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Memories unforgettable



It was in the year 1969 when Bangabandhu was released from the so called

Agartala conspiracy case. It was like a miracle when I met this giant political leader, founder and architect of independent Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. When I was a college student, I used

to hear his voice through radio and saw the picture in print media. But I did not see him face to face before.

In the same year, perhaps in the month of March or April 1969 my first cousin married the daughter of Mir Ashrafuddin Makhan. In that marriage ceremony Bangabandhu was invited with his family.

Let me introduce late Mir Ashrafuddin. He happened to be the husband of

Bangabandhu's own niece, it is interesting to note that her nickname was also Makhan. Bangabandhu came to attend the marriage ceremony of his granddaughter Mukta (daughter of Bangabandhu's niece). Late Mir Ashrafuddin and Bangabandhu used to study in Kolkata Islamia College and lived in the Becker Hostel.

In that marriage ceremony both the bride and bridegroom were my relatives. All close relatives attended the function. I was loitering near the narrow lane (Gali) at Arambagh, the time was near about 1.30pm. I found an old white Toyota car stopped just near me.

I saw Bangabandhu getting down from the car. I immediately understood he had come to attend the marriage ceremony of his grand-daughter i.e. the daughter of Mir Ashrafuddin Makhan. I quickly approached him (Bangabandhu) and asked him whether he had come to attend the function. He (Bangabandhu) promptly replied "Oh! Yes, where is the residence of Mir Ashrafuddin? Lead me up to his residence."

I will ever remember the occasion.

Kazi Liakat Hossain
Advisory Editor
The Economy and Columnist

DU budget

Dhaka University is the biggest educational institution of Bangladesh. As a student, the budget of Dhaka University is very important to me.

The budget of Dhaka University for the fiscal year 2009 was announced on June 28 at the senate session. The total amount of the budget is Tk 184 crore. From this amount Tk 153 crore will be spent on the salaries of the employees.

Only a little is allocated for research. A university's main expenditure should be on research activities but the reality is different here.

We wanted a change, but the budget of 2009-10 fiscal year could not satisfy us.
Mahfuzur Rahman Manik
IER, Dhaka University

Age of uncertainty

The 21st century, within nine years of its inception, has presented the modern civilization with formidable challenges -- Nature takes its own toll!

The rich West has to learn some lessons; mostly it is a process of unlearning -- not to be ruled by Mammon. Now a debate is going on whether the mighty US Dollar would be rendered impotent.

Now the industrialized countries (G-8) have agreed (in principle) to accept the challenges of global warming by a rise of two degrees Centigrade in the coming decades; and have agreed to control emissions by 20 per cent by 2050 (or, is it 80 per cent?). Formerly the rich industries were worried about the lowering of the average standard of living (without bothering for a comparative study in the Third World). Seaside in the coastal areas is a greater threat in the LDCs, affecting about a billion of marginalized families.

Then (especially in the Middle East), the Muslims are being spiritually punished for lack of unity -- the Shia-Sunni conflict; with no silver lining on the distant horizon. The Israel-Palestine issue is more than political: it is a sort of divine test (for both the sides). The solution would appear when the time comes.

Meanwhile the so-called al-Qaeda/Taliban movement of suicide bombing is spreading, regardless of religious or economic boundaries. What is the message between the lines? Politics has failed to deliver. This is a man-made science; and Time is a great tester.

What is the role of the USD? We know about the past, and the panicky present; and await the verdict within the current decade. The changes coming would be irreversible, because the civilization is due for a change. Obama is the advance warning.

What about tiny Bangladesh? Grooved, localized politics, myopic vision, suffering from dynasty virus. The two leaders should not decide the fate of 160 million people: clinging on hope.
Alif Zahr, Dhaka

Let us live in peace

Law and order situation has been worsening day by day. Unexpectedly, even after passing seven months since assuming power, ending an interregnum of two years, the

government has failed to control law and order. Extortionists, robbers, muggers, as well as some political opportunists are reigning supreme.

The government should address the issue in right earnest.
Gopal Sarkar, Bogra

Army pullout

This issue is one of the two most critical national issues, Tipaimukh dam and CHT, being discussed every day in the media.

I can refer to a very interesting talk show on Channel i. The host and the guest gave their opinion on the pullout issues and its implication on the migrant Bengali settlers and the overall law and order issue that might be created if the army is withdrawn.

The interesting part is that they openly argued in favour of "no withdrawal" but at the end they both agreed that the case was in the court, so they could not discuss the issue. Funny! They have already argued in favour of keeping the army, then what is left to discuss?

My opinion on the issue is, it is very unfortunate that exactly when the ethnic minorities are busy organising the international "Adibashi Dibash" adopted by the UN which recognizes their rights to live in a free atmosphere like anybody else in Bangladesh, a writ has been filed against the spirit of the international convention adopted by the UN.

Finally, those who are opposing the phased withdrawal of the army should put themselves into the shoes of the ethnic groups and feel the pinches.
Quadir
California, USA

Coaching centre

The coaching centre is a place where students come to learn through remaining under special guidance. These centres are now known to students of all categories. Not only the weak students but also the most brilliant ones come to these centres to attend special classes. The coaching centres are attracting students with colourful banners and festoons. They are giving 100% assurance of university admission or getting the highest grade or GPA-5 in every exam.

However, are they really serving any purpose? The schools and colleges become redundant when the teachers remain busy with private coaching.

So, the coaching centres must not be allowed to operate.
Md. Al-Amin Khan
Notre Dame College, Dhaka

HR and organisation development

Human resource development and organization development are critical issues for competitive advantages. The basic purpose of organization development is to increase an organization's effectiveness through planned interventions related to the organization's processes, resulting in improvements in productivity, return on investment and employee satisfaction. To remain competitive in today's global marketplace, organiza-

tions need change and one of the most effective tools to promote successful change is organization development (OD).

Organization Development is not only concerned with installing a new machine, new process at work but is also concerned with the person who will operate it, and skills and experiences needed to operate it. Managing the right person at the right place at the right time is the key issue of organization development in changing the environment (e.g., inflation, economic recession, technological advancement etc.). To fit with work and enhance HR productivity management must conduct continuous training and development programmes, establish fair compensation plan, safe and healthy working condition etc. Employee's recognition of work, freedom at work, and feeling of belongingness must be built up by the management. These will facilitate building employee morale, commitment, and better performance and productivity; and ultimately ensure organization development.

These kinds of HR practices are rare in Bangladesh. Only better development of HR practices can promote organization development, productivity, competitive advantages etc. So, the government and non government organizations should introduce HR development programmes for the development of organizations as well as our society.
Chandan Kumar Roy
Student of MBA (HRM)
Hajee Mohammad Danesh
Science and Technology
University
Dinajpur

DU unrest
The days August 20-25 in 2007 are still afresh in our minds. The DU unrest arose from a trifling matter of watching a football match. Later on, it turned into campus violence following the beatings of DU students on the campus by the army personnel. As a result, thousands of DU students took to the street to protest it. They also demanded the withdrawal of the troops from the campus. This continued for a couple of days.

However, when the protest spread to other educational institutions, the then army backed CTG imposed curfew on divisional cities and closed the universities and colleges. During curfew they cracked down on general students and teachers. They even arrested five university teachers, 3 from DU and 2 from RU, for breaking the so-called Emergency Power Rules. Later, three teachers were sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment. On the same day the presidential clemency was awarded to the convicts and they were released.

I would like to thank the parliamentary committee on the education ministry for the decision to interview the affected students and teachers to know their version of the campus violence. The committee should reinvestigate the DU unrest so that such incidents are not repeated in future.
Suman Saha
MBA (Strategic and
International Management)
University of Dhaka

acceptability. Especially, the top leaders of all political parties have some sense of individuality and that is why we expect changes in future political culture in Bangladesh.

So, the nation's expectation is positive. But one politician, at the moment, a Secretary General of a political party, I believe, has no sense of reality and does not mind to speak whatever he feels like. Recently, he said that the AL made a secret deal with India before 29 Dec election on Tipaimukh project. I am confirmed, he will not be able to produce any evidence in support of his claim.

Although it does not matter much, but it does really tarnish the image of his own party, other leaders and the most damaging thing is, it spreads discontentment between supporters of other parties. I don't know when good sense will prevail and his party will be saved from being ridiculed in public.
Shafiqul Islam, NY

Is recession a financial disaster?

There is no denying that the origin of all recessions was in the USA with the collapse of businesses like Layman Brothers and Real Estate in Germany. The economy which hitherto overheated is showing signs of cooling down causing reverberations across the world. How long will it continue is a matter of debate. Pessimists say that it may take more than two years; optimists say that it may take only a year and the realists assert that it may take two years to come out this threat.

The Second World War brought a lot of destruction to mankind. It also ruined the world economy. But it resulted in several technological innovations that brought comforts to mankind. Similarly, the current meltdown will bring fruits to mankind in several ways although there will be pain for some time. But the pain is worth bearing to enjoy the fruits.

In Bangladesh we are or less, all sectors have been hit by slowdown. Real estate, tourism and RMG sectors are badly hit. Fortunately, some sectors in Bangladesh have not been hit such as banking, food sector etc., The Bangladesh Bank has been stringent in its regulation and it has helped to overcome the meltdown in the banking sector. Currently, there is a decline in exports in agriculture and food processing sectors which is a matter of grave concern. However, good monsoon can check the slowdown.

Organizationally speaking, recession is a threat for scroungers not a threat for workaholics. Rather workaholics are a threat to recession. Recession separates men from boys. It differentiates between chaff and grain. It clearly shows who are the real performers and non-performers. Non-performers, wake up! It is time to mend their ways or else they will be fired. Recession is a wake up call for non-performers.

Companies are now looking for silly reasons to fire the people in the name of indiscipline. In fact, it is not due to indiscipline or lack of performance but because of recession. It is a retrograde step and brings down the image of the organizations.

Shohag Mostafij
MBA (Strategic &
International Management)
University of Dhaka

Bravo, Tigers!



Three Cheers for Bangladesh cricket team. What a performance after a big defeat. Bangladesh Tigers have shown that they are now able to face any team in the world with determination & on their day they are dangerous & can beat any team. I must congratulate all the team members, manager, coach & officials for their back to back series win in the West Indies & Zimbabwe. It seems that day by day this team is gaining more & more confidence. They are really playing as a team. Each & every player is contributing for the team. They are a bunch of Tigers who can respond when the occasion demands.

Right from the West Indies tour we have seen their determination as to how to play as a team and in the absence of Mashrafe, Shakib shouldered the great responsibility. It was not easy for our players to play on some totally different pitches in the West Indies. But they have done so well.

As a cricket lover, I would humbly request our Honourable Prime Minister who is also a cricket lover to announce a special cash incentive for each & every member of the cricket team.

Syed Shahid Hossain
HR Bhaban, Kakrail
Dhaka

Recession builds bridges among the families who until now have been separated by barriers due to work pressures. It connects people emotionally. It checks attrition. It provides breathing space to the tired people. It takes out the pressure and injects pleasure for the people.

Recession is not new and we have faced it several times in the past and survived. We would survive this time also. With the growing technology the media is highlighting recession too much thus worsening the situation further. Recession is existing but not as much as it is being overplayed.

Innovative measures to cut down expenses and enhance productivity. Unconventional and out of the box thinking approach is essential. There should be insurance coverage for recession as well.

Bangladesh's economic growth and exports remain quite strong. Nevertheless, precautions are always to be taken to avoid big economic disaster.

Aminur Rahim
Mohakhali, Dhaka

Rights of women

We keep reading in the papers over and over again about men beating up and murdering their wives, pouring acid down the throats of their own children. We read about how women and children working as servants get tortured by their employers. Just the other day there was an article about how a man tied up his wife and locked her up in a medieval manner. It's really sad to see that in this day and age Bangladesh is still not yet a civilised nation. I am really surprised that our Honourable

Prime Minister, being a woman herself, does not seem to be sensitive enough towards all such issues. I believe that stern action should be taken against the culprits. Acid should not be available so easily in the market. I would also like to urge the women of Bangladesh to stand up for their rights and not give in to their husbands so easily. Men who hit women are cowards and thrive on the fear they create.

Therefore, if women start fighting back for their rights, then these so called men will be intimidated.

Aminur Rahim
Mohakhali, Dhaka

Evening MA

Opening evening MA course in the Department of English of DU is a timely initiative which would widen the scope of higher education. The country has dearth of quality higher education. In this condition, imparting better quality higher education with the existing infrastructure will ensure proper utilization of our resources.

But it is unfortunate that some students stood against the move without considering the issue logically. They are confused and concerned that evening MA programme might go against their interest. They argued that it will deepen the session jam and create extra pressure on the department. They also alleged that it is an evil move aimed at commercialisation of education. They chanted slogans that they would resist any attempt at 'commercialisation of education'.

It is a baseless fear that the evening programme will hinder the regular educational activities resulting in session

jam. Ask any student of Business Faculty about this which has been running evening programmes (EMBA) since 2001. It is also noticeable that Business Faculty has less session jam in comparison to any other faculties of DU. Departments of the faculty are still flourishing with its additional fund of evening programmes. Actually in the evening no class is held, no one uses the library. It remains idle. Most of the teachers are also busy taking classes in private universities to utilize the spare time. So in no way will it affect the regular students.

Evening programmes are mutually beneficial. Fifty percent of these self-financed evening programmes go to the development funds for the regular students. Consequently, it provides modern amenities. For example, students of Business Faculties are enjoying better facilities such as well equipped and air conditioned classrooms, modern cyber section, better library, well-furnished seminars and auditoriums. Besides, Teachers will prefer taking class in the department to teaching in private universities. For the general students of the country, it is a window of opportunity by which they can get quality higher education. In fact, it is beneficial to the country as a whole.

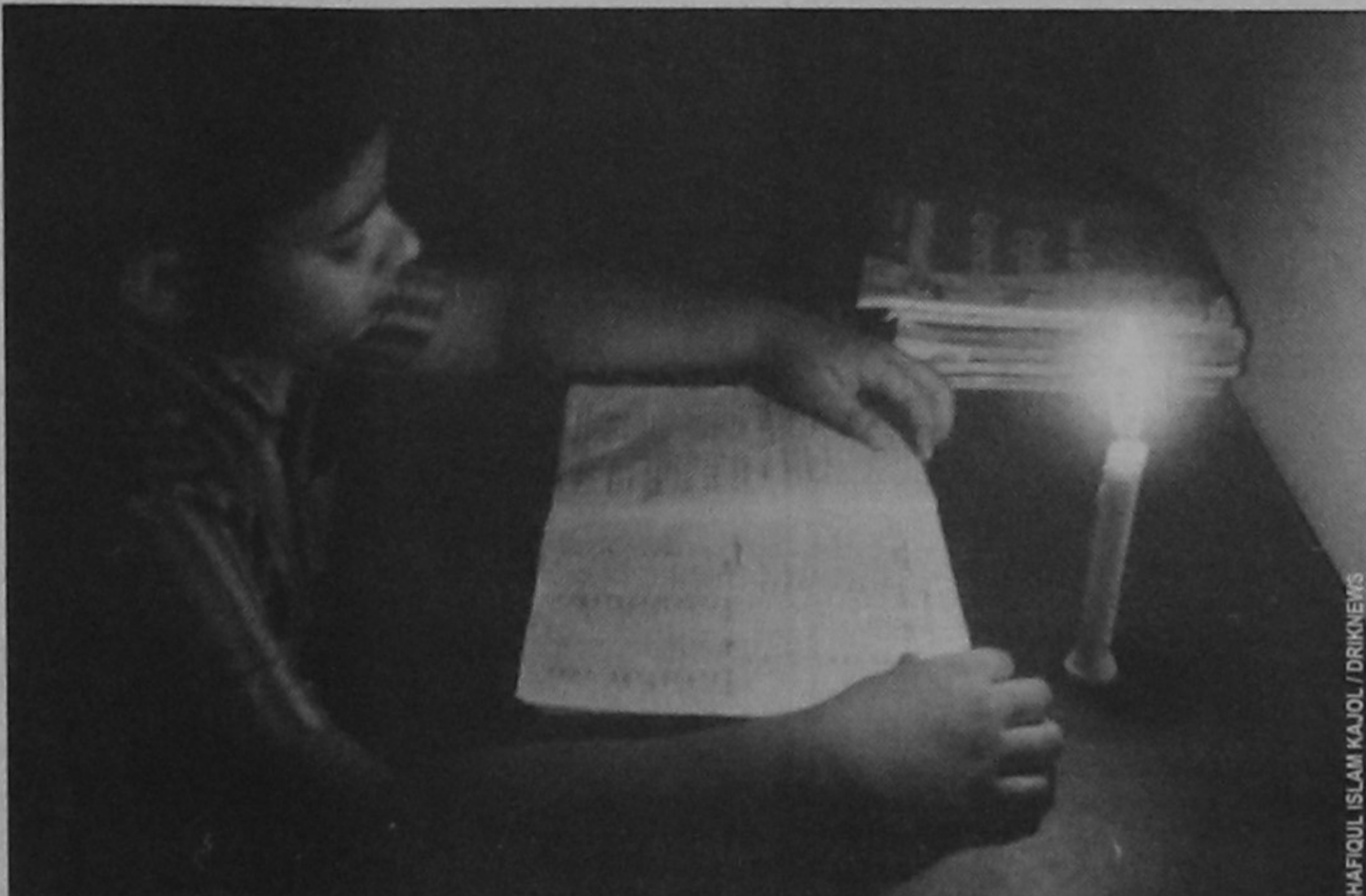
Due to the protest by some misguided students, the department has postponed the programme. It is expected that the students will take the right stance on any matter after assessing everything correctly.

The English department should resume the evening MA programme.
Kushal, One-mail

Captive power generation

The BSS report published by many dailies on 8th July on the matter relating to reduction of renewal fee by BERC for captive power plants is a positive step in the right direction, and a welcome move. Since most captive power plants are sized to the individual power needs

of the user, setting a flat rate is rather unfair. A possible solution could be a minimum fee of say Tk. 2500 calculated say at Tk100 per KW of generator rating. This will be different for each unit, based on its own generation capacity required.



However, the Regulatory Commission's statement that captive generators produce a total of 1800 MW is possibly inaccurate. The installed captive generation capacity could well be 1800 MW in Bangladesh; but they generate only to the extent needed. Many of these are stand-by units, and run only when public power supply fails! Therefore captive power plants do not generate 1800 MW all the time; as meant by the report.

Given the depressing gas supply scenario where we have a fertilizer factory kept shut, to divert natural gas for power generation; the situation is quite precarious! Shortage of natural gas, a common fuel for captive power generation should lead us to look elsewhere for captive power sources.

Renewable energy options like solar, wind and even refuse based power generation needs to be rapidly exploited. Our government should provide all possible incentives, like easy financial loan and duty free provision for this as well as equipment needed to improve energy efficiency for our existing capital equipment in industries must be taken up at the earliest. Tomorrow is too late for this action.
S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka