

EDUCATION



Have you ever visited a maternity ward of a government hospital? Let me paint you a picture. At the hospital, more than 160 pregnant mothers are crammed into a shabby, overcrowded hall, where only 50 beds are available for patients. The rest lie on dirty floors, sharing space with cats and flies. To make matters worse, there are only three doctors and one nurse for all the patients. The nurse, with very little training, delivers babies from experience. Such poor facilities and unavailability of trained midwives are reasons behind the failing health of both mothers and newborn babies in Bangladesh. Many living in

THE ENROLLED STUDENTS HAVE BEEN GIVEN SCHOLARSHIPS COVERING TUITION, ACCOMMODATION, MEAL PLANS, COURSE MATERIALS AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION.

the rural areas, in fact, prefer not to take the trouble of taking a pregnant mother to the hospital for a safe delivery. According to a research (BDHS, 2014), 62 percent births are delivered at home, of which 90 percent occur without the assistance of trained personnels. In addition to the above, the maternal and neonatal mortality rate is quite high in the country due to the lack of skilled attendants working during the child delivery process.

In early 2013, BRAC University (BRACU) introduced a three-year diploma programme in midwifery, to develop qualified, competent and professional midwives, to play a significant role in improving maternal health and children's health in Bangladesh.

"BRACU developed a competency based curriculum that meets national and global standards for midwifery education, keeping in mind the skills necessary to provide quality services at the community level," says Ismat Bhuiya, director and founder, BRACU Midwifery Education Programme. "We enrolled a total of 410 students from 279 unions, in the first intake. We strictly maintain 8:1 student-teacher ratio, well equipped classrooms

A MUCH-NEEDED INITIATIVE

"A PROMISING STEP BY BRAC UNIVERSITY TO ENSURE SAFE MOTHERHOOD AND A HEALTHY YOUNG GENERATION."

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

and laboratories to ensure quality education."

The enrolled students have been given scholarships covering tuition, accommodation, meal plans, course materials and local transportation. The students also enjoy a monthly stipend of BDT 500 for the three academic years. BRACU has been running this diploma programme in six districts in Bangladesh. "I am a first year student and I come

from a commerce background," says Sharmin Akhter, one of the enrolled students. "The well equipped laboratories and regular practical classes guided by our teachers have made this study really enjoyable. I believe that by studying and practicing midwifery, we will be able to contribute a lot to our country," she comments.

The midwifery programme at BRAC University is undoubtedly a revolutionary

step in ensuring safe motherhood. However, our government must come forward to integrate these skilled groups of midwives to the existing system of health services. "The government should ensure options for professional and skilled midwives to practice their skills in the community level," adds Ismat. "Otherwise, the existing conditions of maternal health, in the rural and least developed areas, will not change." ■

STARDIARY



MAD GENIUS

SKETCH: MORSHED ABDULLA

KAZI ABUL KASEM

When Bengali Muslims started to re-emerge as a modern and independent community during the late 19th century, Kazi Abul Kasem established himself as one of the first successful Muslim painters from Bangladesh (then East Bengal). Born in May 9, 1913 in Jessore, Abul Kasem got no formal education in drawing or painting. However, during the 1930s and 40s he became one of the main caricature artists for many renowned newspapers and magazines of this subcontinent such as Mohammadi, Bangalaxmi, Saogat etc. He is also one of the pioneer political cartoonists of South Asia. With his signature Dopiazza, his witty and intellectually stimulating editorial cartoons were critically acclaimed around the subcontinent. He was also a lifetime member of Bangla Academy. A gifted lyricist, Abul Kasem published a book titled 'Ganguli Mor' with 26 of his songs. He has been honoured with many awards for his contribution in art and literature. He died on July 19, 2004 at Dhaka, Bangladesh.

- SOME OF THE AWARDS CONFERRED TO KAZI ABUL KASHEM**
- Bangla Academy Award (1978)
 - Nasir Uddin Gold Medal (1989)
 - Artist S M Sultan Gold Medal (1994)
 - Bangladesh Charu Shilpi Shommanona (1990)
 - Tamaddun Mazlish Mother Languahe Award (2001) etc.

"A CARTOON OF TWO OR THREE LINES IN PENCIL CAN TELL MORE THAN A TEN PAGE ARTICLE."

CARTOON IS LIKE LITERATURE. IT IS EVERGREEN; IT CANNOT WEAR OUT WITH TIME AND AGE.

I PREFER CARTOONS ON SOCIAL THEMES. IT CAN POINT OUT THE DEFECTS AND DISCRIMINATION IN OUR SOCIETY.

IDEA OR THEME GENERATION SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR DRAWING CARTOONS. ONE MUST UNDERSTAND – DRAWING CARTOONS IS AN ART, BUT WITH WIT AND PARODY."

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA AND BRAINY QUOTES



PHOTO: INTERNET

FOOD TAMPERING

This incident happened to my brother and I thought it was worth sharing. He was walking home from work one day and was feeling extremely hot so he stopped by a coconut cart and bought a green coconut which was already cut with a straw in it. As he sipped his coconut water he began to feel drowsy and at one point blacked out, when he woke up he found himself in an alley, and his wallet, glasses, watch and ring had been stolen. He realised later the coconut hadn't been cut in front of him and the vendor could have easily mixed something in it that made him unconscious. He hasn't suffered from side effects but we don't know about long term effects yet. I think it is best we avoid buying food and drink from the streets all together because there is no way we can be sure nothing is mixed in them.

Rubaiya Rab Jhigatala



RARE SHOW OF HONESTY

I had taken a CNG to drop my daughter off to school the other day and returned home using the same vehicle. An hour after I got home, I realised I didn't have my phone inside my purse. I was very upset because I had just received the phone as a birthday present from my husband this month. I spent all day thinking of how to tell him I lost my phone, when around 4pm, I heard a knock on my door and to my amazement it was my CNG driver from that morning standing outside, holding my precious phone. I could have hugged him at that moment and wept in relief, but instead I gave him tea and a large tip for being an honest man. I found out later that he had described me and my daughter to the guards in the building and refused to hand over the phone to them, insisting he wanted to return it in person, till he was allowed to come up.

Shaila Begum Kalabagan

HONESTY OF PURPOSE / GOOD GOVERNANCE ARE THE KEYS TO THE "SUCCESS"

MICRO CREDIT IS THE ORDER OF THE WORLD

"MICRO CREDIT" IS A WELL UNDERSTOOD "SUBJECT" BY THE "BENEFICIARIES"

Term Deposits (MTDR)	
Profit Rate	Duration
10.00 %	03 Months
10.50 %	06 Months
11.00 %	01 Year
12.00 %	02 Years
Double	06 Years

* Condition Apply

The Dhaka Mercantile Co-operative Bank Ltd.

Head Office

19, Indira Road, Farmgate, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Phone: 914-3318, 812-9438, 914-3727, Fax: +88-02-910-2124, E-mail: info@dmcbl.com

for details 01730-701608