

"Light gives of itself freely, filling all available space. It does not seek anything in return; it asks not whether you are friend or foe. It gives of itself and is not thereby diminished."

—Michael Strassfeld

"The International Year of Light and Light -based Technologies, 2015 (IYL 2015) is a United Nations observance that aims to raise awareness of the achievements of light science and its applications, and its importance to humankind."

Life and light have been in existence ever since the creation of the Earth.

Sun is the source of light, life and energy. It's very existence contributed to the cosmic creation of the earth, ocean and life; the biological life is directly linked to the day to day existence of light. The scientists, historians and philosophers of science recorded studies on the theories of light as a Major subject in Science, specially in Physics, Mathematics, Astronomy and Bioscience.

In modern times, the direct application of light in optical science, technology, agriculture, medical technology and in the communication world has changed the dimensions of the modern world's present and future vision.

The historical knowledge, the early and modern theoretical paradigm shifts and theoretical progresses on studies and research on light, are very significant; the global exchanges of knowledge on the subject of light among the ancient scholars and various geographical regions were historically recorded on which the great foundations of the modern scientific studies on light was initiated, especially in Europe in the seventeenth century by Isaac Newton.

"The focus of IYL2015 is to promote improved public and political understanding of the central role of light in the modern world and celebrate significant scientific anniversaries occurring in 2015. Through IYL2015, the United Nations recognises the importance of raising global awareness of how light-based technologies promote sustainable development and provide solutions to global challenges in energy, education, agriculture and health"

"The International Year of Light is "a global initiative adopted by the United Nations to raise awareness of how optical technologies promote sustainable development and provide solutions to worldwide challenges in energy, education, agriculture, communications and health."

Remembrance of the great soul and pioneer scientist- Ibn- Al-Haytham-on-studies and experiment on light is very significant here:

"The year 2015 marks the 1000th anniversary since the appearance of the remarkable seven volume treatise on optics Kitab al-Manazir written by the Arab scientist Ibn al-Haytham. Born around a thousand years ago in present day Iraq, Al-Hasan Ibn al-Haytham (known in the West by the Latinised form of his first name, initially "Alhacen" and later "Alhazen") was a pioneering scientific thinker who made important contributions to the understanding of vision, optics and light."

Fundamental levels of contributions by light-- Light is fundamental to the existence of life through Photosynthesis and through applications of light as photonics in Medicine, communications (optical fiber), entertainment and culture. Light and photonics are going to be the technology of the Future.

Photonics is the science and technology of generating, controlling and detecting photons, which are particles of light. It contributes technologies to daily life from internet, smart phones and laptops to the medical instruments and lighting displaying technologies.

The 21st century will depend immensely on the photonics and its present impact on the world which is diversified and extending day to day.

Notable Indian ancient scientists on astronomy and light are-Lagadha(1st millennium BC), Aryabhata(5th century CE), Brahmagupta, Varaha mihira, Lalla,Bhaskara(I and II), Sripathi,Mahandrosuri and Milkanthan somayaja.

Western scholars on the translation and popularization of the ancient studies on light based scripts, are Ebenezer Burgess(translation of Surya Siddhanta(1860) and recent writer, Kim Plofker.

LIGHT AND LIFE- AN EMBEDDED TRUTH

PERCEPTIONS

IN CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF LIGHT AND LIGHT -BASED TECHNOLOGIES, 2015 -IYL 2015

MD FAZLE SHAHID



PHOTO: KAZI TAHSSIN AGAZ APURBO

The philosophers, scientists and civilizations have never failed to reciprocate its gratitude to the blessings sun has bestowed upon the world with light as a natural object. Thousands of hymns and songs have been written, dedicated and inscribed to the glory of sun since the beginning of civilisation. Contribution of light to our life is universal ever since the cosmic creation of the earth-

when sun was the most responsible, physical, central and rational factor to the creation of earth and life on it.

"A particle of its bliss supplies the bliss of the whole universe. Everything becomes enlightened in Its light."

The author is an engineer by profession and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, London.

Press Release 20th December 2015

CLUBFOOT TREATMENT IN BANGLADESH RECEIVES \$ 2.1M GRANT.

The Glencoe Foundation, a Bangladesh registered Australian International NGO, today announced that they have granted funding of \$2.1m for the program "Walk for Life". This will be used for the ongoing treatment of clubfoot deformity by the Ponseti method, in the period 2016 – 2021.

"Walk for Life" became the National Program in Bangladesh in 2011.

Since the program was established in 2009 over 16,000 children have been enrolled in government and private hospitals throughout the country.

The funding allows for continuing training, research, evaluation and building awareness, to help correct this condition.

The program also focuses on service delivery: all treatment is provided free

of cost for the labor and materials in all participating hospitals.

The Minister of Health and Family Welfare Mr. Mohammed Nasim MP said :

"The government of Bangladesh is committed to provide effective outcomes to those with disability. The economic and social benefit to the children, together with their parents, and the country of the "Walk for Life" program is immeasurable."

The Australian High Commissioner HE Mr. Greg Wilcock said after a visit to the Jessore clinic:

"I applaud the families who have sought treatment and averted a lifetime of disability for their children."

For further information please contact: 01726114647 or 9855324

HERITAGE

I SHALL GO INTO THE ALTAR OF GOD

M H HAIDER

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSSIN AGAZ APURBO



One of the oldest Christian tombs, which date back to 1714, is here. If you go to the church today and spend time reading the inscriptions that are in English, you will discover that today it is the death anniversary of one Ritta Rebello, who passed away on 25 December, 1806. What a sad Christmas that must have been for the deceased's acquaintances! On her 209th death anniversary, we pray for her soul. Amen!

At its present condition, if the church building fails to bedazzle you, these gravestones will not.

One rainy day, over a century ago, when Bradley-Birt visited the church, he too was fascinated by the antiquities. And he was a keen observer, leaving behind even a vivid description of some of the worshippers, like in his encounter with a timid girl:

"Along the path the quick patter of bare feet comes hurrying out of the rain, and the figure of a girl stands framed in the great stone doorway, her steps

arrested, her large dark eyes widening at the unfamiliar sight of a stranger in the familiar place. Her spotless sari, white, neat-bordered, drawn gracefully over her head, clings to her slim body, heavily soaked through with the rain...she hastily draws the veil across her face and, dipping her finger in the stoup, makes the sign of the Cross and moves noiselessly to her place before the altar of the Virgin... Absorbed in her devotion, she kneels, oblivious of all else."

The girl, whoever she was, haunts my soul. In the modern 21st century, as I look upon the tombstones she had likely once seen and, as I walk about roughly the same place she had once visited, I can imagine her startled 'large dark eyes', her sari and her veil, and her praying to the Lord.

I could also hear the 'hushed voice' of the priest, as heard by Bradley-Birt. Beginning the service, he had said in Latin, "Introibo ad altare Dei": I shall go into the altar of God.

"*G*one are the palaces of the Viceroys and the garden-houses of the merchants; gone are the busy streets and market-places and the clamouring camps of armies. Of all that stood in the olden days on this once densely populated spot, only the church of our Lady of Rosary survives."

This church, which F.B. Bradley-Birt - author of The Romance of an Eastern Capital (published in 1906) - visited and wrote about, is none other than The Church of the Holy Rosary in Tejgaon. Located near Holy Cross School & College, the church is often claimed to be the oldest existing one in Dhaka. Officially, as is inscribed in the building, it was established in 1677.

Reflecting its age, the church hosts several old graves and memorial tablets. The idea that the church was originally smaller in size and that people were buried in the churchyard may be a theory explaining why, today, there are graves inside the building: as the boundaries of the church were extended, these graves became part of the building itself!

Today, the commemorative tablets are affixed on the walls; the floor is now tiled. Engraved on some of the gravestones are epitaphs written in English, Portuguese, etc., complete with decorative and symbolic art, such as figures of angels blowing trumpets.

