

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

Durga Puja, the grand festival

In the 'Ramayana', Lord 'Rama' along with his brother and the army of monkeys lead by Hanuman went to 'Lanka' to rescue his wife, Sita, who was abducted and imprisoned by the ten-headed 'Ravana', the king of the Demons in Lanka.

Before his final battle with 'Ravana', Lord 'Rama' sought the blessings of Devi 'Durga' for defeating 'Ravana'.

He was given to understand that the Goddess would be pleased only if she was worshipped with one hundred Blue Lotuses. After travelling and searching the whole world, Lord 'Rama' gathered only ninety-nine Blue Lotuses. So he finally decided to offer one of his eyes, which resembled Blue Lotuses. Durga, being pleased with the devotion of 'Rama', appeared and blessed him for the battle.

The fierce and decisive battle started on the day of 'Saptami' and Ravana was finally defeated and killed on the 'Sandhikshan' i.e. the crossover period between Ashtami, the next day and Navami, the day after. 'Ravana' was cremated on Dashami.

The main ritual of Durga Puja spans a period of four days. However, in case of traditional and household pujas, the festivities last till ten days. Debi-Pakkha is the name given to the fortnight from the new moon till the next full

moon. This is the most propitious time for performing holy rites. The ritual of drawing the eyes on the image of the goddess is called chakkhu-daan. Symbolising the process of infusing the image with the power of vision, this is done on Mahalaya, the day of the new moon.

The main puja starts from Shasthi, which is the sixth day after the new moon. On Saptami, the image of the goddess is infused with life through a process called Bodhon. Early in the morning, the pran of the Devi is put inside the image after it is brought from a nearby river through the medium of a banana plant, called the Kola Bou. The Kola Bou, bathed and draped in a new yellow saree, resembles a newly wed bride. Ashtami is universally accepted as the culminating point of the four-day celebrations. It was on this day that Durga had killed Mahishasura. The ritual of Sandhi puja marks Sandhikshan, the juncture between Ashtami and Nabami. The main attraction of Nabami is the Maha-Arati held in the evening. On Dashami, the image is immersed in a river, and people bid a sorrowful farewell to the Mother Goddess, and the wait begins for yet another year.

Bijoya is a special ritual



PHOTO: AFP

whereby peace and good relations are reaffirmed. Families exchange sweets and people embrace each other, vowing brotherhood. Bijoya continues till the next new moon, when Kali Puja is held.

The community puja, the most-coveted festival in the year, has transcended geo-

graphical boundaries. The four-day fair - with its splendour and mesmerising look - is too beautiful to be a called a mere festival. It has become an indispensable part of every one's life.

Dulal Biswas
National Federation of Youth Organisations

exotic one! Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the museum currently situated in the Jamuna resort, adjacent to the JMB.

The vast collection of animals ranging from foxes to tiny insects appeared to be absolutely fantastic! The dedication and spirit with which the museum was built up appeared to be exemplary. I had visited the National Museum and the Science Museum earlier, but the collection at the Jamuna resort appeared to be the richest to me.

The museum is carrying collection of more than fifty varieties of fishes, snakes, birds, frogs etc of each type. Most of the samples are being preserved in formalin. The space in which the museum is situated appears to be insufficient vis-à-vis the collection. The area is also not big enough. It has been learnt that steps to expand the area of the museum did not turn into reality. The most unfortunate thing about the museum is that only one man is looking after it. The only man is handling everything from stuffing of the animals to preserving them. Earlier, another person associated with it left the job.

The museum could provide an excellent source to carry out research on various animals and their behaviour. Besides, school children may be taken there as part of study tours. We see on Animal Planet and other foreign channels how people like Steve Erwin (who eventually sacrificed his life) play with animals. We also see how the countries take so much care of animals. Nevertheless, as a developing country, we could at least try to do something for the animals! In doing so, measures to extend such museums could be the first step. In our country, there are so many rich people and pressure groups working with wildlife and nature, so it does not appear to be very difficult to have some sponsors. Therefore, it is my humble request to the government, private organisations, universities, TV Channels and other concerned quarters to come forward and do something positive for the museum, thereby opening a new horizon in relation to wildlife.

Moinul Alam
Dharmundi, Dhaka

Awful!

How much money does a man need? It's awful to see big guns of the society involved in crimes like extortion, land grabbing, relief money embezzlement and what not! And they also own a couple of TV channels! See, the age of innocence is lost. Greed has grabbed everything!

Cantara Wali Ruhি
Dhaka

Religion

By discarding religion we are compromising with morality and breaking away from family values. The west and many other countries

are paying dearly for allowing free sex and free society.

It is only Islam that has drawn a line between man and woman to ensure a happy family and a respectful relationship within it.

A.B.Mohammed Zakaria

Middlesex, UK

Good news

This is a fact that the relationship between the BDR (Bangladesh Rifles) and the BSF (Border

Security Force of India) is not a happy one. We the readers of newspapers are used to reading news like an innocent Bangladeshi farmer being gunned down or valuables of Bangladeshi frontier villagers looted eventually border skirmishes take place.

But a milestone was cemented on October 7, 2007 to improve this fragile relationship when the BSF handed over to their Bangladeshi counterpart three most wanted Bangladeshi crimi-

nals who were earlier arrested by Kolkata police. Such an incident is unprecedented as an extradition treaty between these two neighbouring countries is yet to be signed.

We the Bangladeshis from every walk of life wholeheartedly hail this step and appeal to the leaders of both the countries to sign an extradition treaty the sooner the better.

Pragati Chakma

West Shewarpara, Mirpur, Dhaka

Migration to Canada

Those who want to migrate to Canada should know that the process of Canadian immigration has become more simplified. One can easily assess her/his possibility of qualifying by checking the point-based system at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/ind_ex.asp.

Those who are considering coming to Canada or are in the process and waiting for the file approval should have this clear in their minds that getting jobs in their respective fields may not be at all easy. But if somebody wants to change his profession and wants to try to do something different, then it's easy to do so here in Canada.

I would suggest the youngsters who have completed their graduation and want to enroll for master's program at university to work and gain work experience in Bangladesh to qualify for the Canadian immigration. Once you are in Canada you can start the master's program with university that has the best coop program or job placement program. Most of the lucrative jobs are being offered to those who are competent management trainees placed by the universities and colleges in

Canada. Those who want to pursue higher studies in Canada should bring manageable funds to finance the program. Once you become Canadian residents you will have access to OSAP in Ontario. OSAP is a need-based fund available for training and education program. Beside you will have the privilege of paying subsidised tuition fees (three times cheaper than the foreign students'). Overall it's wise to land in Canada as an immigrant at a much a younger age which will help you to adapt to the Canadian culture, climate and norms easily. This country requires skilled manpower to use its resources.

One of the major advantages for the Bangladeshis who want to migrate to Canada is the religious freedom in Canada. Canada's second largest population (about 2% of the total population) are Muslims followed by Jewish 1.1%, Buddhist 1%, Hindu 1% and Sikh .9%.

Mohammad S. Jamal
Toronto, ON
Canada



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Higher Secondary Female Stipend Project (Phase-3)

Directorate of Secondary & Higher Education
Ministry of Education, Dhaka

EOI No-HSFSP-3/Impact Study/2007-08/10/07/549 Date: 18-10-2007

Request for Expression of Interest for the Short-listing of Local Consulting Firm for Impact Study of Female Stipend Programme under Higher Secondary Female Stipend Project (HSFSP)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has allocated a fund for the operation of the Female Stipend Programme at the higher secondary level throughout the country. The Project Director, Higher Secondary Female Stipend Project (Phase-3), has intended to apply a part of the fund for payment of eligible expenditure for conducting of Impact Study by a local experienced consulting firm.

The consulting service includes designing a framework for launching the Impact Study in the grassroots level within 64 districts under 06 administrative division of the project areas. It must include sampling process, preparation of questionnaires for well conversant stakeholders, analysis of the data/information collected from the real sources (both from primary and secondary sources), preparation of reports with recommendations and submission of the reports as per the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the study.

The Project Director, HSFSP now inviting interested consulting firms having at least 05 years of experience in the relevant studies (like Impact Studies on any kind of educational system study, female stipend studies, socio economic studies, monitoring study, socio-economic study, etc). The consulting firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, experience in relevant fields. Brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar operating conditions availability of appropriate professional qualification and experience among staff, etc. Primarily a short-list will be prepared on the basis of the following events:

Experience in the similar assignments (Evidence of relevant experience of similar professional track records from the appropriate authority must be produced).

List including CV of experienced professionals and relevant field staffs (Team Leader, Sector Specialist, Field Supervisor, Field Data Collector etc) in the relevant fields with their academic and professional background, (Evidence of relevant experience must be produced).

Financial capacity (Last 3 years annual turnover statement/audit report must be produced with the EOI).

Logistics & office equipment (Computer, printer, photocopier, fax) including office space and vehicles.

A consulting firm will be selected in line with the procedures of the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR)-2003, Letter of Invitation (LOI) followed by RFP will be issued only to the short-listed firms. The consulting firms may form joint venture, Consortium or Association (JVCA) with other firms for enhancing the capacity for effective study. But a consultant cannot participate in more than one firm. In the case of such a consortium or an association all members should have real and specific assignment. Payment to the selected firm will be made only in local currency. It is expected that the services will commence from January-08 and be completed by April-08.

For further information the interested firm may contact the Project Director, HSFSP during office hour from 9:00 to 5:00pm.

The expression of interest (EOI) in 8 (eight) sets including 1(one) set in original must be submitted to the Project Director, HSFSP-3, Directorate of Secondary & Higher Education, Shikha Bhaban (Block-1, Room No-101), 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka on or before 11th November, 07 in a sealed envelop clearly marked with, "Expression of Interest for Short-listing of Consulting Firm for the Impact Study of Female Stipend Programme" launched under HSFSP-III. The proposals will be opened at 12:15pm on the same day.

Md. Tazul Islam
Project Director
Ph: 7171224

GD-3644

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre

Strengthening of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (Phase-II) Project

Savar, Dhaka

Invitation of Tender

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1. Ministry	Ministry of Establishment.
2. Executing agency	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC).
3. Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC).
4. Invitation for	Selection of training/study-tour management firm for organisation of overseas training/study-tour programmes under Strengthening of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (Phase-II) Project.
5. Procurement	Competent and experienced firm will be selected based on its technical and organisational merits and in conjunction with the financial proposal, form eventually the basis for negotiations and ultimately, a contract between the firm and BPATC upon terms of conditions acceptable to both parties.
6. Source of fund	GOB (JDCF).
7. Package name	Selection of training/study-tour management firm for organisation of overseas training/study-tour programmes under Strengthening of BPATC Project (Phase-II).
8. Tender submission date & time	21 November, 2007 at 1:00pm.
9. Name & address of office	
a) Receiving tender document	Office of the Project Director, ITC, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
10. Eligibility of firm	a) 10 years of experience in overseas training/study-tour management from Bangladesh & from developing countries of Asia. b) Evidence of implementing at least five overseas training/ programmes worth US\$ 2500 or more for the Government of Bangladesh. c) Experience of conducting overseas training/study-tour programmes for the Government of Bangladesh under different ministries/division/autonomous bodies. d) Evidence of permanent office, registration & training/study-tour management team in Bangladesh. e) Evidence of office and registration in destination country.
11. Brief description of work	The training/study-tour management firm will identify and select internationally reputed universities/organisations training institutions and sites for study-tour/training, prepare detailed tour programmes, arrange travel formalities, arrange guides and translators, arrange for multi-country payment of per diem, evaluate and monitor training & report to the project.
12. Further information	Interested firms are requested to procure the RFP from the undersigned upon payment of Tk 1000 and a letter of intent within 20 November, 2007 up to 5:00pm.
13. Name of the official inviting tender	Syed Mahboob Hasan.
14. Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director.
15. Address of official inviting tender	ITC (1st Floor), BPATC, Savar, Dhaka.
16. Contact number of official inviting tender	Tel: 7710072, Fax: 7742102
17. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.	

Syed Mahboob Hasan
Project Director

GD-3634

Strengthening of BPATC Project (Phase-II), Ministry of Establishment

বাংলাদেশ কম্পিউটার কাউন্সিল

(বিজ্ঞান এবং তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি মন্ত্রণালয়)

বিসিসি ভবন, আগামৰাম, শেখেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭
ফোন: ১৮১৪৪০৮৮৮ মেইল: bcc@bcc.net.bd ওয়েব: www.bcc.net.bd

Ref: BCC/NICTI-1378/2007-2593

Date: 22.10.2007

Intake for National ICT Internship (Batch-5)

Notice

Extension of Date of Application Submission

Considering the inconvenience caused by closure of universities on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja, BCC decided to extend the date of submission of application for intake of National ICT Internship (Batch-5) to 31 October 2007. The details are as follows :

Deadline for application submission : 31 October, 2007

Qualifications: (a) 4-year Graduation certificate holder, or students appeared in the final semester exam (with CGPA 3.0 or more in the previous exams) of Computer Science/Engineering, or 4-year diploma certificate holder in any ICT subject from Government recognised Institutes, or Graduate in any subject with Post Graduate Diploma (one year) in any ICT subject;
(b) Age not exceeding 30 years on the deadline for application (25.10.2007);
(c) Bangladeshi citizen having overseas Degree/Diploma in ICT may also apply.

Allowances for Interns : Intern will get allowance Tk. 5000/- per month during Internship. Government will provide 60% (monthly Tk.3,000) and the rest 40% (Tk.2,000) will be provided by the company taking the services of the Intern. No other allowances/financial benefits will be provided.

Application Procedure : Interested candidates are requested to apply in the prescribed form. The form may be downloaded from BCC's website (www.bcc.net.bd) or may be collected from BCC's office during office hours. Two Passport Size photographs and attested copies of Marksheets/Transcripts of SSC, HSC and other academic degrees have to be submitted with the application.

Selected Candidates : The candidates who satisfy the requirements as mentioned above will be selected for written test. The list of these selected candidates will be published on BCC's website.