In response to 'When will Bangla become the medium of Education?'

Mehjabeen Rahman

IN the article 'When will Bangla become the medium of Education' the writer introduces many valid points about advantages of using the mother language instead of any second or third language as the medium of education, but fails to acknowledge the problems that may arise because of this, especially at the tertiary level. If we were to study in Bangla at the university level, we would be excluding ourselves from an entire group of scholars who mainly communicate in English. We would going to be out of sync with the rest of the world, making it much harder for graduates from Bangladesh to go abroad to pursue higher degrees. It would isolate us from the rest of the world, especially the English speaking countries.

The author mentions how Japan and China handle this problem, but even within Japan and China there are schools known as foreign language schools which prepare their students for interaction with the others in foreign countries by teaching them foreign languages and foreign culture. They only accept the brightest of students, and their graduates are the ones we see at the forefront of scientific and academic achievements, both at home and abroad. Also, most countries, especially Japan, are now promoting learning of English. They are hiring individuals who are native speakers of English to come to Japan and teach there. Thus they themselves are moving away from the system that you are advocating we adopt.

In response to another fact you mentioned in your article about how one of the commissions suggested that foreign languages should not be taught till the fifth grade. Linguists have found that the younger you are, the better you will be at learning a foreign language. Between the ages of three to five, the brains of young children are like sponges, and so this is the ideal time to learn something completely new. As we grow, our brains lose this sponge like ability until we reach the point where it becomes very hard, but not impossible for us to learn a new language. Taking this into consideration, it would be a much better idea to make sure that students in primary school are getting a solid background in a language like English which will be an advantage to them for the rest of their lives.

I am not arguing about the fact that it would be best if all our education was in our mother language Bangla. It truly is a magnificent language with a rich history, but if we are to keep up in the current world, we need to make sure we are in-step with other, more developed countries. One of the smallest ways in which we can do this is by increasing the fluency of English of today's students so that they have an advantage on the world's playing field tomorrow. Both Bangla and English should be emphasized starting from a young age. In today's age of globalisation, we must make sure that Bangladesh is not left behind.

Bangladeshi excels at NASDAQ

AMERICANS for UNFPA President, Anika Rahman, a Bangladeshi American, rang the NASDAQ stock Market, Inc. Opening Bell on Thursday April 9th, 2009. While thanking the Obama Administration and Congress for their support of the world's women, she will call on all of us to declare, "I am an American for UNFPA." Americans for UNFPA builds moral, political and financial support for the work of UNFPA within the United States. UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, provides women's health care and promotes the rights of women in 150 countries around the world. It's the largest international source of such assistance and has proven effective in combating some of the most intractable health problems.



Anika was born in Bangladesh and she is the eldest daughter of Ms. Lubna Choudhury, Founder - Principal of Bangladesh International Tutorial. She was a student of Bangladesh International Tutorial (BIT) and is the first Alumni of the school. She later attended Princeton University and has done her Ph. D in Jurisprudence from Columbia University (NewYork) and is the president of Americas for UNFPA in USA.