# The woes of a Misunderstood Scribe

CHINTITO

If I asked someone on the street the time on his watch, the person could get upset assuming that I was next going to want to know his name, and then his home address, and then his daughter's marital status... so went the story of an innocent time-seeker.

This week

If I advocated for drinking water with a spot of lemon in this April heat for arresting dehydration, some *patrika* across the border with its usual *anondo* may alert their security forces as the said prescription is tantamount to destroying the Farakka dam, for that is the only way we can get some decent water. Please can we have some water, rightly or wrongly?

If I articulated on the escape route for 'old age' people , some would start arguing on the advantage of having younger politicians in a committee; they can work standing up, (and so the terminology 'standing committee'). But, a mote of warning, the veteran may come back from retirement. His last attempt of a comeback was futile.

If I briefed you on the hazards of feeling hot in a tall building without air-conditioning, the paranoid would term that as naming names of buildings (that is 98 percent of our buildings) without fire escapes and extinguishers and fire drill, although they have the parallel desire to stay alive in the event of a fire. Alas! Not possible.

If I chose to favour 'rice' pudding for the wedding reception of my friend's daughter, the *cheley pokkho* might misunderstand my love for traditional sweets as offering them a cheap alternative for dessert. Yes the price of rice is that much lower, but the hecklers have stopped shouting. Someone said their mouth was full of rice.

If I elaborated on the electronic benefits of a good 'speaker', a section of the public would wonder how much it would cost to entertain 350 persons per day @ Taka 25 per plate for three months; five and a half lakh taka considering holidays. No wonder he lost the elections in his hometown, they would continue. What *nashta* can you get for Taka 25?

If I espoused the wonders that the softness of candlelight does at dinner that would be construed as trying to save electricity or whatever is available of it. By the way, a candle does not come free.



If I insisted on players representing the district they were born in at the next national football championships, the politically agitated sources would jump to the conclusion that it was in reference to outsiders participating in the Bogra by-elections. Despite their loss of face, how handsomely they won.

If I launched an appeal to provide 'dates' at affordable costs during Ramadan, the detractors would see that as siding with the infidels, as weakening the Iraqi farmer is equivalent to strengthening the hand of the imperialists.

If I penned on the bravery of the strongest men in the world who pull trucks with their arms, it was sure to launch a math quiz on how much did the nation pay due to twelve trucks + arms haul + derailed investigation + NSI personnel + unknown elements + suspected *hothas*.

If I pondered about measuring the depths of the Bay of Bengal in 'leagues', many would opine that the thought process was synonymous with proposing a ban on student and *sramik* politics because recent (non) developments were deplorable.

If I said as much about sports as 'sponsorship' people would offer their seat and say *'boshun'; 'dhara'* they would say was a matter of time.

If I spoke on the need to frame a good long 'sentence' in the English language, the 1971 war criminals would start shivering, and protesting, and looking for political alliances. How large a bluff did their 'well-organised-at-the-grassroots-level' reputation prove in the last elections!

If I uttered my standpoint on the health call for avoiding 'oily food', those buying Soybean oil at the mill gate for Taka 73 per litre would reckon that as ambush marketing.

If I wrote a critique on 'Robin Hood' (he robbed the rich to give to the poor), confused readers may express their shock about a Hood Robin group in Rajshahi which had done just the reverse; affluent *ghetus* close to the ruling party had confiscated all the nineteen one lakh Taka cheques issued by the prime minister to nineteen poor victims of Bangla Bhai. The legacy of torture in the law forsaken area lives on. The cheques have since been returned to their rightful owners, the poor villagers that is.

If I wrote an essay on the luxury of a slum dweller having a 'house' in the capital, the *ninduks* would notice it as rubbing salt on the wound inflicted by the Cantonment Board.

<chintitoforever@gmail.com>