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Sachin Dev

Finally, a cultural group "Banhishikha" has come up with an exclusive "Sachin Dev Burman" programme (October 23/24). It appropriately came in the month he was born and died.

Scion of a princely family of Tripura, Sachin Dev Burman, popularly known as Sachin Karta amongst the Bangalees and SD Burman in the Hindi film circuit, developed the art of singing and composing which until today remains inimitable.

Be it Lalmonirhat in Bangladesh, Pokhara in Nepal, Thimpu in Bhutan, Dharamnagar in India, Sukkur in Pakistan, or Kandy in Sri Lanka, his music continues to capture the hearts of old and new. A true cultural ambassador of the sub-continental countries, his "Bangla" based music continues to unite and enthrall all music lovers of the countries in the region. This great man was born in Comilla and lived there until his departure for Kolkata in 1924 for higher studies.

At Comilla, he and Nazrul Islam shared moments of exclusivity to search for resources to create some of their finest Bangla songs. The building where Sachin Karta lived with his father Nabadip Chandra Burman, the original heir to the kingdom of Tripura, stands at Chartha, Comilla, but alas dilapidated and uncared for! And to make things worse, a government hatchery functions from that compound!

Banhishikha has done a great job by drawing the attention of the government to bring this great man to focus. Could we now request the government

a) To take over his ancestral home



and declare it a national heritage.

b) To name the Chartha street as Kumar Sachin Dev Burman Road.

c) To announce Sachin Dev Burman as one of our national musicians.

Sachin Dev Burman's house in Kolkata has already been declared a national heritage in West Bengal and the street where the house stands is being named after him. The central government of India has also issued postal stamps in recognition of his historic contribution to music.

How can we ever forget the man who gave us "Tumi je giachio", "Rangila rangila rangila re", "Nishithey jaiyo phulobone", "Mono dilo na bodhu", "Tumi aar nei shey tumi" or for that matter the Hindi songs "Thandi hawaye", "Tum na jane kis jahan mein kho gayen", "Jane woh kaise" and so many other songs in Bangla and Hindi.

HQ Chowdhury
Baridhara, Dhaka

and their lands. The block supervisors must visit their blocks regularly.

3. Fertilizers and insecticides should be used carefully but our farmers are mostly ignorant and also victims of dishonest traders supplying spurious fertilizers. Farmers' awareness should be enhanced, they need to be better trained to take up the new methods and technologies, and that will require spending on education and agricultural extension. Most of those investments will come from the government and the private sectors.

4. Feeding everyone in 2050 will also require poverty reduction strategies, social safety nets for both poor producers and consumers and rural development programmes. It will need better governance and establishment of the agricultural sector that will improve people's access to food. Also important is a reform of the agricultural seed and fertilizer trade system, so that it is not only corruption free but also equitable.

5. Agriculture related machineries and tools should be available to the farmers. Loans for the farmers would be easy and corruption free. Then the sectors will be automated. We can banish the spectre of hunger forever and make sure that our children and next generation enjoy a healthy life. There is no alternative to poverty alleviation and an agricultural revolution. The authorities should take necessary measures in this area.

M. Saiful Alam
Anandnagar
Savar, Dhaka

A miracle!

On Friday 23rd, October morning, immediately on return from my regular morning walk at about 7:00am, I chanced to switch on the TV on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) news channel. I was surprised to see an astonishing news report that kept me glued to the TV till its end. The news feature showed a young child, around a year old, with his mother. On his bare body, verses from the Holy Quran in Arabic, was clearly visible on the TV screen!

It was reported in the news feature that the boy lived in one of the Muslim populated republics of Russia, located north of Afghanistan and Kashmir. The boy has different verses from the Quran, appearing on his body and then gradually fading out after a few days. This phenomenon appeared at irregular intervals, say from one to three weeks apart, and after a few days the verses faded away. Next time a different verse appeared and faded.

During the onset of these verses, the child suffered and was very restless and then calmed down. The TV report stated that no explanation of the phenomena was offered; and the local mosque imam only said that it was Allah's deed which cannot be explained. However, I subsequently scanned many international news channels and the ABC channel too but could not see or hear anything further.

Before Jumma prayers, I talked about it with my neighbour, sitting at the mosque. He too said that he had chanced to glance across something about it in one of that morning's local Bengali newspaper, the name of which he could not recollect! However, no Bengali or English newspapers were available at 3:00pm after the end of Jumma prayers.

I would request your news staff to please investigate this news item and publish whatever they can find, and follow it up further, if possible. It will naturally be an item of interest to most readers.

S.A. Mansoor
Dhaka

Films and Censor Board

Okay the title is as straight forward as it can be, but has anyone really checked out the website of the Censor Board of Bangladesh. To put it in a word, it's simply hilarious. Why? - Look around, in fact the next time you see a commercial film poster in the streets of Bangladesh, take a moment and think...look closely at the poster...beyond the half naked WOMEN and the "over dramatic" heroes-what lies beneath you ask? - Everything and everything that needs to be CENSORED!!!

The website carries 12 specific RULES in regard to OBSCENITY, and the last time I checked, all films (feature length) have to be approved by the Censor Board. Then, how come hundreds of films are getting released each year violating the very basis of existence of our Censor Board?

Honestly, I don't have an answer, and I expect none from anyone reading this - and frankly I could care less, but I, being a student studying abroad, feel ashamed every time someone googles or youtubes "Bangladeshi Cinema" and even before you can hit ENTER the automated search engine brings up titles containing obscenity in all forms and sizes. Do I have an answer for my foreign friends when they ask me, why? Did I ever? - No! because if the ENGINE IS DEAD then it does not matter IF YOU CAN DRIVE ACAR OR NOT!!!

I do agree to spending boring long hours on the internet watching trailers of numerous Bangladeshi films

Sea level rise

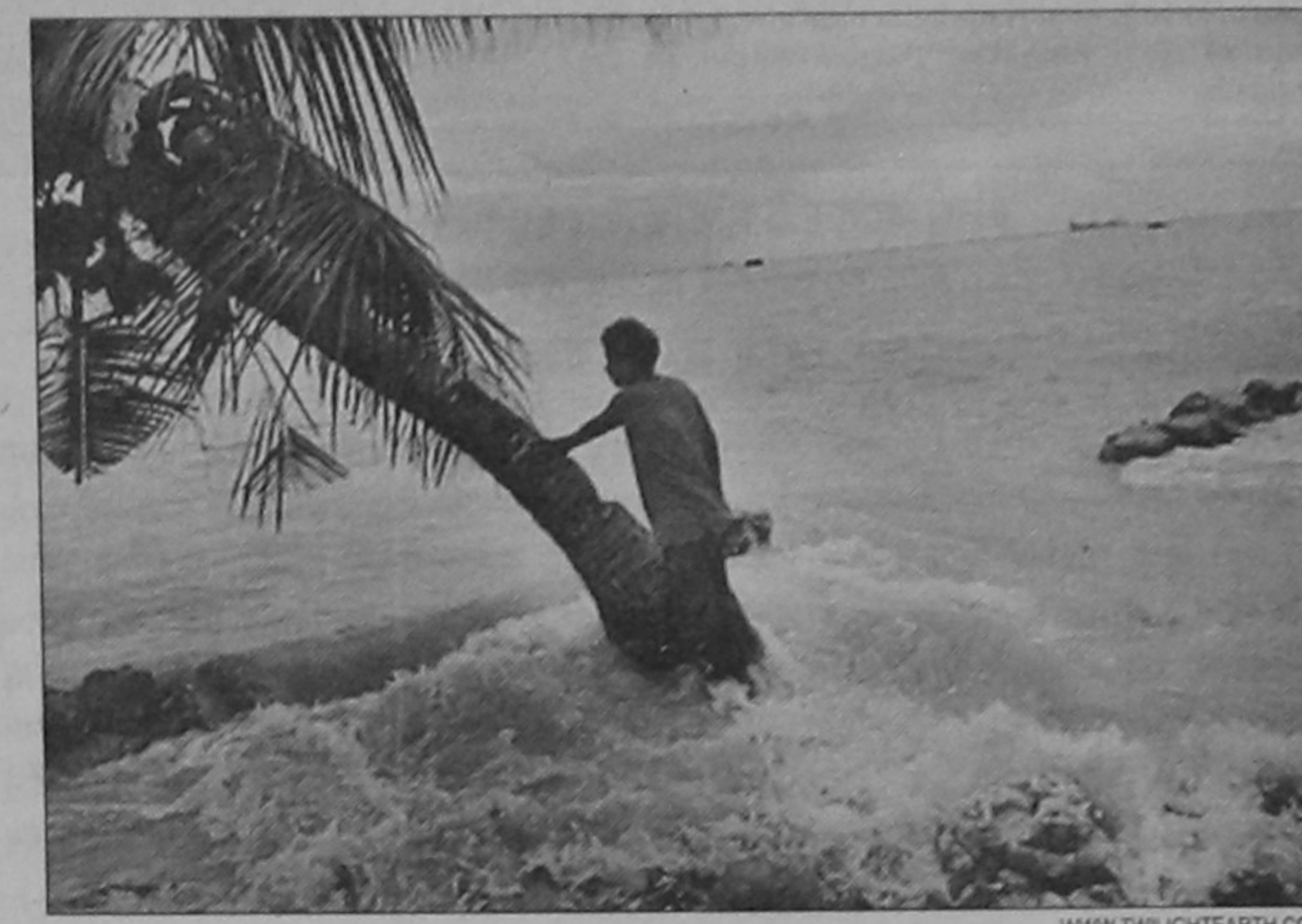
Sea level rise is the most discussed and debated global issue now. Actually in the past 100 years global sea-level rose between 1 and 2 millimetres a year. It is predicted by experts that the sea level rise will inundate most of the low lying countries like Bangladesh. According to INTERNATIONAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC), one meter sea-level rise will inundate 15 to 20% of Bangladesh. So, 13 to 30 million people of Bangladesh would be affected. If there is an increase in temperature of 6c the greater flow of water through three

great rivers will lead to between 20 to 40% more flooding.

Threatening the richest and most productive region of country, sea level rise can have dire consequences for the Bangladeshi economy. A recent study estimates that a gross domestic product (GDP) decrease in the range of 28% to 57% could result from 1m. sea level rise.

Nazmus Sakib
Student

Geography & environmental studies
University of Chittagong



(among many other things), where a few amazed me - MOST made me cry in laughter. Who do I blame for making me laugh? After all laughter is the best medicine, right? So "All's well that ends well"? again NO. Because I will cry in regret any day of the week than laugh at something which deprives our talented and established filmmakers of making a name for themselves while degrading the Bangladeshi film industry.

I know it might not be my place. But IT IS my question. How do we go around solving this little puzzle called the Censor Board of Bangladesh?

Among 15 crore Bangladeshis I, for one, am disgusted and I know there are thousands more like me. All in all, ARE WE THAT BLIND? ARE WE THAT STUPID? AND ARE WE THAT IGNORANT? The ball is in your court now - think fast and decide which shot to play, or you might just miss the chance.

Kazi Riad Omar
London
UK

Abolish quotas

The country of Bangladesh was liberated 38 years ago. And we are still bestowing undue privileges on the family members of freedom fighters! It is discriminatory. Soon after the liberation war ended

several top army commanders, civil service stalwarts, politicians et al worked together to upgrade themselves. Hence, was the 'two years antedated seniority' in service and unprecedented 30% percent quota for freedom fighters in all government jobs. It means thirty percent quota in all fields - admission in medical colleges, public universities, education, govt. jobs, armed forces etc. for 150,000 persons and seventy percent for more than sixteen crore people! What are the faults of the 'Shaheed' families and crores of indirect freedom fighters who helped the FFs, supplied information, intelligence, food and rations, or prayed for the victory? How did we reward them?

It is high time that all quotas except maybe tribal and women quotas are abolished and only meritocracy should be allowed to prevail.

Bangladesh requires able, intelligent, efficient and competent persons at the helm of state affairs.

Dr. SN Mamoon
One-mail

Attack on reporter

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) was created as a temporary measure to quell the menace and insecurity created by the rise of extortion by petty robbers and thieves masquerading as political activists who were often protected by "godfathers". While society breathed a sigh of relief when these extortionists were brought under control, many feared that this elite force one day would also turn against the very citizens of the country where the justice system is too antiquated and bureaucratic to be effective. When a police force loses the respect and co-operation of the people it is paid to protect, it no longer serves its purpose. Between failures of the judiciary and the politicised law enforcement, common people are left to fend for themselves. Is this what an elected government promised to deliver?

As in most countries, each and every media outlet has a natural slant towards its pet political party; Bangladesh is no different. In the last ten years, the media in Bangladesh has made strides in involving common people in the daily affairs of the country through investigative journalism, talk shows and random interviews not to mention informative documentaries. Whereas only a couple of decades ago, the media was simply an extension of the propaganda arm of the party in power, it would not be fair to depict today's situation with the same colours. The awareness drive against social ills such as abuse of women by religious fanatics, abuse of drugs, extortion, failures of the bureaucracy, wrong implementation of the statutes etc., by the media has to be praised. Within the broad spectrum of issues, it is only natural that

different outlets will taint the stories with their own shades while acting as the eyes and ears of a democratic society. To single out any one of the media outlets if they are at discord with the party in government either through neglect or deliberate punishment is an abuse of government.

The New Age has served as an alternative voice of national interest since its inception. To hear that its editor has been the target of bombers who seem to have gotten away with impunity and one of its reporters has been barbarically beaten and tortured by none other than members of the elite force Rab is extremely disconcerting. It shows political immaturity and intolerance that can only divide society and harm national interest. While Bangladesh seeks to garner the sympathy of the world against threats from its neighbours, seeks support to protect itself from the consequences of global warming and the government speaks publicly against extra-judicial killing, it cannot be seen to be attacking the media by unleashing covert political goons and state sanctioned forces to muzzle it.

The media is the closest thing to transparency and accountability that Bangladesh has. Instead of chastising the media, it should respect it as an outlet for the continuous voice of the people.

It is the ineffective justice system and the crawling civil service that require to be brought in line to meet the needs of a more informed citizenry, instead of dishing out yet more rhetoric.

Shabbir A. Bashir, PhD
Vancouver
USA

Learning English

We all know that "English" is not our language but it is an International Language for which those who know this language can do better in building up their careers, if they are properly placed.

But if they cannot pronounce English words correctly, then they face lots of trouble or people laugh at them.

Nurul Huda
Joarsahara Bazar Road
Dhaka

Vegetables

We are now feeling a touch of winter. Various kinds of vegetables - such as tomato, carrot, beet, cauliflower, cabbage, radish, beans, peas and so on - are grown in this season. There are also plenty of leafy vegetables. All these vegetables are full of vitamins. They have great food value. Moreover, they are very nutritious and good for health. If properly cooked, they are no less tasty than a dish of meat or fish.

Habibur Rashid Ismail
Chittagong

Education policy

I welcome any new education policy arrived at after due consideration by the experts to improve it in our country as education is the key element for any nation. I also note the objections of the BNP and JP in this matter. Such objections really point out the root malaise of all our education policies which needs urgent attention. The necessity is to make partisan politics illegal and irrelevant in all our educational institutions (for both students and teachers), and in all official recruitment agencies and promotion boards. Political parties can have 'young' or 'retired' groups (as they have in UK and other countries), but their activities must be outside any educational institution, and they must not use the label 'student'. Genuine student politics should be restricted to representation and activities of students for their own

welfare.

Our educationists should visit countries which have strong bipartisan politics such as the UK, USA and India etc., and study how partisan politics has no place in educational establishments of these countries and recommend to our whole nation that this is absolutely essential for success of any of our educational policy.

Without such outright ousting of party politics from our educational institutions, I am afraid any other measure is like recommending that the deck furniture be rearranged as a solution to prevent the Titanic from going down.

Why should anyone take up the arduous task of study and cultivation of merit, when much greater rewards can be had by using muscle power and patronisation? Engineer Shafi Ahmed
London, UK

The core sector

In the next four decades the world's population will grow by 2.3 billion. Meeting the demand of the world's 9.1 billion population in 2050 will require 70% more food than we currently produce. So unless we take the right decisions today we risk finding the globally dangerous bare tomorrow. It is time the authorities took some necessary steps for a real agricultural revolution.

1. Some TV channels have been telecasting innovative agricultural programmes, but they do not reach the rural areas. Because the cable TV channel facilities are not available at the village level. So the farmers are deprived of watching programmes and cannot learn or implement the innovations.

2. Upazila level agriculture officers and block supervisors must develop better working relations with real farmers

10 years to introduce the online transaction facility. We are too late.

Mohammed Uddin

While e-payment gateway is like rain, my eye is on the rainbow. It is imperative that Bangladesh utilise e-banking and have a position in the emerging economies. Clearly, we are now one step ahead!

MA Faisal Mahmud

No doubt it is a trendsetter initiative. But cyber security is one of major issues of consideration for successful implementation of online banking.

Edward Apurba Singha

The authorities, thank you very much. This should have been implemented at least 4-5 years back. Anyhow, we need to implement it as fast as possible. Having fully loaded e-banking will not only provide the users' flexibility, but also reduce people's movement - reduce jam, save time and will usher in a new era of many online businesses. Well done, the government!

Imrul

This is the stepping stone for bigger and better things to shape up in our country through the adoption of the modern way of banking/transaction. I am still wait-

ing for that day when we would be allowed to do online transaction through foreign currency. Let us embrace this change and take whatever measures are warranted to facilitate e-commerce.

Shahriar Hyder

It's really a matter of joy that finally we are getting the modern facilities.

Mizan

As the technology gets deployed & rolled out for individual clients, we then need to focus on training the bank staff on how to keep the back-end environment secure as well as educating clients on how to use the web interface confidently. Once sustainability is assured, we'll see people coming on board to benefit from this new facility. This is great news!

Shamim Ahmed

I really appreciate that the online payment system is going to be established. It will reduce our hassle in long queues to pay utilities bills. I am looking forward to using the facilities of online banking.

Muslima Begum

many developments in future. Thanks to all who were involved in making this decision.

Nazimuddaula

Good initiative taken. Thanks to all concerned, especially to the BB Governor. This can save a lot of our precious time and we can do our own core jobs giving enough time. Everyone should be thinking like this...

Imtiaz Anwar

This revolution of online banking will exert a positive influence on our money market economy.

Mohammad Ali

It's the news of the day. It will be a boon to the NRBs who would be able to pay their utility bills, property taxes etc. promptly and timely, though living thousands of miles away from home. It's great.

AZM S Alam

It's really a remarkable development for Bangladeshi economy. To get full benefit of it we need to ensure that we have high-speed and uninterrupted Internet and electricity everywhere in the country.

Like many others, I also want to give much emphasis on online transaction's security. This should come first.

Dhakatown.net

ONLINE VOICES

Readers' instant comments on The Daily Star Online reports. Log on to thedailystar.net to leave your comments.

Banking enters new era (November 3, 2009)

Consumers will get their first taste of the landmark online banking reform.

But that's just the start. Between now and onward, a whole raft of new rules will take effect aimed at levelling the playing field between card issuers and consumers, who all too often have found themselves powerless to challenge onerous and abusive lending practices.

Balaram Sengupta

This is great news for all. But Internet security must be ensured by the authorities.

Nigar Sultana

Really, we are gradually entering the era of Digital Bangladesh. If the initiative of the central bank becomes successful, people will no longer curse their fate for being a citizen of Bangladesh.

Shymal Kumar Mukherjee

Let us go for true e-commerce. Thanks to the policy makers and the reporter for sharing the good news.

Md. Abdul Hakim Bhuiyan

This is one of the biggest steps to digitalise Bangladesh, however people also need to know how to keep their identities and money secure.

In Western countries banks are losing millions of dollars because of online theft. However, the banks are paying for it.

Raaf Khan

Security measures to these online services are very critical. High priority must be set for appropriate design and implementation. Misuse of the system can be a great disaster for a developing country like Bangladesh.

Quamrul Khan

Bangladesh Bank took about