

# Starting 2016 with Tomorrow's Bangladesh

ECHOES BY  
ASRAR CHOWDHURY



On the first day of 2016, the Education Minister, Nurul Islam Nahid, flew balloons from the playground of Government Laboratory High School in Dhaka. As the balloons flew into oblivion, the State signaled that around 350 million textbooks were ready to be distributed free to more than 44 million boys and girls from class I to class IX. This year could not have started on a better note.

Our parents choose our schools and schooling. This choice is influenced by their income and position in the social ladder. It is also influenced by where we live. Education has many benefits. Thus parents have an incentive to invest in our education. We can expect to have at least as much education as our parents, if not more. If only life was that simple.

Education is different from other goods. Not only does education benefit the individual, the society also benefits from educated people. If income and social status of parents determine who receives and does not receive primary and secondary education, then societies will become unjust and unequal over time. Through time, societies will also end up with a large population of uneducated and unskilled youth who have the potential to contribute, but cannot do so. This is where the State has a moral obligation to play the role of a parent for the nation. It is very refreshing to know that Bangladesh shines above many countries when it comes to mass education.

In 2000, Bangladesh joined all UN members to achieve eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The target was to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The second MDG was to achieve universal primary education and reduce drop outs. By 2012, primary



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school enrolment for girls in Bangladesh was 99.4 percent and for boys, 97.2 percent. Introducing the Primary School Certificate encouraged parents to make an effort for their children to complete primary education. This helped reduce drop outs. In 2015, UN

members adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs take the MDGs one step further to ensure quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning. The target year is 2030.

For the last quarter century, Bangladesh has experienced impressive growth rates. The economy is growing larger every year. A growing economy needs educated and skilled people to keep its wheels running. If the State does not play a proactive role in mass education, then many boys and girls will be left out from enjoying the fruits of economic growth. It does not end here. Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "Give me an educated mother, and I'll give you an educated nation." Bringing girls to primary and secondary schools has many long-term benefits.

The State plays the role of a parent for the nation's left-behinds. The State invests the nation's resources in the education of boys and girls who would have otherwise been left-behinds. By doing so, not only does the State give hope to the hopeless, but also lays the foundation for an educated and skilled workforce in the future.

The balloons that the Education Minister flew on January 1, 2016 will have a lasting effect. The generation that will take Bangladesh forward is the generation in whose education the State is investing. This year started in Bangladesh with celebrating tomorrow's Bangladesh.

*Asrar Chowdhury teaches economic theory and game theory in the classroom. Outside he listens to music and BBC Radio; follows Test Cricket; and plays the flute. He can be reached at: asrar.chowdhury@facebook.com*

## RELIABILITY OF ONLINE NEWS SOURCES

*The internet never lies, right?*

TAIMUR RAHMAN

With the advent of the Internet, several of our mundane tasks got shifted. The Internet gives quick access to news and some of us often rely on it but how can you say for sure what you read on the Internet is hard fact?

We now delve into the realm of satire, click-bait, hoaxes and scams. There are sites that lie for fun, personal gain, or just to mess with the public. While satire sites are humorous and provide a lighter take on news, people usually take their word as truth. These sites often poke fun at other sites, much like ClickHole does with BuzzFeed.

Even credible news sources can't be trusted these days. A well-known news source claimed that the Facebook's "unlike" feature would delete posts that had more than 10 unlikes. They listed their source as National Report, which is a satire page. Fake news sources are often satire, and will include that bit in its disclaimer. If you aren't sure about a particular news source, always search it up with the word "fake" or "satire" next to it. To make things simpler, realorsatire.com exists for the sole purpose of listing satire and potentially satire sites.

While there are blatantly obvious satire sites like The Onion, it is still notorious for making people fall for its fake news. Then there are the less subtle ones, like Portly Gazelle, which mainly focus on spreading fake feminist propaganda in

the name of Cassidy Boon. Cassidy Boon has gained a huge number of haters, all of these haters who don't know that it is all a huge joke. Satire directed at a specific audience makes it more likely that they will fall for it.

Wyoming Institute of Technology, The Onion, and Tribune Herald.

Hoaxes are usually harmless April Fool's pranks. They never seem to die and they rise back from the dead even if they are debunked. Hoaxes really give the term "suckers are born every minute" some ground to stand on, since they irrefutably prove it. There are various hoaxes in the form of life hacks and DIY projects that are supposed to make life cheap and easy. Some hoaxes talk about pest control (like the mosquito yeast trap), or a cheap cure to dandruff. Most of these can be proved false with just a simple Google search.

Some hoaxes are often directed towards your safety and will make you uneasy unless you take precautions. An example is: the terrorists near a certain embassy hoax. These don't look authentic but they question your security so you choose to believe it. Better safe than sorry, right?

Of course, some news sources refrain from providing answers in their disclaimers or some hoaxes are so small that nobody bothered to debunk them. In that case, always follow several popular and reliable news sources, and cross reference them if necessary.

What can we expect from Bangladesh? Will we ever have a cool satirical news source? Will we ever conjure a nationwide hoax? The future waits.



Here's a list of sites that had readers **dumbfounded**: National Report, Huzlers, Empire News, Empire Sports, The Daily Currant,

*Taimur Rahman is a man of few words. He can be reached at taimurrahman98@gmail.com*