

# A YES start to the New Year

*With friends, on the way of friends  
Taking hands and remembering  
With nature, on the way of nature  
Let us start a new journey.*

This was the theme song for the Poribesh Utshob 2005, the second official trip of the Young Explorers' Society (YES) where they celebrated the New Year at Sonadia Island. The first official trip of YES, which also found its way into the RS, was a trek from Teknaf to Cox's Bazaar.

The daring team that took part in the latest trip consisted of a group of seven students, Limana, Raka, Nile, Antu, Aka, Shashi and Abir.

Rubayat Khan the founding member of YES, was absent in this particular trip. The RS managed to catch up with Limana, Raka, and Nile to talk about their experiences. Limana has completed her GED, Raka is doing her honours in English in DU and Nile is a graduate in CSE from the University of Pune. In spite of having different educational backgrounds they are working for a common cause and that is YES.

## Poribesh Utshob 2005

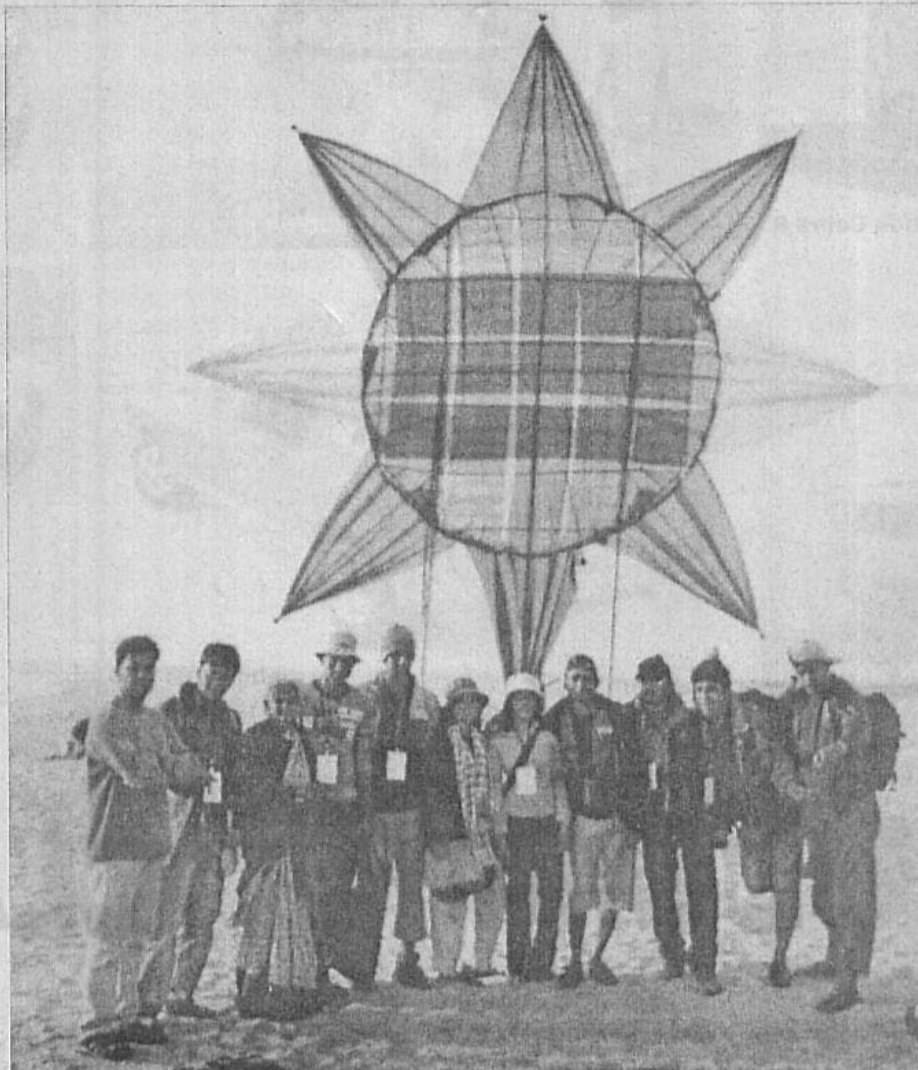
The journey to Shonadia was not a mere pleasure trip. The aim of this trip was create environmental awareness amongst the people of Shonadia and also amongst those who participated in this expedition, and hence the name Poribesh Utshob 2005. It was arranged with the association of Poribesh Bachao Andolon, which is centered in the Bishwo Shahitto Kendro (BSK). Around one hundred and fifty people took part in this trip. There were two groups, one belonging to the organisers, and the other to the explorers.

## First stop: Cox's Bazaar

The YES started their journey on Dec 30 at 9 pm from the BSK premises. They journeyed through the night in three buses. They reached Cox's Bazaar in the morning on Dec 31. Pausing for tea at the Kanon Tea Beach, they took part in a rally for environmental awareness in association with the Environmental Journalists' Forum of Cox's Bazaar. The Forum arranged lunch for them at Hotel Panwa in Cox's Bazaar.

## Journey towards Shonadia

After lunch they started for Shonadia from Kostura Kheya Ghat, on two fishing trawlers and one speedboat. They reached Shonadia at



The organisers of YES with their handmade paper sun at Shonadia Island

around 5 pm. Some of them put up at the cyclone center and some of them, mainly the organisers camped outside. Many eminent personalities went with them. Prof. Latifa Ahmad, BTV Producer M Hamid, Todd Smith from US Peace Corps in Cox's Bazaar, Artist Anwar Hossain, Nasser Khan (BSK), Golam Kibria (BSK), Dr. AR Khan, Ornithologist Enamul Haque, Mili Rahman the wife of Bir Sreshtha

Matiur Rahman, the Environmental Journalists' Forum and journalists from different newspapers were among them.

## Floating mongol prodeep and barbecue party

After reaching Shonadia they had a discussion session on environment. Onushondhitshu, an astronomical society also joined them in the trip, and they arranged a stargazing event for

the explorers. A team of Bokul Boyati also joined them. They arranged a show of folk-song at Shonadia. At 12:01 am, everyone celebrated the New Year by floating *mongol prodeep* in the sea. The scene was truly magnificent. The volunteers had been preparing everything since 10 pm. After celebrating New Year they arranged for a barbecue party at sea beach. They arranged many parallel programmes so that the participants could choose according to their likings.

## Exploring the pristine Shonadia

In the morning of Jan 1 some of the organisers and explorers went to explore Shonadia Island. The island was mantled in its own beauty so the trekking was very adventurous and full of fun. The islanders were also very friendly and they treated the explorers as guests. The peaceful surroundings of the island were truly mesmerizing. After trekking followed kite flying and model plane flying, which the explorers participated in with great enthusiasm.

## Art competition for the village children

To entertain the islanders the YES arranged for an art competition for the village children on Jan 1. The response was overwhelming. The children who stood first, second and third were awarded on behalf of YES. It created a fulfilling atmosphere among the village children. One of the most important jobs of YES is to create environmental awareness among people and that's why they wanted the islanders to participate with them in their programmes. They also cleaned the place before leaving the island as a sign of their commitment for a cleaner environment.

## Leaving Shonadia and creating more environmental awareness

At 5 pm on Jan 1 the team left Shonadia for Cox's Bazaar and reached at 6 pm. After dinner they started for Dhaka at 10 pm and reached at 8am on Jan 2. On Jan 13 BSK arranged a discussion programme for the participants, and everybody had glowing reports of an enjoyable experience.

Thanks to this trip, the young people not only had fun, but also got to reach out to others and help spread environmental awareness. We need more initiatives like YES to help protect and enrich our environment.

By Durdana Ghias

## Campus news

# Magic stars of Scholastica

TWO students of Scholastica, the reputed English medium school of the city, are using their magical talents toward raising funds for the sick and poor.

Fahim Chowdhury, a student of Class XII and Fahmid Chowdhury, currently in Class VII are both magicians and also siblings. They are both capable of performing individual tricks and are also each other's assistant, during some special ones.

They are both famous in school for their magic skills with around 60+ tricks at their disposal. Breaking all industrial logic, one can produce ten whisky bottles from one, while the other can yank out a live rabbit from one empty box and make it disappear into another.

In order to bring variety into the shows, they also sing and play the key-board, in between the tricks. Their latest magic show was on November 28th, 2004 at Scholastica's STM Hall. The show was being held to raise funds for a poor cancer patient. The two brothers fascinated hundreds of teachers and students present at the massive hall through various tricks.

An impressive amount of 60,000 Taka was thus raised from the show, which was handed over to the cancer patient. According to sources, this was Fahim and Fahmid Chowdhury's second magic show to raise such funds in their school.

This was their seventh charity show and previously, they had also performed at several other occasions in the Society for Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled (SWID), Leo Club and Lions Club.

Fahim is the President of 'Leo Club of Dhaka Gluidya' and 'DOHS Baridhara Youth Society'. His brother occupies the position of Vice-President in both the associations. While being extremely meritorious in studies and other activities as Art, music, keyboard, Piano, Magic is still their primary focus.

"Through Magic, not only have we have been able to bring a smile on thousands of faces, at any one time but also had the opportunity to take part in some meaningful causes," said Fahim, when asked about their enthusiasm toward the special art.

They learnt magic at Magician Ulfat Kabir's 'Magic School' & both the magicians love the mentor.

Both being active members of 'American Society of American Magicians' and 'International Brotherhood of magicians', the two are constantly trying to improvise on their old tricks as well as to learn new ones. They have learning various magic tricks from India, London, Thailand and other such countries.

"We know the secrets to various illusions like David Copperfield's Flying trick, some of David Blaine's, cutting off people in halves or



thirds and various other ones," said Fahmid, while talking about the tricks and illusions they have already learnt.

Even though magic is never going to be their profession, but they have a strong desire to cling on to this special skill of theirs for the development of the community.

In future, Fahim wants to help the nation as an Economist while Fahmid wants to pursue his dream of becoming a Computer Scientist.

When asked about their inspiration, they quickly referred to their parents as their only source of inspiration.

It was learnt that the two will be performing at the International Magic Conference scheduled to be held sometime in March, 2005 in Dhaka.

The organizers of the two school events of Scholastica referred to Fahim and Fahmid Chowdhury as 'the pride of Scholastica'.