

FLASHBACK

# A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE

ANISUL HAQUE, THE MAYOR OF DHAKA NORTH CITY CORPORATION, REMINISCES ABOUT HIS CAREER AS AN ANCHOR IN 'ONTORALE'.

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA

Neatly brushed hair, dressed in bell-bottoms, paired with straight pointed collar shirts, and a bright, wide smile.

Packed with entertaining contents and featuring the spontaneous, up-tempo personality of the anchor, *Ontorale*, a BTV show from the 80s, was a staple of national television during that time.

Long before Anisul Haque was elected as the Mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), he made his mark in the minds and hearts of the public with this TV show, as a TV host.

Interestingly, Haque's foray into TV as an anchor in *Ontorale* was rather coincidental.

Year 1980. With no intention of auditioning for a TV show, Anisul Haque was accompanying a friend at the BTV centre. He had a train to catch in a few hours. But producer Musa Ahmed had other plans.

Ahmed was about to commence the shooting of his new show, but his anchor had not shown up on the set.

"He asked me two questions – whether I absolutely needed to leave for Chittagong and whether I ever faced the camera," Haque recalls laughingly.

Ahmed was a bit sceptical about this young man who had no experience in hosting a TV show and wasn't sure whether Haque had what was needed to make the show a success. However, Anisul read the script once, faced the

minutes. In the beginning of every episode, Haque would come up with a different theme and a number of items – like songs, dances, recitations, quizzes, debates and interviews, based on the particular theme.

"Once something quite unexpected happened on the set as Haque was working on a theme titled 'Mother'," recalls Tushar. "As he was showing a book with pictures of martyrs from 71 and paying respect to their mothers, one of the junior artists present on set

Shafiq Rehman were also present and as I finished the show, apparently many people had tears in their eyes," he ends.

"Haque did not announce the ending in an ordinary manner, he did it using an anecdote", informs Tushar.

The anecdote goes like this – 'once upon a time there lived a king who was dearly loved by all his subjects. One day, the king suddenly died leaving everyone shattered. They were not ready to accept his absence, so they decided to wait for him to return. They waited for a long time, having painted the castle and adorned it with flowers.'

*Ontorale* too, like the King, made its exit from our television scene leaving an indelible mark in the viewers' hearts.



Anisul Haque with the producer of 'Ontorale' Musa Ahmed.

PHOTO: COURTESY



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

camera test, became a member of the cast and the rest, as they say, is history. The show became an instant hit.

Anisul Haque's charismatic presentation was undoubtedly a reason behind the show's popularity, says Abdun Nur Tushar, a popular media personality, debater and a doctor. "As it was a star studded show, people would be glued to their TV sets to catch a glimpse of their favourite media personalities," says Tushar. "Starting from Abdullah Abu Sayeed to Afzal Hossain and Suborna Mustafa, every celebrated name was invited as a guest at least once on the show."

The show had 24 episodes in total and was aired every 15 days for 50

recognised her freedom fighter son among the other martyrs. Unaware of her son's death before this, she completely broke down."

The shooting was halted and she was asked whether she would like to be interviewed about her son, adds Tushar. After she agreed to do so, the content was revised that very moment and her interview was included. That particular episode touched many people's hearts.

"Even though it was not the longest running show, we heard that people took out a procession when the show aired its final episode," says a nostalgic Anisul Haque. "On the set of the last episode, other popular anchors like Fazle Lohani, Abdullah Abu Sayeed,



SKETCH: YAFIZ SIDDIQUI

## RANDALL JARRELL

May 6, 1914 – October 14, 1965

Randall Jarrell was an American poet, literary critic, children's author, essayist, novelist, and the 11th Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, a position that now bears the title Poet Laureate.

Notable works: *The Woman at the Washington Zoo*, *The Lost World*, and *Pictures from an Institution*.

MAD GENIUS

“A POET IS A MAN WHO MANAGES, IN A LIFETIME OF STANDING OUT IN THUNDERSTORMS, TO BE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING FIVE OR SIX TIMES.”

IT IS BETTER TO ENTERTAIN AN IDEA THAN TO TAKE IT HOME TO LIVE WITH YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN A GOLDEN AGE USUALLY GO AROUND COMPLAINING HOW YELLOW EVERYTHING LOOKS.”

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA AND BRAINY QUOTES

## STARDIARY

# DISCRIMINATION FOR HELP

A couple of days ago a few of my girlfriends and I went to Gulshan for sehri. We had no car with us so we were planning on taking a CNG run auto rickshaw back home. A couple of minutes passed while we were trying to find a one but there was none at sight. At last a CNG stopped in front of us. When my friends and I went to fix the fare, the driver gave a good look at us and said that he won't take us because we are all girls and girls shouldn't be out in the streets without male supervision at this time of the night. Then, in front of our shocked faces he left. We, as women, face discrimination every day, in many ways throughout our lives, but never have we faced something like this. We had to wait another hour to find another CNG!

Nazifa Amin  
North South University, Dhaka



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# STREET BRUTALITY!

The other day, I was waiting for the bus near Malibag intersection. The place was too crowded and everyone had to wait their turn to board the bus. Meanwhile a police car came with some family members of high officials, which got stuck in traffic because of a rickshaw. At once a policeman came out of the car and started beating the aged rickshaw puller. We, the pedestrians, requested him not to do so but he did not heed upon our request.

Policemen behaving brutally in the streets of Dhaka are a very common scene nowadays. Of course, the duties of the police are more challenging than others. But why is this kind of brutality from policemen on the rise?

Bipul K Debnath  
English Literature, Dhaka College  
Dhaka

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@dmcb.com

for details 01730-701608