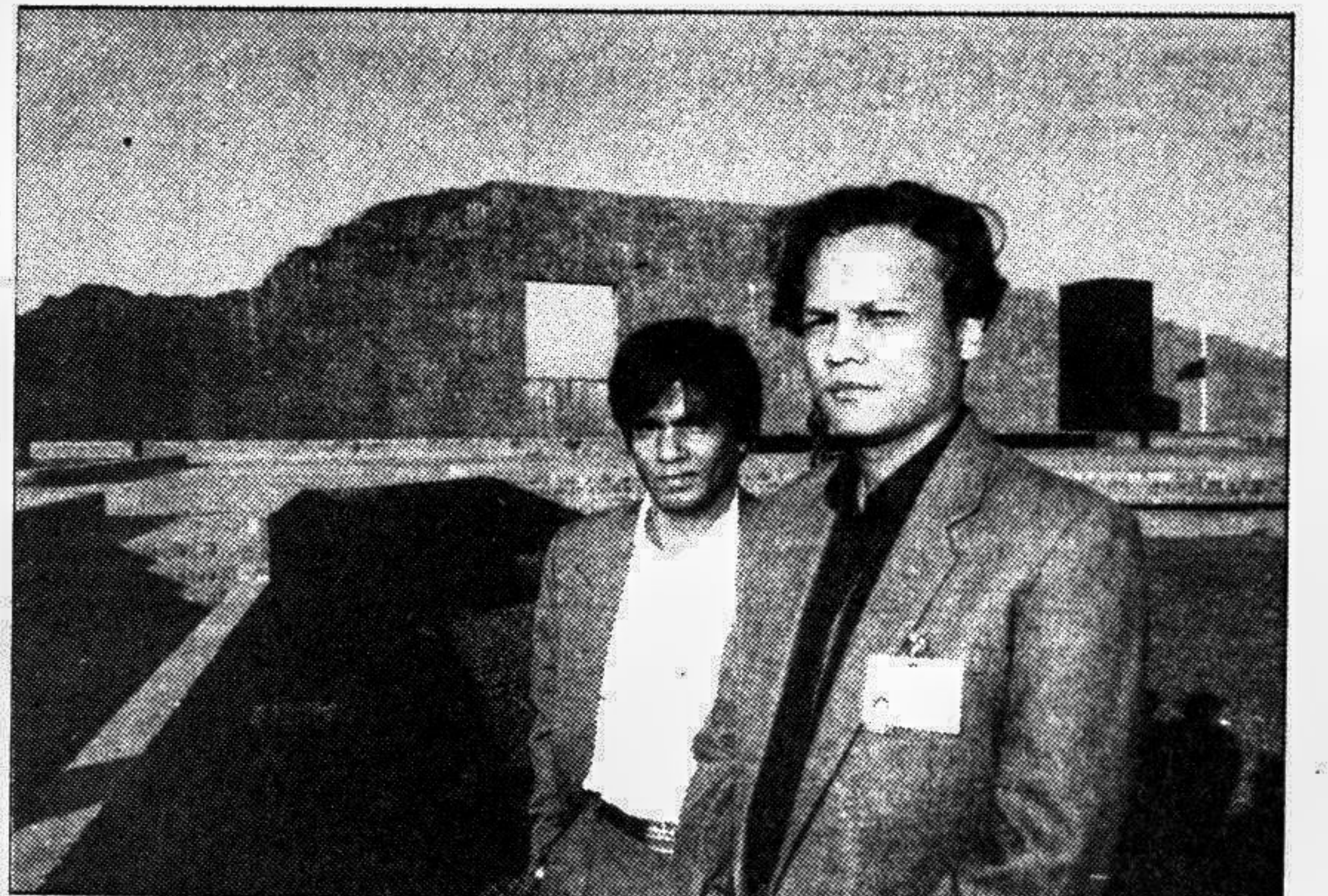
The architect Farid Uddin Ahmed was born in

Rajbari in Pansa district. From Adamji cantonment college he has passed his SSC and HSC in 1981 and 1983 respectively. The architect Mohammad Jami Ali Safi was born in the Kurigram district. He has completed his SSC from Westand High School in 1980 and HSC from University School and College in 1983. Both of them are the Designer of Rayer Bazar Bodhya Bhumi. To find the real taste of the 'Art' Farid Uddin Ahmed and Mohammad Jami Ali Safi after completing their degree from the institution of BUET built up a 'design center'. One can easily feel their vigilance to find the root of the art, to give something dynamic to our nation.

On behalf of the YEP, during our conversation

with the architect Jami and Farid we can feel their mournful glance, feel their melancholy temperament. Their success could not reach their ecstasy. After completing our usual talk we went to Rayer Bazar Badhya Bhumi. They took us at the every corner of the monument.

We were silent ... while coming back Farid and Zami asked us "how did you like our work? For a moment we were speechless. No doubt the work was praiseworthy and laudable. But something was pricking me deep inside. While visiting "the Rayer Bazar Smriti Shoudhoy" I was remembering those martyr families who have lost their dear and near ones in the battle of 1971. The question which was constantly bothering us how Shaon, Shomi, Anol, Tonmay, Sadi



Heart of Darkness

By Tamjiduzzaman

WE have come into this earth with a very short span of life. time and I am just 25 but the millennium has 10 letter words give me the feeling of 1000 years of experience. I am feeling as if I lived thousand years. I have become the "Messiah" of all human kind. I can predict the future as I know the past. People have become restless to take the taste of the first sun-shine of the millennium. People have gathered in New Zealand and it was predicted that the first sun would shine from the Archipelago of New Zealand.

Four lakhs people have already gathered to celebrate their millennium in Goa. They will do the beach party, they will play

the Bangi game and take the rest of their joys in the eve of the millennium.

I am not exceptional of these people but as a citizen of the third world country I have a mixed feelings. The din, anxious, excitement and hope for the future will actually not bring any change to the humankind. The evening of 31st December 1999 and 1st January 2000 will be the same. The wave that we see around us about millennium, is it only because we are interning into the year 2000? Is it only these four digits that we are curious about or it is something else which is making us happy, curious and hopeful. Only few hours left for the millennium and when with full hopes I want

to expand my welcoming hands towards it I feel scared I feel frightened to think what it is bringing for us and for our country.

My poor knowledge about my countries political and economical situations may be excused but somewhere deep in my heart I feel something, somewhere is seriously going wrong.

We all are aware about our problems but we simply hear them we don't listen to them we look at them but we don't see them. When I was young I used to wander about the outside world and as I grew up I found every thing beautiful even the Fish market of Kawan Bazaar to the jam of Farmgate. But slowly I started losing my interest. I started

questioning.

Few years back with full and excitement we celebrated our 'Democracy'. Democracy this word bears a significant meaning for us. As the people of Bangladesh we have the right to speak whatever we feel is just. But as I grew up I felt there are barriers ...barriers in every path of life. Mingled with thousand questions in my mind I wonder in this land to find someone who will solve all my questions. It's more like Becket's Waiting For Godot, as if one day Godot will come and solve all our mysterious problems.

Like every New Year, with full of hopes and dreams I am waiting for Godot to come and solve all our mysterious problems. You

will blame as being pessimist but my question goes to you ...does our present situation allow us to become optimist? Does our present situation welcome our talent and creativity?

The 20th century was extremely successful in terms of technological and IT development. Today's era is considered as computerized information high way. Now we can talk to anyone at any corner of the world within a second and can move billions of dollars from one part to another part.

The speech of the millennium 'freedom, Peace, and Democracy is actually taking us towards an idealess world, innovating selfishness and transforming mankind into

a furious beast. IT advancement was the main reason to spread unemployment, widening the gap between the two classes, shrinking the right of labor and their wages, expansion of poverty, including the development of third world countries.

We are in the 'Heart Of Darkness'. In the name of a millennium we are simply giving it an outer layer. New millennium, which will after few hours, no matter how it will be, no matter what it brings for us, we will be hopeful. We will not stop dreaming.

To make a successful dream we want to sing in a chorus voice

"We shall over come ...we shall over come one day....."