

Renowned broadcaster and cultural personality Iqbal Bahar Choudhury has represented Bangladesh, and our language and culture in the Voice of America (VOA) for more than three decades. His contribution as a broadcast journalist made him a renowned figure among the Bengali speaking people worldwide.

Iqbal Bahar Choudhury was born in 1940 to a renowned Bengali Muslim family. His father Habibullah Bahar Choudhury was a famous politician and social activist. His mother, Anwara Bahar Choudhury, was a prominent female writer and activist for promoting women's education. Iqbal entered the cultural arena during his early years and used to perform in the children's programmes of Pakistan Radio. He got deeply involved in the cultural activities during 60s.

Iqbal recalls, "At that time I was a student of Economics Department of Dhaka University. I used to perform in the theatres regularly. I took part in the Tagore Centenary (1961). I had worked with artistes such as Golam Mustafa, Fateh Lohani, Khurshedi Alam and many others."

After graduation, Iqbal joined the Radio Pakistan as a broadcaster and after introducing television facility, he became one of the first television broadcasters in this land. While doing his job in electronic Media, Iqbal got the opportunity to serve the country more effectively.

"The Bengali crews of Pakistan Television used to visit Bangabandhu's

# THE VOICE OF BANGLADESH

## THE MAN WHO SPOKE TO THE WORLD

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

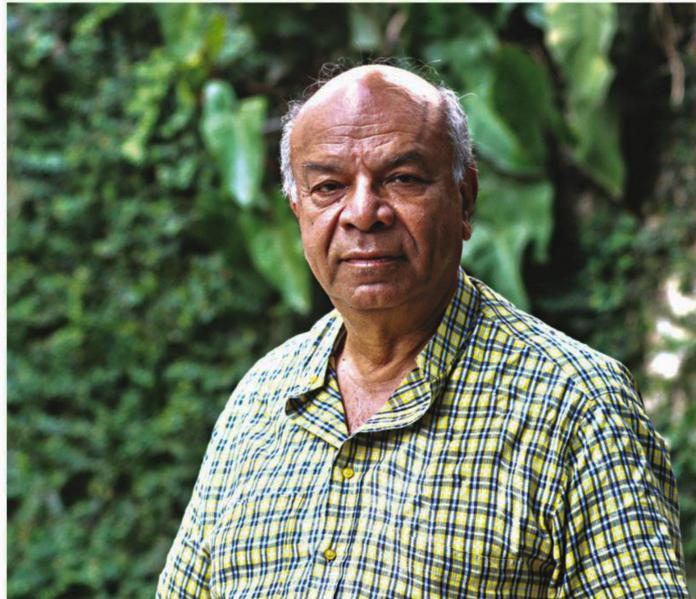


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Iqbal Bahar Choudhury

place regularly and request him for his instructions. He used to inspire us all the time. Though there was surveillance and pressure from our West Pakistani bosses, we used to give preference and special treatment to the news related to the struggle for our self-determination and independence," says Iqbal.

After the liberation war of 1971, Iqbal got the opportunity to cover some of the most significant moments in the history of Bangladesh. He was assigned to live telecast the historic home coming of Bangabandhu on January 10, 1972. Iqbal says, "Live telecast at that time in war torn Bangladesh was an unthinkable job. Millions of people gathered in the old airport to welcome the leader. Suddenly I was told to acquire a helicopter because I had no way to reach him from the ground. So, I rushed to the airport and requested a pilot to take me to the air. I had no idea whose helicopter that was but the pilot agreed and I flew to Suhrawardi Uddyan from Tejgaon and covered the ceremony from the air."

In 1973, Iqbal left the country and joined the Bangla service of VOA. He served there for 33 years and retired in 2010 as the chief of Bangla service. In 2006, he single-handedly introduced the Bengali television service in VOA. Now in his mid 70s, Iqbal is still active in the cultural arena. He has published several albums of poetry recitation. He has also produced two documentary films; one on Begum Rokayea and another on his mother Anwara Bahar Choudhury. ■

STAR PEOPLE

QUIRKY SCIENCE

# 25 YEARS OF THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE

In just 405 years, since Galileo first chose to point a telescope up rather than forward, humankind has made incredible strides in space exploration. But none has done more for modern astronomy than the Hubble Space Telescope (HST). The HST built by NASA, with contributions from the European Space Agency, is operated by the Space Telescope Science Institute.

It is one of the most iconic scientific instruments ever created and is used by astronomers across the globe.

One of those who have taken advantage of the telescope's unprecedented capabilities is the University of Leicester's Professor Nial Tanvir, who has used the HST to

explore the size of the cosmos and learn more about gamma-ray bursts – the most powerful electromagnetic events ever discovered.

On Friday, 24 April, the HST will celebrate exactly 25 years since it was launched.

Named after American astronomer Edwin Hubble (1889-1953) – whose work led to the proposal the cosmos is expanding – the telescope of the same name has captured images which have changed our perception of the Universe forever.

One such snapshot is the Ultra Deep Field – an image which shows more than 10,000 galaxies compacted into just a tiny portion of the night sky.

SOURCE: SCIENCEDAILY.COM



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One moment she is seen in an apron, shoes and hat, climbing a ladder to check whether the machineries are working right, the next moment she is seen supervising a team of male workers in the manufacturing wing. This week we bring you the success tale of Farah Zabeen, the Area Manager of Secondary Manufacturing Department, British American Tobacco. For her outstanding contribution as a leader in her team and her courage to face challenges, Bangladesh Brand Forum recently honored her with the "Progressive Women Leader" award.

Soon after completing her BSC in Mechanical Engineering from BUET, Farah joined the manufacturing wing as the first female leader of the British American Tobacco (BAT) in 2005.

"Working as the first female staff in a factory dominated by male workers was a huge challenge for me," Farah recalls. "One of the difficulties that I faced during my initial days was to convince the workers that a woman too can be an engineer and a leader."

However nothing could hold her back. Farah's towering confidence and passion have helped her cross the long journey as Assistant Quality Services

# LEADING THE TEAM

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Manager, Quality Manager to Area Manager. A mother of two children, Farah also makes sure that she maintains a good balance between her

SOON AFTER COMPLETING HER BSC IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FROM BUET, FARAH JOINED THE MANUFACTURING WING AS THE FIRST FEMALE LEADER OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO (BAT) IN 2005.

professional and family life. "My company has always inspired me to take risks and my family has been a great support all the way," she continues. "However, to excel in your job, it's also very important to recognise your inner strength and passion. Because I believe there is no job that we can call a 'man's job'!"



Farah Zabeen

# NEW EBOLA TREATMENT



Researchers from The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and Tekmira Pharmaceuticals Corp, have successfully developed a post-exposure treatment that is effective against a specific strain of the Ebola virus that killed thousands of people in West Africa.

The study results, in the April 22 edition of Nature Journal, demonstrated that the treatment is the first to be shown effective against the new Makona outbreak strain of Ebola in animals that were infected with the virus and exhibited symptoms of the disease.

The treatment uses a sequence specific short strand of RNA, known as siRNA, designed to target and interfere with the Ebola virus, rendering it harmless. One of the advantages of this approach is the ability to quickly modify it to different viral strains.

Although all infected animals showed evidence of advanced disease, those receiving treatment had milder symptoms and recovered fully. The untreated controls succumbed to the disease on days eight and nine, which is similar to that reported in the field after patients begin showing symptoms of Ebola.

This treatment also protected against liver and kidney dysfunction and blood disorders that occur during an Ebola infection. These results indicate that the treatment may confer protective benefits that go beyond improving survival rates and effective control of virus levels in the body.

The Tekmira siRNA-based therapeutic is now being evaluated in Ebola-infected patients in Sierra Leone.

SOURCE: SCIENCEDAILY.COM