

Selling the nation's souls

MOHAMMAD MOZAHIDUR RAHAMAN

It is indeed an interesting juncture of our national history. The external pressure is mounting, the internal flux is waiting to burst out and the policy makers have to decide whether to sell the souls of the nation or not.

the global population lives in the developed countries, they own the 97 per cent of the world's big corporations and by R&D spending 99 per cent of the global new technologies are in the control of those big corporations from the developed countries.

seems to me that Bangladesh can create a positive image in the external world by sending a signal that it is ready to cooperate with the world business interest.

export, the opposition will call for mass protest and if they decide not to export, then the opposition will again take the credit.

body will invest once they cannot get the return or once we deny them to reap the return after they have found gas reserve in our country.

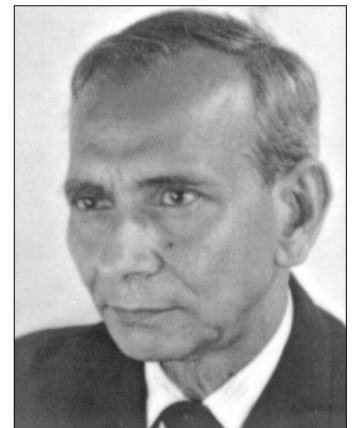
Lest we forget

Dr. Mohammad Kabir: Inspiring teacher and scientist

M BADIUZ ZAMAN

An inspiring research scientist and a devoted teacher of physics during his working life, the man was known to his acquaintances wearing a face of fulfillment and satisfaction in his well-earned days of retirement.

education and idealism. This had very positive impact in that society. After schooling, Mr. Kabir had college education in Burdwan and graduation from Calcutta a year before the British rule ended.



Late Dr. Mohammad Kabir

created with migration and loss of good teachers since partition of Bengal and asked Kabir to teach in Jagannath College.

A soft-spoken amiable personality Mohammad Kabir was very particular about responsibility toward his own family.

While a teacher, he was superintendent of two student hostels and this brought him closer to the students and even to their personal matters requiring attention and advice.

Kabir was a role model to young generation of his locality for value of

meteorology and like. Some students from modest homes needed material support and thus his children had tutors like 'Noreesh bhai', 'Ansar bhai' and others.

Dr. M Kabir was long associated with scientific research and in guidance of young scientists till he was head of Technological Research Board.

Dr. M. Kabir taught physics at Jagannath College for almost a decade. He also taught briefly at the Mymensingh Agricultural University, holding positions of Head of Physics as well as Head of Mathematics simultaneously.

We remember Dr. Kabir on his tenth anniversary of demise; he will remain to all of us who knew him an individual of virtues worth pursuing.

No matter how tremendous the external pressure is policy makers should weigh a decision in terms of internal dynamics as well as the whole normative economics behind the decision.

bodies to formulate its national policy on gas export. Already a \$250m loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to build a pipeline to supply the western part of the country hinged on the exports.

They are sitting on a live volcano that can erupt any moment. Gas export will certainly become a big issue in national politics.

country has proven recoverable gas reserves of 13 trillion cubic feet (390 billion cubic metres) of which more than 23 per cent has already been extracted, according to official figures.

The fact of the matter is we need foreign currency and we also need FDI from foreign businesses and no

Children caught in a vicious cycle

SHAKEEL AHMED IBNE MAHMOOD

POVERTY is a recognized cause of ill health, but to what extent does illness perpetuate poverty? Little is known about poor people's experiences of ill health or their coping strategies.

Eleven million children die every year from preventable and treatable causes, according to WHO and UNICEF.

A study by the Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy (Proshika) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine examines these issues in Dhaka city.

Illness is a key constraint on the ability of slum households to secure their livelihoods. Action is needed to reduce health risks, improve healthcare and provide social and financial support.

They also found that ill health is a chronic stress factor for slum dwellers, directly causing loss of income, job insecurity and increased expenditure.

The World Health Organization said that despite recent progress in combating iodine deficiency, 50 million children worldwide were born last year without protection against the deficiency.

ment, is a leading cause of mental impairment. While doctors say the mineral can be absorbed by eating some types of seafood and kelp, the United Nations has focused on providing iodized salt.

Perspectives on development revealed that nearly 700 Bangladeshi children die of hunger or other nutrition-related causes every day, a World Bank report warned.

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The fact that many children of the poor must work, either for their own survival or to augment family income, cannot be ignored, as alternatives are still not in place. Under these circumstances, preventing children from working is clearly immoral as some parents find it impossible to give their children the care and attention they need.

According to UNICEF, half of Bangladesh's children are malnourished and many work instead of attending school. Despite the government's various steps to increase the nutrition status of the nation, the malnutrition level in the country still remains highest in the world.

According to UNB, the child mortality rate in the country is still 60 per thousand as 40 newborns in 1000 die within one month of their birth.

revealed that the child mortality rate in our country is higher than that of many developing countries of this region. Then pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles, and malnutrition are the main killers.

As per statistics of Social Welfare Department the number of floating children in our country is about four lakh. More than one NGO engaged in rehabilitation of sex workers informed that the number of children born to prostitutes across the coun-

try having no identity of their fathers is nearly one and a half lakh. The number of sex workers is almost one lakh. This includes floating prostitutes. Most of the offspring of these sex workers become floating kids and majority of them reside in Dhaka city.

One NGO worker informed that on an average 693 floating children enter Dhaka city every month from various parts of the country. Most of them are either forced to come to the city due to torture by step mothers, misbehavior by fathers or being driven by hunger.

Recommendations: Appropriate measures must be taken at the earliest. Importance of proper education at all levels, including school and out-of-school and counselling, offering nutrition services, improving immunization and control

of diseases is emphasized. Public awareness on fortification and nutrition, reduction/ alleviation of micro nutrient deficiencies, increased resistance to diseases, increased intelligence, income and productivity and better opportunities for survival and participation in development work is urgently required to overcome the problems.

Conclusion: How children are cared for at home and in their community has a decisive impact on their chances of survival. We need to provide parents and caregivers with essential knowledge and commodities that can save the lives of their children.

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Poverty, employment opportunity and rural development: Reciprocal relationships

MOHAMMAD RAFIQUOL ISLAM TALUKDAR

In the decade of 1960s rural development was just seen as the augmentation of agricultural production. In the 1970s it got defined in the World Bank declaration during its conference in Nairobi, Kenya in 1973.

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. Here the scenario of poverty has become a mainstay of rural life. Most of the rural areas of Bangladesh can be marked as below poverty level.

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maximum labour and merit of those employees, but without delivering the rational financial support to provide economic security. Only negligible amount of profit is distributed among the employees, of which they simply fail to save any amount for future security.

The migrant people who work in NGOs also fail to meet both ends. Development notions have mostly become intangible in their personal lives, although they are concerned with human development.

It has been thirty years since the independence of Bangladesh but poverty reduction remains a multifaceted challenge. Well we can take this challenge for a better future. A noticeable change between early 1990s and end of 1990s has been marked in some cases.

the facilities the donor countries or sponsor organisations are supposed to offer. And those who work in government organisations get poor office environment and too little salary to maintain a minimum standard of living.

even though its involvement in the socio-economic lives of the people remains pervasive. The most basic public goods do not get delivered. Our government still lacks institutional delivery system to reach the poorest section of the society who are without any direct political umbrella to reallocate investments in their favour.

The need for creating opportunities for self-employment should be

an essential criterion for rural development. Efficient policy for gender equity and women empowerment in rural environment should be the second criterion. An equitable distribution of important national resources, prospects, facilities and gross national profit can reduce poverty to trigger the real rural development.

From a human development perspective people are the ultimate of development. In the light of this view our existing rural development approach mostly fails to build around people-centered commitment. Our administration has fallen back on its most essential tasks,

developed countries.

Development does not trickle down itself. Unless the politicians become sincerely committed to govern the country with optimistic vision to touch the human development eradicating poverty, grass-roots development would not be possible itself. Government should re-arrange socio-economic, legal and administrative setup where common prospects and opportunities will thrive towards greater good of common people impeding the shelter and protection for the opportunists. Many of the gains will remain fragile unless bolstered by strong growth in favour of the mass poor people. In order to further the improvement of capacities and socio-economic condition of rural people, national approaches to organise, justify and motivate them may be a vital step by government.

It has been thirty years since the independence of Bangladesh but poverty reduction remains a multifaceted challenge. Well we can take this challenge for a better future. A noticeable change between early 1990s and end of 1990s has been marked in some cases. The majority of rural people now have a desire to change their lives.

Nevertheless, in order to face the challenge of globalisation government must invest liberally in human development. It has been thirty years since the independence of Bangladesh but poverty reduction remains a multifaceted challenge. Well we can take this challenge for a better future. A noticeable change between early 1990s and end of 1990s has been marked in some cases. The majority of rural people now have a desire to change their lives. Women are emerging as significant contributors to the socio-economic growth. So there is no reason to lose heart and there are reasons to be optimistic if only the government takes the right steps.

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