

April 16, 2005  
৩ বৈশাখ, ১৪১২

# কথা

দ্বিতীয় সংখ্যা

**KATHA**  
Second Volume

## Board of Editors

Abul Kalam  
Anwar Hossain  
Faruk Mansur Mir  
Hasan Ahmad  
Irin Hoque  
Kabir Newaz  
Mohammad Irfan  
Syed A. Hoque  
Wasima Wali

Published by  
Bangladeshi  
Community in  
Colorado

Contact  
Ph. 303-750-3115  
e-mail: mirfan@du.edu

Cover Design  
Selina Munni

## সম্পাদকীয়

বাংলা নববর্ষ বাঙালীর সার্বিক জীবনযাত্রায় একটি আলাদা তাৎপর্য বহন করে। স্কুল কলেজ কিংবা অফিস-আদালতের কাজে সঙ্গত কারণেই রোমান বর্ষের ব্যাপক ব্যবহার হলেও গ্রাম-বাংলার ঘরে ঘরে এখনও বাংলা দিনপঞ্জীর প্রচলন রয়েছে। কৃষক বৃষ্টি-খরার হিসেব করে বাংলা মাসের ভিত্তিতে, ফসল তোলায় পর নবান্নের উৎসব করে পৌষের প্রথম প্রহরে। বিক্রেতা তার হালখাতা খোলে বৈশাখের প্রথম দিনে। আমাদের নাগরিক সংস্কৃতিরও একটি স্থায়ী প্রতীক হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে পহেলা বৈশাখের অনুষ্ঠানমালা।

উত্তর আমেরিকার প্রকৃতিতে বাংলার ষড়ঋতুর বৈচিত্র্যও নেই - আর 'মাহ ভাদরে' হিয়া কেঁপে ওঠার মত 'ভরা বাদর'-ও এখানে দেখা হয়ে ওঠে না। তাই প্রবাসের এই ব্যস্ত জীবনে বাংলা ১৪১২-র শুভারম্ভ-কে স্মরণীয় করে রাখার জন্য আমাদের এই ক্ষুদ্র প্রয়াস - আমাদেরই 'কথা'।

কথার দ্বিতীয় সংখ্যা প্রকাশের জন্য যারা সার্বিক সহায়তা করেছেন তাদের সকলকে আমাদের ধন্যবাদ। যারা আমাদের জন্য লিখেছেন, বিশেষ করে আমাদের ছোট্ট সোনামণিরা যারা নিজেদের কলমে তুলে ধরেছে আমাদের দেশ, আমাদের সংস্কৃতি, আমাদের সংগ্রামের কথা, তাদের সবাইকে আমাদের অভিনন্দন। নববর্ষের সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানমালার শিল্পী-নির্দেশক ও স্বেচ্ছাকর্মীদের জন্য রইল আমাদের শুভেচ্ছা।

যুদ্ধ-হিংসা-দ্বেষ্টের অবসান ঘটিয়ে নুতন বছর আমাদের সবার জন্য বয়ে আনুক একটি শান্তিময় পৃথিবী।

## Editorial

The second volume of 'Katha' comes to the Bangladeshi Community in Colorado at a time when the Bengali speaking people all over the world are welcoming another Bengali New Year, or 'NoboBarsha', as it is popularly called. For the people of Bangladesh the timing could not be any better as the occasion of the 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day of Bangladesh is also fresh in their mind. This is the time when the feelings are very nostalgic, emotions run very high and thoughts are often filled with rich cultural heritage. While the memories of the Independence Day fill the heart with a sense of pride and freedom, the herald of the Bengali New year tinkles the more artistic and cultural sides of the mind. Perhaps the best time to feel rejuvenated, invigorated and to come out of the everyday hectic life of professional career at a place far away from the motherland. Katha, therefore, attempts to take this opportunity and give the Bangladeshis in Colorado a media to nurture their cultural and literary talents.

After the great success of the first volume, it was quite obvious that we needed to continue this effort to expose the hidden talents among us. Once again, the response has been very enthusiastic and the quality and diversity of the articles show the level of enrichment among the people of various ages. One distinctive feature observed from this year's submissions is the fact that the number of articles submitted by the kids of the community increased by quite a bit. At the same time, the number of sponsors also increased substantially indicating that there is a growing interest in the development of cultural talents. Sincere thanks to the writers, reviewers, editors, sponsors and everybody else in the community for their continuous support, encouragement and generosity.

## ক্রসফায়ার

মোহাম্মদ ইরফান, ডেনভার, কলোরাডো

‘ক্লিয়ারেন্স এসে গেছে। তোমাকে আর একটু পরেই ক্রসফায়ারে নেয়া হবে। বল তোমার শেষ ইচ্ছা কি?’  
মৃত্যুদণ্ডদেশ শুনে ‘চর্বি’ নাসিরের শরীর ঘামতে থাকে। রক্ত আর কান্নায় মাখামাখি মুখ তুলে কাতরভাবে তাকায় কালো জল্লাদের দিকে।

‘একটু পানি দেবেন স্যার?’

সেপাইকে ইঙ্গিত করে কর্ণেল দেলোয়ার। টেবিলের উপর এনামেলের জগভর্তি পানি আর গ্লাস তৈরীই ছিল। কর্ণেল দলাই-মলাইয়ের প্রথম সুযোগেই বজ্জাতগুলো দু’গ্লাস পানি সাবাড় করে।

পানির গ্লাস হাতে নিয়ে গত ক’দিনের কথা ভাবতে চেষ্টা করে নাসির। আজ দুদিন ধরে সে এই বিশেষ বাহিনীর হাতে বন্দী। এ বস্তি সে বস্তি করে তিন মাস পালিয়ে বেড়ালেও শেষ রক্ষা করতে পারেনি। ‘চিকনা’ সেলিমের বিশ্বাসঘাতকতায় শেষ পর্যন্ত ধরা পড়েছে শিববাড়ির স্টাফ কোয়ার্টার থেকে। ধরা পড়ার মুহূর্তেই নাসির জেনে গেছে তার পরিণতি। পাঁচ পাঁচটি খুনের মামলা আর চাঁদাবাজির অভিযোগ যার বিরুদ্ধে তার ভাগ্যে ক্রসফায়ারের নীচে কোনকিছু জোটের সম্ভাবনা খুবই ক্ষীণ।

তবে গত দু’দিনের অভিজ্ঞতা একেবারেই নুতন। এর আগেও কবার পুলিশের হাতে ধরা পড়েছে ‘চর্বি’। প্রথমবার ছাড়া কোনবারই তার মার খেতে হয়নি। প্রতিবারই সময়মতো ওসির হাতে এসে পড়েছে মোটা বাড়িল। আর তার জন্য এসেছে প্রচুর চর্বিযুক্ত খানাদানা, তার সঙ্গে যা খেয়েছে গোটা থানাই।

এবার সে মার খেয়েছে। বেদম মার। বিশেষ ধরনের মার। পায়ের তালুতে মার। হাতের কজিতে মার। আঙ্গুলের গাঁটে লাঠি ঢুকিয়ে ঘুরিয়ে ঘুরিয়ে মার। পায়ের উরুতে পানি ভর্তি বোতল দিয়ে মুণ্ডরের মার।

ঢকঢক করে গ্লাসের পানিটুকু শেষ করে কিছুটা ধাতস্থ হয় নাসির। ভাবতে থাকে তার শেষ ইচ্ছাটা কি হতে পারে। একবার ভাবে কশানো গরুর মাংস দিয়ে গোটা দশেক পরোটা খাবে। মায়ের কবরটা দেখে আসা যায়, আদরের মেয়ে টুনিকে কোলে নিয়ে ঘোরানো যেত যদি?

অনেক ভেবেও কোনকিছু ঠিক করে উঠতে পারে না নাসির। পুরনো দিনগুলো ধীরে ধীরে ভেসে ওঠে তার মনের আয়নায়। নেতার কথা মনে পড়ে যায়। মনে হতেই প্রচণ্ড রাগ হয়। গত তিন মাসের পলাতক জীবনে অনেক চেষ্টা করেও নেতার সাথে কথা বলতে পারেনি। প্রথমদিকে তাও নানান কথা দিয়ে বোঝানোর চেষ্টা করতেন, ‘কয়টা দিন সইরা থাক, বাপ।’ মোবাইল ফোন ট্র্যাক করা শুরু হবার পর নেতা নম্বর বদলে ফেলেন। অনেক চেষ্টা করেও আর সে নম্বর পায়নি নাসির।

নাসিরের মাথায় হঠাৎই এক চিন্তা আসে- ‘একটা গল্প শুনবেন স্যার, আমার গল্প। আর আমার শেষ ইচ্ছা, এ গল্পটা আপনি কোথাও ছাপানোর ব্যবস্থা করবেন।’

কৌতূহল বোধ করেন কর্ণেল। এর আগে যাদের ধরেছেন মরার আগে তাদের কেউ ভালো খাবার খেতে চেয়েছে, কেউবা দেখা করতে চেয়েছে প্রিয়জনদের সাথে, কিন্তু চর্বির মত অদ্ভুত আবদার কেউ করেনি -

‘দেখ ছাপানোর মালিক তো আমি নই, আর তোমার গল্প ছাপাবে এমন ঘাড়ে মাথা এদেশে কজনের আছে? তবে আমার এক বন্ধু আমেরিকায় থাকে। ওরা পত্রিকা ছাপাচ্ছে। আমাকে খুব ধরেছে একটা লেখা দেয়ার জন্য। যদি বলতো তোমার গল্পটাই পাঠিয়ে দিতে পারি।’

নড়েচড়ে বসে চর্বি। পানির গ্লাসটা সেপাইয়ের হাতে ফেরৎ দিয়ে শুরু করে তার গল্প।

বেগুনবাড়ী বস্তির এক ছয়ফুট বাই ছয়ফুট ঘরে জন্ম নাসিরের। বাবা ছিট কাপড় ফেরী করে বেড়াত। আর মা ঠিকে-ঝির কাজ করত বাড়ী বাড়ী। পাঁচ ভাইবোনের সংসারে নুন আনতে পানতা ফুরোয়। এন, জি, ও আপার ফ্রি স্কুল পালিয়ে একদিন ঝুড়িহাতে কাওরান বাজারের তরকারীর আড়তে ঢুকে পড়ে ছোট্ট নাসির। আলু পটলের ভারে শ্রান্ত নাসির দিনের শেষে বাসায় ফিরে উপার্জনের টাকা বাবার হাতে তুলে দিত, তার আগেই অবশ্য কালু সর্দারের হাতে চলে যেত আয়ের একটি অংশ। এরই মধ্যে স্কুল ছেড়েছে নাসির। অজানা রোগে ভুগে মা মারা যাবার পর বাবা আরেকটি বিয়ে করেছে। নুতন মার ঘরে নাসির আর তার ভাই-বোনদের ঠিকমত একবেলা খাবারও জোটেনা।

এরই মধ্যে একদিন ‘ভারি’ বইতে গিয়ে পরিচয় হয় শহিদুল্লাহ হলের মেস ম্যানেজার ‘চাঁদপুর’

আঙ্কেলের সাথে। আঙ্কেল নাসিরকে প্রস্তাব দেয় হলের ক্যান্টিনে কাজ করার। ফ্রি থাকা-খাওয়া, মাসের শেষে তিনশ’ টাকা, নাসিরের কাছে আকাশের চাঁদ। সহজেই রাজী হয়ে যায় নাসির। স্কুল পালানো নাসিরের সরাসরি জায়গা হয় দেশের সর্বোচ্চ বিদ্যাপীঠে।

নাসিরের চটপটে স্বভাব আর ‘লৌরের ওপর’ কাজ করা সহজেই তাকে ছাত্রদের প্রিয় করে তোলে। একদিন বাবু ভাইয়ের নজরে পড়ে নাসির। বাবু ভাই বিশাল ছাত্রনেতা। ক্যান্টিন বন্ধ হবার মুহূর্তে বাবু ভাই তার দলবল নিয়ে ঢোকান সাথে সাথেই স্পেশাল বাটি নিয়ে হাজির হয় নাসির। বাবু ভাই প্রায়ই তার ভাগ থেকে চর্বির

টুকরা তুলে দেন নাসিরকে - ‘আরে খা বেটা, চর্বি বানা, কাজে লাগবো।’ বাবু ভাইয়ের ভাগের চর্বি খেতে খেতেই একসময় পিচ্চি নাসির হয়ে যায় ‘চর্বি’ নাসির।

বাবু ভাই একসময় প্রস্তাব দেয় তাদের সাথে কাজ করার। প্রথমদিকে বিশেষ বিশেষ দিনে বাবু ভাইয়ের ‘মাল’টি লুকিয়ে রাখার মধ্যেই নাসিরের দায়িত্ব সীমাবদ্ধ ছিল। ক্যান্টিনের মেঝেয় তেল চিটচিটে বালিশের ভেতরে বাবু ভাইয়ের অস্ত্র শিহরণ জাগাতো নাসিরের মনে নিজেকে বেশ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মনে হতে থাকে তার।

যথেষ্ট বিশ্বাসভাজন হওয়ার পর ডাক আসে বোমা বানানোর জন্যে। গন্ধক আর তরকারির ঝোলার রং এক হয়ে যায় নাসিরের আঙ্গুলে। মাঝে মাঝে লাল হতে থাকে নাসিরের সদ্য কৈশোরোত্তীর্ণ চোখ দুটোও। হলের নিরীহ ছাত্ররা টুকটাক বকুনি খেতে থাকে নাসিরের কাছে।

হল সংলগ্ন চাঁনখারপুলের দোকানদাররা বাবু ভাইকে নিয়মিত চাঁদা দেয়। নাসিরের দায়িত্ব সেই চাঁদা তোলায়। নামের সাথে সঙ্গতি রেখেই যেন তার গায়ে এখন এক-আধটু চর্বি দেখা দিয়েছে। চাঁদার টাকা থেকে ভাগ পাওয়ায় দু’একটি ভাল কাপড়ও ইদানিং কিনেছে। চর্বির চেকনাই, নতুন জিন্স, ডোরাকাটা টি শার্ট, বেলীর কেডস আর মোটা সোনার চেইনে অনায়াসেই নিজেকে ছাত্র বলে চালিয়ে দেয় নাসির। হলের বাইরের সাগরেদরা মাঝে মাঝে হলে আসে নাসির ভাইয়ের খোঁজে। নাসির ভাইকে চিনতে না পারাটাও সাধারণ ছাত্রদের জন্য দোষের - ‘নতুন আইছেন নাকি? নাসির ভাইরে চিনেন না!’

এদিকে ক্যাম্পাসে ও ক্যাম্পাসের বাইরে সামরিক শাসন বিরোধী আন্দোলন দিনে দিনে দানা বেঁধে ওঠে। আন্দোলন জঙ্গী রূপ নিলে বাবু ভাই আর তার দলের চাহিদাও বাড়ে। সেইসাথে নাসিরের বাড়ে আয়। প্রতি বোমায় পঞ্চাশ টাকা, মসলার টাকা বাদ দিয়ে নাসিরের হাতে থাকে প্রায় অর্ধেকটা। আন্দোলনের কথা বলে ছমকি ধমক দিলে মাঝে মাঝে মসলা ফ্রি-ও পাওয়া যায়।

‘আর এক গ্লাস পানি দেবেন স্যার।’

মন্ত্রমুগ্ধের মত নাসিরের কাহিনী শুনছিলেন কর্ণেল দেলোয়ার। সেপাইকে আরো এক জগ পানি আনতে বলে ভাবতে শুরু করেন সেই উত্তাল দিনগুলোর কথা। কর্ণেল সেসময় তরুণ ক্যাপ্টেন। কিছুদিন আগে ‘হিল’ ডিউটি শেষ করে ঢাকায় পোস্টিং পেয়েছে। অবশ্য এর পুরো কৃতিত্ব ‘এজাহার কোম্পানী’ আর তার কাঠের চালান থেকে তৈরী হওয়া কর্ণেল সেকান্দরের কাফরুলের বাড়ীর দরজার পাশাগুলোর। সেসময় একটু-আধটু চোখ বন্ধ রাখতে পেরেছিল বলেই পরবর্তীতে দু’চোখ ভরে ঢাকা শহরের শোভা দেখার সুযোগ হয়েছে মফস্বলের সুবোধ ছেলে দেলোয়ারের।

দেলোয়ারের ঢাকায় বদলি হওয়ার কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই জ্ঞানবিরোধী ছাত্র আন্দোলন তীব্রতা লাভ করে। দেলোয়ারের আইডল কর্ণেল সেকান্দর তখন সামরিক গোয়েন্দা বিভাগের রাজনৈতিক শাখার দায়িত্বে। তার শীতাতপ নিয়ন্ত্রিত অফিসঘরে একদিন ডাক পড়ে দেলোয়ারের। কফির কাপে চুমুক দিতে দিতে দেলোয়ারের হাঁড়ির খবর নেন সেকান্দর। কণ্ঠস্বরে রাজ্যের আন্তরিকতা Did you have some fun with the flat nose? বিনীত হাসি হাসে দেলোয়ার। স্কুলশিক্ষকের নিম্ন-মধ্যবিত্ত ঘরে কঠিন নৈতিকতায় বড় হয়েছে সে। এসব ঠিক আসে না তার।

‘টাকা-পয়সা কিছু জমিয়েছ হে? মেজর হওয়ার সাথে সাথেই তো বিয়ে করতে হবে।’ সেকান্দর আবারো জিজ্ঞাসা করে।

‘কি যে বলেন স্যার, যে কটা টাকা পেয়েছি মেসের বিল দিয়েই তো শেষ, ‘হিল এলাউন্সের’ কটা টাকা রিটার্নস বাবার কাছে পাঠাতাম। এখন তো তারও উপায় নেই।’ দেলোয়ার মিন মিন করে।

‘Money is no problem. তা একটা কাজ কর। এই নেতাগুলো খুব বেড়েছে ইদানীং, দু’ একটাকে ধরে কড়কে দাও। আর যে কয়টার টাকা হয়েছে, তাদের কাছ থেকে কিছু খসাও।’

‘স্যার!’ বিগলিত হাসি হাসে ক্যাপ্টেন।

সেকান্দরের টু, আই, সি হয় দেলোয়ার। সাদা পোশাকে শহরময় ঘুরে বেড়ায় পরের কটা মাস। খুব একটা জবাবদিহির বালাই নেই। প্রতি সপ্তাহে ক্যান্টনমেন্টের সেলুনে চুল ছোট করার কষ্টকর ব্যাপারটিও নেই। শুধু এজায়গা ওজায়গা থেকে নির্দেশমত নেতাদের তুলে নেয়া। কারো আঙুলে সূঁচ ফোঁটায়। কারো বা পায়ের হাঁড় ভেঙ্গে দেয়। আর টাকা, টাকা যে কোথা দিয়ে বন্যার জলের মত আসতে থাকে টেরই পায়না দেলোয়ার। ধরলে টাকা, ছাড়লে টাকা, মারলে টাকা, মার বন্ধ করলে টাকা, আবার কখনওবা কাউকে ধরার জন্য একই দলের প্রতিদ্বন্দী নেতার কাছ থেকেও পায় টাকা।

মিরপুরে বাসা ভাড়া করে বাবা-মাকে নিয়ে আসে দেলোয়ার। কাফরুলে একটা জমিও কিনে। জমির উত্তরাধিকারসূত্রের মালিক অবশ্য কিছুটা ঝামেলা করেছিল। ওর বাসার পাশের ড্রেনে দুটো বোমা রেখে ওই বোমাসহ ওকে তুলে নিতে হয়। পত্রিকায় সেই বোমাসহ তার ছবিও দেয়া হয়। তারপরই সবকিছু সহজ হয়ে

যায়। জমির মালিক বাজার দামের চেয়েও অর্ধেক দামে জমি ছেড়ে দেয়- সেইসাথে কখনও কোন ‘রাজনৈতিক কাজে’ জড়িত না থাকার একটি মুচলেকা।

যাক, সে আন্দোলনে তাহলে আরও দু’চারটে লোক কিছু কামিয়েছে। ভেবে স্বস্তি পায় কর্ণেল। উত্তাল আন্দোলনে পতন ঘটে সামরিক সরকারের। কর্ণেলের নাম অবশ্য বিরোধী দলের কালো তালিকায় ছিল। জাত্তার পতনের পর কালো টাকার একটি বড় অংশ এক ছাত্রনেতাকে চাঁদা দিয়ে সেই নাম কাটাতে হয়। ছাত্রনেতাদের ওপর তখন থেকেই তার ভীষণ রাগ। কোন ছাত্রনেতাকে না পেলেও তাদের এক চেলাকে আজ সে পেয়েছে। এই চেলাকে তার হাত থেকে কেউ বাঁচাতে পারবে না।

পানির গ্লাস ফেরৎ দিয়ে আবার তার গল্প শুরু করে চর্বি নাসির।

জেনারেলরা পড়ে গেলে ইলেকশন হয়। বাবু ভাই অনেক ফাটাফাটির পর পুরান ঢাকার একটি আসনে মনোনয়ন পায়। নাসিরের হাতে এবার দায়িত্ব পড়ে বাবু ভাইকে জেতানোর। পুরান ঢাকার পাড়ায় পাড়ায় বাবু ভাইয়ের দুর্গ গড়ে তোলার। বিশাল বাজেট। আর নির্বাচন কমিশনের রক্তচক্ষু এড়াতে কোন খরচেরই কোন লিখিত হিসেব নেই। নাসিরের হাতে মোবাইল আসে। পাজেরো কেনার পর বাবু ভাই তার পুরোনো গাড়ীটি নাসিরের জন্য ছেড়ে দেয়। ভোটের আগের রাতে প্রতিপক্ষের দু-চারজনকে মৃদু বকুনি দেয় নাসির।

ভোটে জেতার পর বাবু ভাইয়ের আনঅফিসিয়াল পি, এসের অফিসিয়াল পদবীটি পায় নাসির। তার দায়িত্বের মধ্যে ছিল শাঁখারী বাজারের দুর্বল মালিকানার বাড়িগুলো চিহ্নিত করা। এরপর বাবু ভাইর কাজ চলত আদালতে- আর নাসিরের কাজ ছিল বিভিন্নভাবে বাড়ীর মালিকদের হেনস্থা করা- যাতে তারা বিনাশব্দে উঠে যেতে বাধ্য হয়। এদিকে বাদামতলীর পাইকারী বাজার থেকে শুরু করে সোয়ারীঘাটের মাছের আড়ৎ, সবজায়গা থেকেই ভেট আসতে শুরু করে - টু বাবু ভাই, ভায়া নাসির। দু-একজন প্রথম প্রথম গাঁই গুঁই করেছিল- তাদেরই একজনের বহু টুকরা লাশ কাঁচপুর ব্রিজের নীচে বস্তায় পাওয়া যায়। তারপর সব ঠিক।

বাবু ভাইয়ের জন্য কি না করেছে নাসির?

জমি দখলে ওয়ার্ড কমিশনার বাধা দিয়েছে, ওয়ার্ড কমিশনারের বাড়ীতে বোমা ফাটাও - কে করবে? কেন! নাসির!

প্রতিপক্ষের নেতারা ঘন ঘন আগামসিহ লেনের প্লাস্টিক ব্যবসায়ীদের কাছে যাচ্ছে- প্লাস্টিক কারখানায় আঙুন লাগিয়ে দাও - কে করবে? নাসির।

‘ভোরের আলো’-র সাংবাদিক বাবু ভাইয়ের ছন্ডি ব্যবসা নিয়ে লিখছে- ওর হাত পা ভেঙে দাও, কে করবে? নাসির।

‘আজ বাবু ভাই কোথায়? আমায় বাঁচাবে কে?’- হাউমাউ করে কেঁদে ওঠে নাসির।

‘Well, তোমার বাবু ভাইও Decision Making Cell -এর মেম্বর। In fact, উনি আমাকে বিশেষ করে বলেছেন তোমার ব্যাপারটা তাড়াতাড়ি সেরে ফেলতে। আর আমিও ভাবছি, পনের বছর আগের ছাত্র পেটানোর মামলাটা থেকে আমার নামটা কাটাতে হবে। আর সেটা হতে পারে বাবু ভাইয়ের Ministry থেকে একটা ছোট্ট নোট গেলেই। সুতরাং, Get ready for crossfire.’

---

---

### Pioneer Products & Publishing Company

1. স্বপ্ন মিলে যায়, শাহানা রহমান, ৮ ডলার (সমালোচক এই বইয়ের সঙ্গে আনা কারেনিনা’র তুলনা করেছেন।)

2. Statistics Lecture Notes by Dr. Abul Kalam \$15

3. কালুরঘাট, মার্ক কালাম (প্রকাশনার পথে) (সমালোচকের মতে উপন্যাসটি দ্রুত আবহমান ও অপূর্ব। দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধে বার্মাফ্রন্টে বাংলাদেশী সৈনিকদের পটভূমিতে রোমান্টিক উপন্যাস।)

12438 W. Swarthmore Avenue, Morrison, CO 80465, 303 979-0481

## দুঃস্বপ্ন

-আইরীন হক, অরোরা, কলোরাডো

এ কোন পথ ধরে এগিয়ে চলেছে মেধা? সব অচেনা, সব অন্যরকম, সব কিছুই মনে হচ্ছে সাজানো। অসম্ভব রকম সুন্দর সব। কেমন শান্তি শান্তি ভাব, বাতাসে, চারিদিকে। এত বেশি সুন্দর কেন সবকিছু? আরও কিছুদূর গিয়ে চমকে উঠলো মেধা। একি? এখানকার বাড়ীগুলো দেখি প্রায় একই। ফুলে, ফলে ঢাকা এক অপূর্ব রাজ্য। আশ্চর্য, এতদিন ধরে জীবনটা চলছে, কিন্তু এমন একটা সুন্দর জায়গায় আসাই হয়নি কেন? কি করে ও পৌঁছলো এখানে, কিছুই মনে পড়ছেনা। হাঁটতে হাঁটতে একটা ছোট্ট নদীর কিনারায় এসে বসলো সে। ধীরে, অনেকে ধরে গভীর নিঃশ্বাস নিল। নিঃশ্বাসেও এমন শান্তি!

মাথায় হঠাৎ কারও হাত পড়লো। চমকে, লাফিয়ে, ঘুরে দাঁড়াতেই দেখতে পেলো, অসম্ভব রকম সুন্দর এক মানব। দ্যুতি ছড়িয়ে পড়ছে তার সমস্ত চেহারা থেকে। শুভ্রতায় ঢাকা পুরো শরীর। - কে তুমি?

-শান্ত হও। বসো। তারপর বলো, তুমি কে? কি করে এলে এখানে? তোমায় দেখেছি বলেতো মনে পড়েনা।

-আমি 'মেধা'। কি করে এলাম এখানে, তাতো বলতে পারবোনা। কিন্তু তুমি কে?

-আমি 'শুদ্ধ মানব'। এ আমার দেশ, আমি এখানেই থাকি। বুঝেছি, তুমি এখানে নতুন। তুমি জানো, কেন তোমাকে পাঠানো হয়েছে এখানে? - নাতো, কেনো?

-তুমিও যে ধীরে ধীরে শুদ্ধ মানবী হচ্ছে। এলোমেলো হয়ে যাচ্ছে মেধার সবকিছু। মাথায় হাত দিয়ে বসে পড়লো সে। কি হচ্ছে এসব? -চলো, তোমাকে সব ঘুরে দেখাই। এসো।

মন্ত্রমুগ্ধের মতো অনুসরণ করতে লাগলো মেধা। কিছুদূর যেতে লক্ষ্য করলো, এ শহরের সব কিছু একই রকম। বাড়ী, গাড়ী, অন্যসব দালানগুলো সব, সবই এক। একটি বড় দালানে প্রবেশ করলো ওঁরা। বিপ্লবে হতবাক মেধা দেখতে পেলো, অসংখ্য নরনারী কাজ করছে এখানটায়, কিন্তু আশ্চর্য যে, সকলে দেখতে অবিকল একি রকম, শুভ্রতায় মোড়া আগা গোড়া। -একি! তোমরা সবাই একই রকম, দেখতে।

-ও হ্যাঁ, ঠিকই বলেছো। এখানে সবাই এক। তাই হিংসা বা ঘৃণাও নেই।

এভাবে ঘুরে দেখতে দেখতে মেধা লক্ষ্য করলো, কোথাও কোনো শিশু বা বৃদ্ধতো চোখে পড়লোনা।

-তোমাদের এখানে কোনো শিশু বা বৃদ্ধ নেই কেন? আমি যে শিশুদের ভালোবেসে আদর করতে আর বৃদ্ধদের শ্রদ্ধা করতে ভালোবাসি। তবে আমি কি করে থাকবো এখানে?

-এখানে আমরা সকলেই সকলকে ভালোবাসি, শ্রদ্ধা করি। আমরা সবাই শুভ্র, তাই ঘৃণা করতে জানিনা।

-আচ্ছা শুদ্ধ মানব, তোমরা কোন ধর্মে বিশ্বাসী?

-আমরা সবাই একটি ধর্মে বিশ্বাসী, মানব ধর্ম। আমাদের পৃথক কোন ধর্ম নেই, জাতি নেই।

এবারে শুদ্ধ মানব মেধাকে নিয়ে এলো একটু অন্যরকমের একটি বাড়ীতে। ঢুকে দেখে, বেশ কিছু বৃদ্ধ, শিশু এবং যুবক যুবতী। তারা দেখতেও বিভিন্নরকম। মেধা কিছুটা রাগ নিয়ে শুদ্ধ মানবকে বললো—

-তুমি আমায় মিথ্যা বলেছো। এইতো, এরা সব এক রকম নয়। এদের বাড়ীটাওতো আলাদা।

-মিথ্যা? আমরাতো মিথ্যা বলতে জানিনা। তুমি ভুল করছো মেধা। ওঁরা এখনও পুরোপুরি শুদ্ধ মানব হয়ে ওঠেনি। তাই এখনও অন্যরকম। কিন্তু ওঁরা চেষ্টা করছে। অচিরেই ওঁরাও আমাদের মতই হবে। তখন ওরা আর এ বাড়িতে থাকবেনা। মেধা, তুমি এখন থেকে ওদের সাথে এ বাড়ীতেই থাকবে।

-আমি তোমাকে বিশ্বাস করিনা। এসব কি বলছো?

তবে এসো আমার সঙ্গে। শুদ্ধ মানব একটি বিরাট আয়নার সামনে নিয়ে এলো মেধাকে। বললো—

-আয়নায় তাকিয়ে দেখো মেধা, চিনতে পারছো নিজেকে?

চমকে উঠলো মেধা। একি! ওর চেহারাও ধীরে ধীরে শুদ্ধ মানবীদের মতো হয়ে উঠছে যে। শিউরে উঠলো ওর সমস্ত শরীর। ভয়ে, নাকি আনন্দে, নাকি অজানা এক অনুভূতিতে- জানা নেই মেধার। ও যেখানে দাঁড়ানো, তার পাশেই একটা দুটো সিঁড়ির মতো। অন্যমনস্ক মেধা হঠাৎ পা ফসকে পড়ে গেল নীচে।

-'মাগো!' বলে নিজের চিৎকারে ঘুম ভাঙলো মেধার। ওর চিৎকার শুনে দৌড়ে এলো মা। -কি হলো মেধা? একি, এত ঘামছিস কেন?

-একটা দুঃস্বপ্ন দেখেছি মা।

-কি দেখেছিস আমাকে বলতো।

পুরো স্বপ্নটা শোনার পর মা হেসে বললেন—বোকা মেয়ে। এটাকি দুঃস্বপ্ন নাকি?

-না! তবে কি?

-এটাতো সুন্দর একটা স্বপ্ন। নতুন পৃথিবী গড়ার স্বপ্ন। যেখানে নেই কোনো মিথ্যা, অসুন্দর, ঘৃণা, হিংসা, ভেদাভেদ, দুঃখ। আছে কেবলই সুখ আর শান্তি। -আমার স্বপ্ন সত্যি হবে মা?

-হতেওতো পারে। স্বপ্নইতো সত্যি হয়।

## ভালোবাসি কাকে?

ফারুক মনসুর মির, অরোরা, কলোরাডো

ভালোবাসি কাকে? বলার অপেক্ষা রাখেনা  
তবুও বলতে হয় প্রতিনিয়ত সম্পর্ক চাঙ্গা রাখার জন্য  
তবুও বলতে হয় ভালোবাসাকে স্মৃতি না করে স্মরণ করার জন্য ।

তবুও বলতে হয় ভালোবাসি ভালোবাসি  
যেমন করে বাবা মা বলতেন ‘উচ্চ স্বরে পড়ো’  
যেন নিজ কানে শুনতে পাও - তবেইতো মুখস্থ হবে ।

এই পড়ন্তবেলায় আর মুখস্থ? গেঁথে আছে হৃদয়ের ঠিক মধ্যখানে  
যেমন করে আলগা মেদ সঁটে থাকে করোনারি নালির মাঝে  
এনজিওপ্লাস্টি বা বাইপাস ছাড়া ছাড়ানো যায়না, অথবা মরণ ।

ভালোবাসি উচ্চ স্বরে বলি আর নাই বলি  
ভালোবাসি স্মরণ করিয়ে দিই আর না দিই  
ভালোবাসি - শুধু তোমাকেই ।

---

## স্বদেশ

রেবেকা ছালাম রানু, ইরি, কলোরাডো

হায়রে স্বদেশ, আজও তোর বেদনার  
হল নাকো শেষ।  
খুন দিয়ে ছেলে তোর ভিজাইল বুক  
তবু কি মা পেলি না তুই এতটুকু সুখ।

চৌদ্দ কোটি সন্তান চরণের দাস  
বল মাগো বল তুই আর কত চাস।

বড় ভালোবাসি মাগো বড় ভালোবাসি  
তোর মুখে দেখি যদি এক ফোটা হাসি  
বল মাগো বল তুই কবে সেই দিন  
শেষ হয়ে যাবে এই জালিমের ঋণ।

## ঋতিকাৰ ভাবনা

মাকসুদা আইৰিন মুকুল, ডেনভাৰ, কলোৱাডো

আকাশে হালকা মেঘেৰ আনাগোনা, বাতাসে কালবৈশাখীৰ আভাস। প্রকৃতিৰ এই বুঝধৰা নিঃশব্দ প্ৰহৰে বসে ভাবনাৰ জাল বুনতে কাৰ না ভাল লাগে। ঋতিকা বসে আছে তাৰ বাঢ়ীৰ প্ৰিয় অংশ, জানালাৰ পাশে। যেখান থেকে আদিগন্ত মাঠ আৰু মাঠেৰ কোলঘেঁষে পাহাড়-আকাশেৰ মাখামাখি চোখে পড়ে। পাহাড়েৰ ঋজুতা আৰু আকাশেৰ নীলিমায় চোখ পেতে ঋতিকা ফিৰে দেখে তাৰ নদীৰ মত বয়ে চলা প্ৰবাসী দিনগুলি। আজ কেন যেন ওৱ মনটা একটু বেশী আনমনা। গতকাল বন্ধু শিমুলেৰ সাথে কথা হলো ফোনে। তাৰপৰ থেকেই মনটা কেমন যেন উচাটন হয়ে পড়েছে। ওৱ কাছে শোনা বন্ধুদেৰ কথা, দেশ-শিল্প-সংস্কৃতি -ৰাজনীতি সৰ্বোপৰি দেশেৰ বৰ্তমান পৰিস্থিতি বাৰেবাৰেই নিজেৰে আনমনা কৰে তুলছে। দেশীয় সংস্কৃতি, যাৰ সাথে জড়িয়ে ছিলো একান্তভাবে, সে-সব থেকে আজ সে অনেকই দূৰে। পৰভূমে সে এক পৰবাসী! ইচ্ছে কৰলেই ছুটে যেতে পাৰেনা নিজ বাঢ়ীৰ কদমতলায়, গাইড হাউসেৰ নাট্যমঞ্চে, শিল্পকলায় নীপাৰ নুপুৰেৰ নিষ্কণে।

শিমুলেৰ বলা কথাগুলো শুধুই কানে বাজেছে, ‘এখানে কতকিছু হচ্ছে, তুইতো সবকিছু থেকেই দূৰে সরে গেলি!’ সত্যিই কি তাই? যাৰ হৃদয়জুড়ে বাজে দেশীয় সুৰেৰ মুৰ্ছনা আসলেই কি সে পাৰে দূৰে সরে থাকতে?

আকাশ আলো কৰে বিদ্যুৎ চমকে উঠলো। ঋতিকাৰ ভাবনাৰ রাশ টানতে হলো। উঠে জানালা বন্ধ কৰতেই বৃষ্টিৰ রিমঝিম শব্দ আৰু মাটিৰ পৰিচিত সোঁদা গন্ধ তাৰ ভাবনাকে আবার জাগিয়ে তুলল। আসলেই কি সে এখন শিমুলেৰ অনেক দূৰেৰ? তাই বা কীভাবে হয়? বিগত কয়েকবছৰ সে তো নিজ সংস্কৃতিৰ চৰ্চা থেকে দূৰে সরে থাকেনি। নিজেৰ ছোট গভীৰ ভেতৰ থেকেই সে দেশকে, দেশীয় সংস্কৃতিকে তুলে ধৰাৰ চেষ্টা কৰেছে নানাভাবে। নিজেৰ স্কুল, স্কুলেৰ বিদেশী সহপাঠীদেৰ সামনে নিজেৰ দেশকে তুলে ধৰা এবং তাৰেৰ আবেগাপ্ত হয়ে বলা - ‘কী সুন্দৰ তোমাদেৰ দেশ’- আবার সেই বন্ধুৱা যখন তাৰ পোশাক চেয়ে নিয়েছে তখনই তো সে নিজেৰে বিলিয়ে দিয়েছে সবাৰ মাঝে, সৰ্বত্র।

প্ৰবাসে বড় হওয়া নিজেদেৰ সন্তানদেৰ নিয়ে ঋতিকা এবং তাৰ প্ৰবাসী বন্ধুৱা যখন একুশে ফেব্ৰুৱাৰী, স্বাধীনতা দিবস, পহেলা বৈশাখে বিভিন্ন ধৰনেৰ দেশীয় অনুষ্ঠান কৰেছে এবং বাচ্চাৱা সেসবে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰেছে প্ৰবল উৎসাহ নিয়ে, তা’ দেখে সত্যিই খুব ভাল লাগে। দেশীয় নাচ, গান, নাটকে বাচ্চাদেৰ অংশগ্ৰহণ এবং গানেৰ সুৰেৰ সাথে অবলীলায় সুৰ মেলানো দেখে ভাবতে ভাল লাগে আমৱা আসলেই ওদেৰ কিছু দিচ্ছি, আৰু ওৱাও তা’ গ্ৰহণ কৰেছে সানন্দে। কোন একটা অনুষ্ঠানেৰ যখন পূৰ্বপ্ৰস্তুতি চলে এবং সেখানে বড়-ছোট সবাই মিলে কেউ গান, কেউ নাচ, কেউ প্ৰকাশনা, কেউবা নিছক আড্ডা কিংবা খাবাৰ-দাবাৰ পৰিবেশন নিয়ে ব্যস্ত, আৰু এইসব কিছু মিলেমিশে সেখানে যে অতি-পৰিচিত সংস্কৃতি চৰ্চাৰ আবহ তৈৰী হয়, তা সবাইকেই কিছুক্ষণেৰ জন্যে হলেও নিজ দেশেৰ খুব কাছাকাছি নিয়ে যায়।

অন্তৰে যে সংস্কৃতি লালিত ছোট ছোট বাচ্চাদেৰ মাঝে তা’ ছড়িয়ে দিতে পাৰা এও কি তাৰেৰ কম প্ৰাণ্ডি! একটা সম্পূৰ্ণ ভিন্ন ধাৰাৰ সংস্কৃতিতে বড় হওয়া সন্তানেৰা যাতে কোনভাবেই দুটো সংস্কৃতিৰ সংমিশ্ৰণে দ্বিধান্বিত বোধ না কৰে দুটো সংস্কৃতিৰই আত্মিক সৌন্দৰ্যটুকু অনুভব কৰতে পাৰে, আৰু সেখান থেকে ভাল এবং সুন্দৰ বোধগুলো বের কৰে আনায় ‘ঋতিকা’ৱা যদি তাৰেৰ হাত ধৰতে পাৰে, তৰেই না তাৱা সাৰ্থক।

একজনেৰ ভালোলাগা, ভালোবাসা যদি অনেৰেৰ মধ্যে প্ৰভাব ফেলতে পাৰে তাহলে নিজেৰ ঐতিহ্য, সংস্কৃতি কেন তাৱা অন্য সংস্কৃতিৰ মাঝে বপন কৰতে পাৰবে না। ঋতিকা ভাবে তাৰেৰ মধ্যে তো কোন টানা পোড়েন থাকাৰ কথা না। দুই সংস্কৃতিৰ সংমিশ্ৰণ - এটা তাৰেৰ বাড়াতি পাওনা। একটা তাৰ শেকড়, আৰু অন্যটা সেই শেকড়কে ভৰ কৰে দাঁড়িয়ে থকা গাছ। এৰজন্য তাৰেৰ হয়তো একটু বেশী কষ্ট কৰতে হবে। দেশীয় ঐতিহ্য সংস্কৃতিৰ চৰ্চা চালিয়ে যেতে হবে, শত ব্যস্ততাৰ মাঝেও। ছড়িয়ে দিতে হবে নিজেৰে ক্ষুদ্ৰ থেকে বিশালে- এই বোধ নিজেৰ এবং সন্তানদেৰ মাঝে জাগিয়ে তুলতে পাৰলে তাৱা কখনই নিজেৰে ভিন্নগ্ৰহ থেকে আসা কোন ‘এলিয়েন’ ভাবেৰ না, কখনই মনে হবে না ‘পৰভূমে আমি পৰবাসী’।

হঠাৎ ডোৱবেলেৰ শব্দ। বাইৰে তাকিয়ে ঋতিকা দেখে সন্ধ্যা ঘনিয়ে এসেছে। একটা দিনেৰ শেষ। তাৰ ভাবনাৱাও কি এভাবে শেষ হয়ে যাবে। নাকি মনেৰ নদীতে সাঁতাৰ কাটতে কাটতে একসময় তাৱা খুঁজে পাৰে কোন গন্তব্য।

## জল ছবি

হায়দার খান, ডেনভার, কলোরাডো

### ১. জীবন

সব রং সমুদ্র আকাশ  
সমস্ত জীবন  
জন্ম জন্ম ধরে  
যেখানে দৃষ্টি থমকে যায়  
যেখানে স্বপ্নের বাস্তব সবুজ হলুদ ম্যাজেন্টা  
বাস্তবিক পৃথিবীটা স্মিহর হয়ে আছে  
অদৃশ্য আঙুনের উপরে  
এই শিখা.... এক বিন্দু উল্টানো অশ্রু

### ২. জীবন/মৃত্যু- ধ্বনি প্রতিধ্বনি

আসমুদ্র আকাশলীন রোদ  
কালো ছায়া থেকে উঠে আসা  
আলো ও কালোর ধ্বনি প্রতিধ্বনি  
সন্ধ্যা ক্রমাগত কালো রাতের দিকে এগিয়ে যায়  
কে ডাকে কোথায়?  
প্রতিধ্বনি প্রতিধ্বনিত হয়  
কেউ নেই..... কেউ নেই  
গভীর থেকে উঠে আসে প্রতিধ্বনি  
মানুষ অতল গভীরতার ধারে দাঁড়িয়ে

পাথর সশব্দে নেমে আসে পাহাড়ের চূড়া থেকে  
কালো মেঘের পাহাড়  
সাব্ব মনির দেশের রূপকথা মনে পড়ে  
ধেয়ে আসে বৃষ্টি ও বাতাসের গমক  
কালো পরী নিদ্রা পরীর দেশ অনেক পরে  
আসবে হয়তো মরণের ওপারে  
জীবন-মরণের সীমানায়  
আমাদের পেছনে  
সমুদ্র গর্জন করে।

টোকিও, মার্চ ২০০৫

## স্বাধীনতার ঘোষণা ও প্রাসঙ্গিক ভাবনা

মোঃ মাহবুব হোসেন, ডেনভার, কলোরাডো

১৯৭১ সালের মার্চ মাসে স্বাধীনতার ডাক এলো। বাংলার এক সূর্য সন্তান, দেশ বরণ্য নেতা, জাতির জনক, তৎকালীন সাড়ে সাত কোটি বাংলার মানুষের আশার আলো, সবার প্রিয় মানুষ, সবার প্রিয় বন্ধু, বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান ডাক দিলেন স্বাধীনতার, ঘোষণা করলেন পূর্ব বাংলার মানুষের মুক্তির কথা, ইঙ্গিত করলেন সশস্ত্র সংগ্রামের কথা। ৭ই মার্চের ঐতিহাসিক ভাষণে বঙ্গবন্ধুর কণ্ঠে ঘোষিত হয়েছিল- ‘এবারের সংগ্রাম আমাদের মুক্তির সংগ্রাম, এবারের সংগ্রাম আমাদের স্বাধীনতার সংগ্রাম, তোমরা ঘরে ঘরে দুর্গ গড়ে তোল, যার যা কিছু আছে তাই নিয়ে শত্রুর উপর ঝাঁপিয়ে পড়ো।’ এ কথায় কি স্বাধীনতার ইঙ্গিত ছিল না? ছিল অবশ্যই। বুঝতে বাকি ছিল না কারোই, এমন কি মুক্তিযোদ্ধাদের ভিতর কারো মনেই এতটুকু দ্বিধাদ্বন্দ্ব ছিল না আমরা কার নেতৃত্বে যুদ্ধ করছি।

তাহলে কেন আজ এই স্বাধীনতার ৩৪ বছর পরে আমরা ‘স্বাধীনতার ঘোষক’ নিয়ে বিতর্কের অবসান ঘটাতে পারছি না? জাতি হিসাবে আমরা এতই দুর্ভাগা যে, যে চেতনায়, যে স্বপ্ন নিয়ে এই জাতি মুক্তি পেতে চেয়েছিল এক পরাধীনতার শৃংখল থেকে- আসলেই কি জাতি তা পেয়েছে? যেখানে আজ আমরা সবাই মিলে-মিশে কাজ করার কথা, তা না করে কে কার কাঁধে ভর দিয়ে রাজনীতির সিঁড়ি বেয়ে কিভাবে ক্ষমতার মসনদে আরোহণ করা যায়, সে প্রতিযোগিতায় সবাই ব্যস্ত।

যদি একটু পেছনের দিকে ফিরে যাই- সেই ২৫শে মার্চের ভয়াল রাতে 'Operation Search Light' -এর নামে কুখ্যাত পাকিস্তানি হানাদার বাহিনী ঘুমন্ত অসহায় বাঙালীদের উপর হয়েনার বেশে ঝাঁপিয়ে পড়েছিল, হত্যা করেছিল হাজার হাজার নিরস্ত্র বাঙালীকে। সেই বর্বরোচিত হত্যায়জ্ঞ ইতিহাসের পাতায় এক কালো অধ্যায় হয়ে আছে এবং থাকবে। সেই রাতে বঙ্গবন্ধু জাতির পিতা শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান বাংলাদেশের বিভিন্ন শহরে, গঞ্জে প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চলে নির্দেশ পাঠিয়েছিলেন প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের জন্য। সেখানে আরও নির্দেশ ছিল সশস্ত্র সংগ্রামের, রুখে দাঁড়াতে সমস্ত বাঙালী জাতিকে বর্বর পাকিস্তানি বাহিনীর মোকাবেলার জন্য। তৎকালীন পাকিস্তানি সেনাবাহিনীতে কর্মরত সমস্ত বাঙালী অফিসার এবং জওয়ানরাও বঙ্গবন্ধুর এ নির্দেশকে স্বাধীনতার মূলমন্ত্র মেনে নিয়ে বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা করেছিলেন যে যার অবস্থান থেকে। সেই সময়ের মেজর জিয়া, পরবর্তীতে প্রেসিডেন্ট জিয়াউর রহমান ছিলেন বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধে একজন পরিচিত নাম। একজন বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা - স্বাধীনতার ঘোষণা পত্র পাঠ করেছিলেন কালুরঘাট বেতার কেন্দ্র হতে 'On Behalf of Shekh Mujibur Rahman' বলে। এই ঘোষণার মাধ্যমে তৎকালীন সময়ের বীর বাঙালীরা আরেকবার অনুপ্রেরণা পেয়েছিল বর্বর হানাদার বাহিনীকে বাংলার মাটি থেকে উচ্ছেদ করতে।

যা হোক আবার ফিরে আসি আমার মূল বক্তব্যে- স্বাধীনতার ঘোষক নিয়ে আজ আমাদের মাঝে তর্ক বিতর্ক, কই সেদিনের প্রেসিডেন্ট জিয়াউর রহমান তো তার জীবদ্দশায় কোনদিন কোন বক্তব্যে বলে যাননি যে আমিই ছিলাম স্বাধীনতার ঘোষক, আমার ডাকেই শুরু হয়েছিল বাঙালীর ভাগ্য বিবর্তনের মরণপন মুক্তিযুদ্ধ। তাহলে আজ এই স্বাধীনতার ঘোষণা নিয়ে বিতর্কে আমরা অর্থাৎ সাধারণ জনগণ কি পাচ্ছি? আমাদের রাজনীতিবিদদের প্রকৃত চেহারা- তারা নিজেদের জন্যই রাজনীতি করেন, জনগণ বা দেশের জন্য নয়। নেতার চেয়ে দল, দলের চেয়ে বড় দেশ, এই কথাটি যদিও তারা মুখে বলে থাকেন, কিন্তু বাস্তবে কি এর প্রতিফলন কোথাও আমরা দেখতে পাই? জনগণ তথা দেশের উন্নতির বদলে তাদের ব্যক্তিগত উন্নতি ঘিরেই আমাদের দেশের বেশীর ভাগ রাজনীতিবিদদের রাজনীতি।

আসুন আজ তর্ক বিতর্কের রাজনীতি পরিহার করে যার যতটুকু অবদান আছে আমাদের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধে, তাঁর প্রাপ্য সম্মান দিয়ে তাঁকে শ্রদ্ধা জানাই, মুক্তিযুদ্ধের চেতনা ও স্বপ্নকে বাস্তবায়িত করতে সচেষ্ট হই। সবাই মিলে মিশে, ভেদাভেদ ভুলে দেশের দশের মঙ্গলের জন্য কাজ করি। আসুন ত্রিশ লক্ষ শহীদদের আত্মত্যাগের কথা স্মরণ রেখে আমাদের সঠিক ইতিহাসকে জীবিত রাখি, আসুন আবার আমরা সবাই মিলে এক সাথে গাই, ‘আমার সোনার বাংলা, আমি তোমায় ভালবাসি’।

## **Struggle For Bangladesh Independence In North America**

Abul Kalam, Morrison, Colorado

The scope of this article is in the context of what a very small group of Bangladeshis in Colorado did to help the independence movement in Bangladesh. It consisted of only three Bangladeshi families living in Denver and a similar number of students at CU and CSU. The movement for Bangladesh independence in North America was in a much bigger context. It was considered necessary to form a national organization to represent and unite all the Bangladeshis of the USA and also to represent views of the Bangladeshi people. With that in mind, the Bangladesh League of America and Canada was formed in Chicago along with other umbrella organizations such as the Bangladesh Defense League formed in New York and the Bangladesh Information Center formed in Washington, D.C. The national committee needed to establish certain legitimacy: To establish that most Bangladeshis were in favor of a split from Pakistan into a separate nationhood; that the new nation already had a government in exile; and that the Bangladeshis living in North America were representing the will of the Bangladeshi people. The committee wanted to establish certain facts: that there was a genocide perpetrated methodically by the Pakistan army with the full approval of the Pakistan Government; that American weapons were being used in the killing and, therefore, arm shipment to Pakistan must stop immediately; and that an immediate relief effort was necessary to help the plight of the refugees. The committee needed to get an active support of the American people for the cause of the Bangladeshis. The committee wanted to include the support of academicians, activists, Congressmen, journalists, musicians, and simply the world opinion. The task was not easy considering that the Nixon-Kissinger administration had sided with Pakistan in a defense treaty alliance. There was also a debate about when the Bangladeshi diplomats at the Pakistan Embassy should defect. Their stay was, in some sense, necessary to get the inside information of Pakistan's plan, but at the same time, their defection was necessary to form a solidarity and also to form a foundation of a Bangladesh diplomatic mission to give an official voice and legitimacy to the Bangladeshi cause.

The genocide of the Bangladeshi people began on March 25, 1971. That was the period when I met Dr. M. Sher Ali for the first time. He had finished his schooling in Halifax, Nova Scotia, before he came to Lakeland, Florida and then he came to Denver in 1969. He is a biochemist and was a cancer researcher at the American Medical Center in Denver. He now lives in Athens, Georgia. He was a dynamic young leader with a great sense of humor. Whenever we felt subdued at the turn of events, he was often able to cheer us up. He organized the Denver chapter of Bangladesh League of America and Canada and became the President of the chapter. Mr. F.R. Khan, who had designed the Sears Tower in Chicago, was the president of its national committee. It was a time of great tension and anxiety for us watching on television the great suffering of the Bangladeshi people. Everyday, we would see faces of thousands of starving or malnourished Bangladeshis in refugee camps in India shown on television. That considerably disturbed us; the members of the League would spend sleepless nights with a mission to make American citizens aware of the political cause of the Bangladeshis. The league wrote letters to U.S. Senators and influential people. Our group contacted newspaper reporters who published stories about the massacre of the Bangladeshi people and its leading intellectuals. The cover story in the *Time* captioned "Conflict in Asia: India versus Pakistan" and the simultaneous cover story in the *Newsweek* captioned "India Attacks: The Battle for Bengal" helped strengthen the Bangladeshi cause. Sher was interviewed a few times by the journalists and the local television news. Justice Mohammad Hossain, who had just arrived from Bangladesh at the time, joined the lecture circuit traveling to Colorado Springs and various campuses in Colorado. (He later returned to Bangladesh and retired as a justice of the High Court in Dhaka). Mr. Abdul Mohit, the Economic Secretary of Pakistan Embassy who defected from Pakistan Embassy, also visited Denver on a few occasion to participate in our locally organized activities. (He later became an economic minister under the Bangladesh Government). The Denver group organized a cultural program to raise funds. Some of our closest Bengali friends from West Bengal were instrumental. The foremost of

them were Mrs. Manju Gupta, who was originally from Barisal, and her husband Mr. G.S. Gupta, who was originally from Dhaka. With her immense artistic talent, Mrs. Gupta organized the rehearsals at their residence while Mr. Gupta continuously supported our efforts. The program was an immense success. We raised twelve hundred dollars (the sum is about fifteen thousand dollars in today's inflated dollars) and sent the money to Mr. Enayet Karim, one of the first high-ranking Bangladeshi to defect from the Pakistan embassy. Mr. Karim was placed first in the Matriculation Examination of the undivided India and later, a similar standing with the Pakistan Superior Service. But his demeanor was very friendly and he was very easy to talk to. Mrs. Hosne Ara Karim, his wife, was also a very charming and a heroic individual, who always *actively* supported the cause of Bangladesh independence. For example, during a period when Mr. Karim, who was working under considerable stress and had recently suffered a heart attack, was in the hospital, Mrs. Karim convened meetings at her residence in his absence. She also allowed activists from other states to come and share the residence. I had the good fortune of knowing both of them and I visited them on several occasions. (Unfortunately, Mr. Karim died very young at the age of forty-seven because of his heart condition about three years after the creation of Bangladesh.) Because of her charisma and distinguished services, Mrs. Karim was appointed in the diplomatic services of Bangladesh after independence as the Foreign Secretary and the Director General of Foreign Affairs in Washington, D.C., and later as the Deputy Ambassador in Canberra, Australia. Mr. M.R. Siddiqui arrived in Washington, D.C. during this period and on August 5, 1971, he represented Bangladesh as the first ambassador to the United States from Bangladesh, a nation not yet recognized by the U.S.A. On several occasions, he came to Denver to help advance the cause of Bangladesh independence.

In the face of the magnitude of the problem, our individual efforts never seemed to be enough. On the other hand, the anxiety and tensions from the situation in Bangladesh affected our personal lives. But my friendship with Sher bonded very strongly and we spent hours planning our actions.

The efforts of the Bangladesh League of America brought about some significant changes in the public opinion in America. The Bangladeshi diplomats of Pakistan Embassy defected, unfurled the Bangladeshi flag, and planned a course of action. Bangladeshis and their American and other friends held successful rallies at various places such as in front of Pakistan Embassy and also on the steps of the U.S. Capital Building to get the support of the U.S. Senators. On May 6, 1971, the Senate Relations Committee unanimously passed the Case-Mondale resolution that stopped military aids or further arms sales to Pakistan. On May 24, Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury came to New York as the Bangladesh envoy to the United Nation.

Among the fund-raising efforts to help the Bangladeshi refugees, George Harrison's concert, Concert for Bangladesh, held in New York, attracted the attention of most of the world. The album set, Concert for Bangladesh, that I had gathered at the time is now considered a collector's item. There were also fund-raising concerts by Ustad Ali Akber Khan at Berkeley, Ustad Ravi Shankar at Iowa City, and Joan Baez in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

There were some interesting anecdotes. Mr. Enayet Karim helped pass a vital information from the Pakistan Embassy to Bangladesh Information Center which indicated that despite the State Department's disclosure, arm shipment was still flowing to Pakistan. The news was publicized and in the face of criticism by the Congressional leaders, the arm sale to Pakistan was finally stopped. At some point, Nixon-Kissinger administration considered sending its nuclear powered aircraft carrier to the Indian Ocean, a threat that was voiced as the "gunboat diplomacy" by the Indian press. At some point, Mr. F.R.Khan went to Bangladesh to solidify a support for the new government from the Bangladeshi residents living abroad, but in the chaos of the new governmental set up, his presence was completely disregarded. No one seemed to understand his purpose or presence of being there or its importance.

Creation of Bangladesh despite all odds was a joyful event to the Bangladeshis living in the United States and Canada. It brought about a great relief. For the first time, the community bonded together toward a common national goal of achieving independence for Bangladesh. But some sober facts remain: The Government of Pakistan has so far failed to apologize for the genocide that it had masterminded. The government's failure to make its army command accountable is a clear signature of its direct involvement in the pogrom of Bangladeshis. Nor has it negotiated to repatriate the share of assets that belong to Bangladesh.

**References:**

Much of the information in this article was verified through cross-referencing. The author talked to M. Sher Ali and also to Yusuf Zaman, the brother of Mrs. Hosne Ara Karim. To verify the historical dates, the following publications were helpful:

1. 1971, Freedom Struggle Abroad by Mahfuz Parvez, <http://www.thedailystar.net/suppliments/indp2004/indo04.htm> , 2004.
2. Grameen Bank O Amar Jibon (in Bengali), by Muhammad Yunus, Mowla Brothers, 39 Banglabazar, Dhaka 1100. 2004.

Buying?      Investing?  
Selling?      Relocating?

Find a hassle-free way to get information on any home currently listed for sale. Request a free over-the-net home evaluation. Find out what the home down the street sold. Find out how to make more money on the sale of your home. Sign up to receive daily updates of all the hot new listings. Find out how to get a good deal on a bank owned or HUD home. Visit our web site to obtain all of this information and more - for free and without obligation!

**Visit: <http://www.ValentineProperty.com>**



Some of our clients that you may know:

- \* Taufiq Raihan (above)
- \* Sharmin A. Raihan
- \* Al Moshaddeq
- \* Kazi Mahamoda Sulthana
- \* Badra Khatoon
- \* Nabeel Ashraf
- \* Jawad Ashraf
- \* Sharma Ayyagari



Valentine Property, Inc.  
9559 S. Kingston Court  
Englewood, CO 80112  
303-332-9924 Art  
720-394-5264 Jamie



**METRO  
BROKERS  
INC.**

Independent Companies  
Working Together

## **Royal Bengal Cricket Club**

Hasan Ahmad, Longmont, Colorado

It is needless to say that cricket is not at all popular in the United States. The very few people, except for the immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, the British Isles and countries influenced by the British rules, that heard about the game think that it is another lazy and less exciting version of baseball. In fact, similar analogies are often used for both of the games. Like baseball, cricket is a battle with the bat and the ball between two teams. It is played on a grassy field, at the center of which are two wickets – the equivalent of baseball's bases. When a team is in, the opponent attempts to get each of them out. After being all out, the team that was in takes the outfield and the team that was in the outfield in turn goes in. At the end, the team that scores more runs wins the game. But that's about all the similarities that exist between cricket and baseball. To the people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the West Indian nations, cricket is far more than just the similarities with baseball and it is their burning passion for this game that cricket is making a gradual but dramatic impact on the mainstream sports for this country. Today there are about five hundred cricket clubs in the nation and the United States is a recognized member of the International Cricket Council (ICC). However, most of the cricket in this country is still being played around the East Coast and California, where the concentration of people from cricket playing nations is the maximum and the necessary equipments, playing grounds and passionate people are easily accessible. Not too many people, especially the Bangladeshi Community in Colorado, knew or talked about cricket in this area. That notion, however, changed dramatically in 2004 when a group of Bangladeshi people brought the whole community together to form the Royal Bengal Cricket Club and started playing cricket inside the community and in the Colorado Cricket League.

Although cricket is quite new among the Bangladeshi community in Colorado, the game itself has quite a rich history in this state. As the history goes\*, the Colorado School of Mines in Golden formed a cricket club as early as 1873. By 1880 the British immigrants of this area started organizing regular cricket matches and the first competitive cricket match was recorded on August 24, 1888 between a club in Denver and another from Colorado Springs. The current form of league cricket came almost a century later when a group of Australian and Indian immigrants started organizing competitive cricket championships on natural grass pitches. Colorado Cricket League (CCL) was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1994. Since then cricket in Colorado has been played on concrete pitches covered with a mat or carpet, although the league started using neutral umpires as early as 1985. Today there are about 300 members of the league playing cricket among eight teams throughout the summer between May and September.

The Royal Bengal Cricket Club came to its existence through a community initiation process on April 17, 2004 during the official celebration of the Bengali New Year, more commonly known as the "Pahela Baishakh" or "NoboBorsho". By that time Muhammad Arif just started to settle in Colorado and was getting acquainted with the people around. He first floated the idea of playing cricket among a few members of the community, who played cricket during their early years in Bangladesh. Needless to say that with some initial hesitation, the idea was very well received, especially among the young and more enthusiastic members. The initial hesitation came from the fact that most of the people were out of touch with cricket, some for over twenty years, and the cost of starting such a club is quite significant. Only a couple of members of the community played cricket in the United States before and the only equipments available were a set of personal cricket gears that Muhammad Arif used while he played in a Pennsylvania cricket league before moving to Colorado. In order to play cricket, the club would, therefore, require new bats, balls, safety and protective gears and above all a suitable playing surface. It was estimated that the initial cost would rise anywhere between \$3000 and \$5000, and the community never before faced the challenge of raising such an

amount for a single purpose. However, that did not discourage the enthusiastic members, and some of the pioneers of the community decided to open up the whole agenda to all the members during its Bengali New Year celebration. As a part of the plan, the Aurora City Council and its Park and Recreation department were approached for a dedicated cricket field, and after much deliberation the city set aside the south west corner of the Utah Park for playing cricket. Accordingly, the Bengali New Year celebration was also planned at the same Utah Park so that playing cricket could become one of the day's main events for all the members of the community.

Although cricket is not one of the more traditional events for "Pahela Baishakh", on that particular day of April 17, 2004 the whole Bangladeshi Community in Colorado suddenly became very passionate about cricket. It appeared more like cricket was hidden in everybody's mind for a very long time and with a slight poking into their heart, it came out pouring. From the very early part of the day, almost all the male members of the community, seniors, juniors and kids alike, started swinging the bats and throwing the balls. More importantly, the overwhelming enthusiasm continued even after lunch, when for the first time the required budget for the proposed Royal Bengal Cricket Club was placed in front of the community and the members were asked for generous contribution. The response was overwhelming and within half an hour or so the club received commitments that exceeded the overall requirement. The success of that fund raising event was the first milestone in building the cricket club and thus the memory of the "Pahela Baishakh" in 2004 would remain in everybody's mind as the day when the Royal Bengal Cricket Club was born. Based on the commitments, a total of \$4903.00 was raised throughout the 2004 season and after all the expenses, including those for the equipments and joining the Colorado Cricket League, the club ended with a surplus of \$479.29.

Leaving the financial story aside, the rest of the history of Royal Bengal Cricket Club is quite contemporary and smooth. We started ordering the equipments – the bats, balls, pads, gloves, helmets and even the jute mat that formed the surface of the cricket pitch at Utah Park. The Aurora City Parks and Recreation Authority created the flat clay surface for the pitch, and immediately after, the community members started joining the team for regular practices. Most of them played cricket in some form in Bangladesh and never played the game after moving to the United States. A survey later indicated that except for a few like Muhammad Arif, who played competitive league cricket in Dhaka, most of the players were only involved in local cricket, typically known as "Para Cricket" or "Street Cricket", during their early school/college years. It is also worth mentioning that the time frame for these cricket events also falls well before the recent revolution of Cricket in Bangladesh which resulted in the country obtaining its status as a test playing nation. All that indicates that there has always been a latent talent and enthusiasm surrounding cricket within the Bangladeshi community and the successful formation of the Royal Bengal Cricket Club in Colorado only bears a solid testament to that fact.

Royal Bengal Cricket Club played its first friendly match on May 2, 2004 against the Colorado Springs Cricket Club (formerly known as One World Cricket Club) in Colorado Springs. However, the more memorable event for the club was an internal battle between two groups within the community, one with players with ages below 35 years and the other with ages 35 and over. The first of two such battles took place on May 8, 2004 which also heralded the formal inauguration of the club at its home ground, the Utah Park. The excitement generated from the inauguration continued throughout the season and as a result the club ended up participating in the Colorado Cricket League with its amateur players against the more polished and matured teams that had been playing in the league for over a decade. The first league game played by Royal Bengal Cricket Club was on June 20, 2004 against the Coal Creek Cricket Club Green at Louisville Recreation Center and the club ended

their season at the same venue against the league champion Coal Creek Cricket Club Gold on September 11.

Unlike many other clubs around the nation, Royal Bengal Cricket Club, or as it is more widely known as RBCC, is more like a social organization, whose heart and soul is very closely tied with the Bangladeshi Community in Colorado. It derives its inspiration from the community, is solely funded by the community and the regular players are the members of the community that meet more often in community social gatherings rather than on cricket fields. It is quite unique in this sense that the members of the club have been a part of a social body that knew one another very well except for their talents in playing cricket. Now RBCC provides added glue to the Bangladeshi community in Colorado and there is at least one more reason to dream of building a homogeneous community that can flourish with its rich culture, heritage and pride.

\* The history of Cricket in Colorado has been obtained from the official web site of Colorado Cricket League at [www.coloradocricket.org](http://www.coloradocricket.org)

---



**(303) 368-4688**

- General Contractors
- Custom Builder & Remodeler
- Floor Covering Sales & Service
- 24-HR Emergency Response
- Fire, Water & Mold Restoration
- We Accept All Insurance Related Work

Whether an emergency water loss, devastating fire, or just a new home addition, our team of professionals guarantee you the highest levels of quality, service, and workmanship.

*We Care 24/7*



**AmeraClean**  
Experience the Difference

***Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning***

- Powerful Truck-Mounted Steam Cleaning System
- Unique and Effective Pet Odor Removal
- Expert Stain removal
- Carpet Repairs

***Duct Cleaning***

- 3-Stage Hepa Vacuum
- Brush and Vacuum Entire System
- Clean & Sanitize Furnace

**(303) 337-7888**

Free "Spotting Chemical" with every cleaning  
10% off with this coupon

***Experience the difference!***

## **Bangladesh: After Thirty Years**

Mark Kalam, Morrison, Colorado

I returned to Bangladesh in 2002 from the United States after thirty two years. After three weeks of stay, I had a chance to see Bangladesh more closely. I do not recognize Dhaka now. It is no longer the city in which I spent much of my youth and rode a bicycle all over the city. All the vacant places have disappeared. Instead, most of Dhaka is filled up with many high-rises. Nevertheless, I felt a sense of vitality and energy among the people.

In many ways, the progress in Bangladesh has attracted my attention. In particular, I noticed the growth of a healthy and powerful mercantile class of entrepreneurs. On an average, a Bangladeshi is now more interested in possibly getting involved in entrepreneurship. This gives me plenty of hope. This new class of entrepreneurs and managerial class are an invaluable wealth of Bangladesh. They are introducing new innovative ideas to serve and are making an effort to fulfill many needs of the people and of a modern urban community. Like an advanced country, Bangladesh has modern shopping malls, grocery stores, and fast food places. Much associated business activities have also grown. Without doubt, Bangladesh has progressed the most in its private sector. The supportive climate of privatization has become the mainstay for progress in Bangladesh. It appears to me that industries that have failed under government management would do better if brought under private management with minimum restraints.

I was most impressed by the progress of the women's rights. Women are working side by side with men in businesses and industries on an equal footing as men and can roam around with considerable freedom. Women working at all levels will certainly strengthen the families. It will reduce prejudices and religious taboos. It will also give women more dignity and self-assurance by making them equal economic partners. The breeze of freedom has touched the shore of Bangladesh. Through cable TV, the windows of the world have opened up into the bedroom of people. The cable TV of Bangladesh offers variety of programs. People have many choices. It has given people many choices through programs broadcast in Bengali, English, and various other languages

Computer revolution in the world has rightfully attracted Bangladeshis as well. People can appreciate the power and potential use of computers in businesses and professions. For example, businesses can recognize the need and value for maintaining websites and its universal necessity. In order to get a share of the world market, they realize the importance of maintaining websites. (At the same time, they have been aware of protecting themselves against computer viruses.)

I have noticed a rule of order in every sphere of activity. For instance, people are no longer overcrowding on the buses; there is little push for spots on a train; nobody attempts to break into a queue because, now, there is a system of buying tickets. In many offices, I have seen people have to get a ticket in order to be served in accordance to their ticket number. These democratic ideals and discipline are indeed signs of a progressive nation; the nation becomes an equal service provider for everyone and not just the privileged ones.

During my three-weeks' of stay, there never was a shortage of running water, or there never was a power failure. Above all, even though I had used boiled water for drinking, the use of tap water did not cause any major health hazard. These changes are certainly impressive.

Introduction of mobile cell phones in Bangladesh has brought about revolutionary changes in Bangladesh society. It has increased communication and efficiency at work. Work gets done more quickly now. Through cell phones, people are able to discuss their tasks even when on the road.

With the introduction of electricity and gas in rural communities, the difference between a city and a village dwelling has reduced considerably. Now one can do in village home things one can do in a city home.

A great progress has been made in the case of freedom of speech. The unhealthy hold of a much glorified censorship has slackened. The artistic freedom of all artists has particularly attracted my attention. The writers are openly writing and publishing about themes that would once be considered unthinkable. I saw some writings that one can compare with such classics as Anna Karenina, or Lady Chatterley's Lover. Art and the freedom of art are undoubtedly the signatures of a free society. Clearly, the freedom of art will safeguard individual liberty.

While in Bangladesh, it now indeed feels like Bangladesh has become a free nation. The average worth, dignity and rights of an individual has multiplied manifolds. The walls of a class distinction have eroded quite rapidly. Creation of Bangladesh has greatly opened up opportunities for an average Bangladeshi citizen. In various professions in defense, air and sea travel, shipping and navigation, international trade, and embassies, Bangladeshis are taking the lead and accepting responsibilities. Undoubtedly, this opportunity was once un-thought of. Likewise, creation of a national cricket team would be un-thought of without the creation of Bangladesh. We are noticing that people's worth are judged by their work ethics and the quality of work and not by their birth. Another issue that clearly surfaces is as follows: much of this progress has been achieved by decentralization of power rather than by centralization of institutions.

The wind of change is sweeping across Bangladesh. People of Bangladesh realize that they cannot be satisfied with the current situation, that they have to change and try new things and that they have to progress further. They know they are not only representatives of Bangladesh but also of the entire world. Bangladeshis cannot be complacent; they have to know that complacency can do immense harm.

The problems of Bangladesh are not beyond resolve. But Bangladeshis must find solutions to these problems. For example, how can one solve the traffic problems in Dhaka? It can be solved in two ways. First, by the creation of a countrywide network of divided highway system along with a network of city highways and overpasses, and by widening up many narrow city lanes into major roads. Bangladesh has to do both of these. Alternately, creating a new capital can relieve pressure off the city of Dhaka.

Now, let us consider the problem of polluted and dusty environment. What is the answer? First of all, a standard of emission control, no matter how lenient, should be established and enforced. That should be a beginning. Baby-taxis should be removed not only from Dhaka but also from throughout Bangladesh. It is the responsibility of every law abiding Bangladeshi to see that transportation system does not pollute the country. The result will be apparent; the city dwellings would not look so gray from the emission exhausts and dust and there would also be much reduction in health related problems. One way to do this would be to use technology that does not pollute. Thus, converting gas engines into natural gas driven vehicles would be an ideal solution. There is no shortage of natural gas in Bangladesh.

One can reduce the amount of dust on the street. Is it too much to expect street sweeping tractors on the street or watering of the streets? Do people not have a right to these services? Don't the citizens deserve better? Needless to say, such services are an expectation and citizens do have a right to such services.

The question arises of open street-sewers. These are sources of mosquitoes, flies and insects that carry many diseases. Besides, they are sources of methane and other toxic gases. We have to change these open sewers; the city must design and build an elaborate and effective underground sewer system.

Protecting the health of its citizens is a noble duty of any civilized nation. It is the expectation of any civilized nation to place trash bins and sufficient number of upgraded public toilets in public offices and airports. There cannot be citizenship without countywide cleanliness. While I went to Rangamati, it gave me pain to notice that the water of the lake was greatly polluted and had turned green. I discovered a very simple reason for that. The entire sewer from homes was draining into the lake. One must take action to remedy this situation. These tourist places are national wealth. One must conserve this wealth.

The need for improvement of public health and its urgency has drawn my most attention. I have noticed one effect of fouled environment: I have heard opinions from serious sources about general deterioration of eye-health and an increase in breathing disorder. There needs to be an immediate improvement in public health. Without it, the more the cities grow; the worst will be the case of public health.

I am returning to the issue of transportation. To be an owner of an automobile is an expectation of most individuals in an advanced nation. But in Bangladesh, ownership of automobiles is still a privilege of a few. There are several reasons for that: the country does not make any inexpensive cars; besides, the imported cars are imposed high tariffs causing their prices to soar. These situations can be remedied in order to increase the number of taxis on the street. To reduce the number of rickshaws would also require that individual car ownership be increased, that there is an efficient mass transit system and that more taxis be available.

It is true that rickshaws are a source of income for many individuals. But, I shall argue that the more powerful the private sector of the economy becomes, the more will be the job opportunities for average people in various professions. Hence, with the improvement of public transportation system, job market, job training, and income, the nation can afford to systematically phase-out rickshaws and hand-drawn carriages off the street in a timely fashion without seriously jeopardizing the economy of the nation or the livelihood of an individual.

Now, I propose to switch to another issue. Bangladeshis must remember that Bangladesh is a secular nation. (Its religious basis of nationhood had totally failed in the past.) The value of secularism is as follows: It gives the right to people of all faith to follow their religion without fear of persecution. Besides, it desists the religious majority from forcing their religion onto others or to transform their own religious beliefs onto the nationhood. But the religious fundamentalists will always want to reduce the rights of other religious groups and will attempt to preach their own religion through national broadcasting medium. So, one is prone to ask, will a Christian be forced to say Muslim greeting 'as-salamo-alaikum' against his will? Will a Hindu be told not to say 'namashkar'? Or, will a Hindu be denied from building a new temple? These are certainly scary thoughts if such things happened. At the same time, I wonder, is it fair to force an individual, or a sick person, or an after-hour working individual, who needs a good night's sleep to be forced to listen to morning aazaan (call for morning prayer) through a system of powerful loud speakers? Is it really fair to use loud speakers for aazaan? Further, is it not a violation of secularism to use national broadcasting medium to promote one specific religion over others? Bangladeshis must, of course, have to discuss these issues and many others, get involved into healthy debates, and must find a greater solution.

I have expressed my thoughts and concerns freely. It is too much to expect that we will always agree on all issues in a democratic society, or that we need to always agree; no democracy ever expects that. But that we should be able to freely express our thoughts without fear and discuss them should be our only democratic right. My other expectation would be, no matter what we do, we must be accountable for our actions to the citizens at large. Thus, we may not make an arrest unless there is sufficient evidence by a bureau of investigation of wrongdoing.

Now, I wish to express a few opinions on the issue of the language. It has drawn my attention that English is used on the same footing with Bengali in all areas, specifically in businesses. I have also noticed that many words from the English language have been adopted into Bengali. To me, it is not a sign of weakness. On the other hand, it is a reflection of a dynamic social order. I argue that English is predominantly one of the major international languages. Besides, use of the English language has been a historical legacy of the nation. For that reason, the nation does not have any shortage of teachers or textbooks to instruct knowledge of English. I think this is the rightful reason why English is so widely used. The situation, of course, has reaped its advantages.

Finally, I wish to reflect on the educational system of the nation and end my discussion. First of all, there is no educational system in the world that is without its shortcoming. But the educational system of a country depends on its planning. What kind of educational system do we want? What kind of educated individual do we want? What is the fundamental objective of an educational process? Is the educational process for everyone? If not, what do we do for people who are deprived of an educational process? Bangladesh must raise these questions. It is not certain that a person trained in a formal educational process will always succeed more than a self-motivated individual. Moreover, the incompleteness of training and its weaknesses manifests itself at various phases of life of an individual. But the fundamental idea of an educational process is as follows: its purpose is to help individuals reach the fullest of their potentials. If that is true, then the educational process is not for an elite few, but for all individuals. The right to an education is a right for all people. One must think so in a free nation. But what kind of education? In the field of education, the best skill that one might teach an individual is the skill to learn how to learn. An institution simply cannot teach all skills. Neither is it possible. Many skills of the future have not been created yet. There may not be any resemblance to a life in the future to the life of today. In that perspective, an individual has to learn every new skill and retrain possibly much on his own. For that reason, I argue that the purpose of education is “the freedom of intelligence”. By that I imply that we must create thoughtful individuals who would not be blind followers; they must be open-minded, and must judge every process rationally and critically, and are willing to get involved in a discussion and a healthy debate.

In this perspective, I wish to make several propositions. First, we must get away from an elitist attitude in education. That implies, education is not just for a few individual but is meant for all. Second, we must teach for skills that have survival value in a work life. These include among others: knowledge of citizenship, democratic ideals, diversity and pluralism, entrepreneurship, healthy mental attitude, and interpersonal skills. That is, learning just a few skills does not fulfill the function of an education. On the other hand, the basic education must be well rounded. Third, every individual irrespective of their age, gender, or origin must have a right to an education and re-education. For that purpose, the doors of institutions must be open to all, even though that does not imply that the quality of education must be sacrificed. Fourth, the board exams that are essentially based on much cramming cannot be the only criteria for success in education. We must discuss other forms of success. For example, what should we do to people who cannot succeed in board exams? Shall we sacrifice them as a waste product, or shall we find an alternate or continued educational process for these individuals? Fifth, we must provide to teach new skills and new know-how through re-training and continuing education. For that purpose, we must provide short courses, extended courses, job training, in-service training, and re-training. The educational institutions must extend their hours to

provide instructions during the evening and the weekends. That is, we must provide for all options in education. Our approach must be one of pragmatism. Its outcome must be functional.

We can accomplish all of these provided we believed in people; we must believe that an average individual is interested in learning if we present education according to their need. While it is true that education is for the people, the contrary is not true: people are not sacrificial lambs to a rigid educational program. That is, we must not create an educational system in which only a few individuals can access and succeed while most fail. On the other hand, the educational system must be one that would be a reason for psychological and financial fulfillment of the majority and would create responsible individuals.

So, what have I seen in Bangladesh after thirty years? I have seen the rise of a dynamic nationhood. The youth of this vibrant nation is surging in freedom into new directions. I am seeing how the chains of old prejudices are breaking down one after another. The dawn has arrived in the life of a new secular democratic nation. But at the same time, I hold a few concerns. With the large increase in population, the public health and sanitation system has deteriorated. There has been an increase in pollution. All these problems are solvable. The immense success of the private sector has impressed me. But it must be the duty of a responsible government to address and remedy the problem of transportation and to cleanse the cities of their pollution. The urgent lesson for this is simple: How we compete with other nations in the world will depend on how we are able to solve our own basic domestic problems.

It is true that overpopulation in Bangladesh has put an enormous strain on the country's economy. But used wisely, it can also be a wealth. Through public works programs, this valuable human resource can be put to use to build roads and highways, or to reclaim land by building dikes (perhaps, use the model from Netherlands), or to remove silt from riverbeds.

Watching the youth of the country has revitalized my hope. It is my feeling that there are no problems that Bangladeshis cannot solve. I end my reflections with this positive note.

## **Evolution of the Bangladesh Community in Denver, Colorado**

M. A. Samad, Ph. D., P.E., Centennial, Colorado

I came to Colorado in the summer of 1972 to attend summer school at the Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins. This was a part of my Master's program I was pursuing at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. I did not know anybody from Bangladesh living in Colorado at that time. Only people I knew were one Bengali student from West Bengal, attending CSU at the time. My roommate was a Pakistani student who also came to attend summer school at CSU from the University of Hawaii. Our social gathering was with Indian, Pakistani and Bengali students from West Bengal. Occasionally, we used to get together for lunch, dinner and table talk to vent our frustration with school work. Anyway, this is a very brief introduction how I set my foot in Colorado for the first time.

I returned to Colorado in January of 1975 after I completed my Master's program and two years' of professional training in Hawaii. This time I was married and came with my beautiful wife, Khokon to pursue a Ph. D. program at CSU. We rented an apartment at the Aggie Village, one of the university married student housing facilities. Again we did not know any Bengali from Bangladesh this time around. However, one day I got a call from a person named Shamsuzaman Chowdhury from Denver asking us if he and his family could visit us in Fort Collins. Somehow he got information from the school that there was a Bengali student from Bangladesh attending school in Fort Collins. I was so glad to get the call from my fellow countryman. I said, come on over. So he came with his family to visit us, and we were so glad to meet them. Then they invited us to go to visit them in Denver, where they lived in the suburb of Littleton. Mr. Chowdhury told me that he was a civil engineer and worked for the Colorado State Highway Department and he also graduated from CSU. I told myself, chowdhury is so lucky, he is a U.S citizen and works for the State and he does not have to worry about citizenship or school work any more.

After I finished my Ph. D. program at CSU I got a job offer with Engineering Consultants Inc., in Denver. I moved to Denver with my family and rented an apartment at Glenn Oaks, just south of the Sears Store at South Glenn shopping mall. We have been living in the Denver area since then except for a one year assignment in Indonesia. With time we came to know Dr. Abul Kalam, Dr. Sher Ali, brother of Mr. Afsar Ali, who now lives in Atlanta. This was the extent of Bengali community in the 70's. This is how the Bengali community got started in the Denver Area. Mr. Chowdhury has retired couple of years ago and has moved to warmer area in the Southern Florida. Dr. Kalam is in the process of retiring. He told me he is not going to teach next semester. I am still working; the thought of retirement has come to my mind. May be, in a couple of years I will follow the path of Mr. Chowdhury and Dr. Kalam, my long time friends. I do not have any plan for moving out of the Denver area in the foreseeable future.

I am so glad to see that our Bengali community now consists of nearly 100 families with some singles. It is so nice to see that the community is growing and being assimilated to the larger American community in each neighborhood we live in. We all are contributing to the welfare of the community at large, and we and our children should be proud of that. No matter how much we are part of the larger community, we will always long for companionship of people from Bangladesh, our native land.

## **Understanding Disease Process and Design of a Healthy Life Style \***

Mohammed A. Salam, PhD

Senior Analytical Chemist, Geomega, Boulder, Colorado

As a society, we depend largely upon the medical community to keep us well. Yet even with all of our technological advances, medical science can do little to get rid off or reverse the disease process once a person gets severely affected. Tragically, lifestyle habits contribute significantly to the onset and development of most of the major diseases. People, therefore, should adopt a healthy lifestyle to experience greater degrees of overall life satisfaction, positive health, and in most cases to live longer.

Starting with the heart disease, it is any disorder that affects the heart's ability to function normally. The most common cause of heart disease is narrowing or blockage of the arteries, which supply blood to the heart itself. Our heart only functions when it receives oxygen from the blood and any delay in receiving oxygen from blood due to blockage of artery causes the heart to collapse resulting in heart attack. Similarly, brain cells also get oxygen from supplied blood and if it does not get oxygen stroke occurs. The blockage of the artery is caused by cholesterol (lipoproteins), both low-density lipoprotein (LDL) or bad cholesterol and other fats (triglycerides). In order to control LDL we need to avoid foods like red meat that is high in saturated fat, dietary cholesterol, and excess calories. While vegetable oil with most unsaturated fatty acids is very useful as these oils do not solidify, hydrogenated vegetable oil, like margarine, must be avoided. It is believed that the fiber helps control bad cholesterol when it binds with LDL and excreted from the body. Eating oily fishes like, salmon, mackerel, herring, trout, halibut, swordfish, katla, hilsa, pangas, etc., reduce blood clotting by decreasing the stickiness of blood platelets and stabilizes heart rhythms. Egg provides very good protein provided we eat only the white part. Collectively, it is very useful to follow the USDA's food pyramid guide, where the following are suggested: Bread, cereal, rice and pasta group (6-11 servings); fruit group (2-4 servings); vegetable group (3-5 servings); meat, poultry, fish, dry bean, eggs and nuts group (2-3 servings); milk, cheese and yogurt group (2-3 servings); fats, oils and sweets (sparingly). On the other the HDL level can only be increased by exercise or adequate physical activity.

Turning the attention to blood pressure, it is the force in the arteries when the heart beats and when the heart is at rest. For a normal person it should be less than 120/80 (mm Hg). The high blood pressure is categorized in two stages (stage 1): more than 140/90 mm Hg; (stage 2): more than 160/100 mm Hg. Individual with high blood pressure are at risk for kidney disease, heart disease and stroke, especially along with other risk factors. There are four risk factors that cannot be changed: race, age, sex and family history. But there are risk factors that can be changed: weight, inactivity, too much sodium, too little potassium, excessive alcohol, unhealthy diets, tobacco, stress and certain medications. Therefore, it is very important that everybody takes care of their diet for proper control of hypertension.

Diabetes is a condition that occurs when the pancreas is not producing insulin (Type 1 diabetes) or when it is not producing enough insulin (Type 2 diabetes) or when the body has lost its ability to use insulin. In a normal healthy person insulin is produced in the pancreas and released in response to elevated blood sugar level. Insulin lowers blood sugar by allowing the sugar to move out of the blood and into the body cells. That's how the body gets energy it needs. When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells it can cause the cells to starve for energy right away, or may hurt eyes, kidneys, nerves or heart over time. There is no cure for diabetes; however, it is almost always manageable, either with diet and exercise alone or with the addition of regular medical treatment. As the name diabetes and sugar go hand in hand, diet which controls amount of sugar that

goes into the blood stream is extremely important. Carbohydrates like rice, bread, potato, cereals, fruit and milk items allow glucose to go to blood stream faster. Whereas glucose from wheat, parboiled rice, bran cereals etc. ends in blood sugar very slowly. Fruits like apples, bananas, oranges and mangoes have lots of sugar but have plenty very useful vitamins and fibers. In these cases a moderation or balance is needed. At the same time regular exercise releases insulin which were sluggish in the pancreatic cells and controls the glucose in the blood like it supposed to do.

One of most fatal of all the diseases is cancer that ranks second among the leading causes of death in the nation. Cancer is a group of more than 100 different diseases and occurs when cells become abnormal (deformed or mutated) and keep dividing and forming more cells without control or order. If cells keep dividing when new cells are not needed, a mass of tissue forms forming tumors. Tumors could be harmless (*benign*) or harmful (*malignant*) and the malignant tumors cause cancer. Some of the common forms of cancer include skin cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer for woman, and lung cancer, which is the leading cause of death from cancer for both men and women in the U.S. Cancer is not contagious and can not caused by an injury. It develops gradually as a result of a complex mix of factors related to environment, lifestyle, and heredity. While smoking accounts for more than 85% of all lung cancer deaths, evidence also points to a link between a high-fat diet and certain cancers, such as breast, colon, uterus and prostate. On the other hand, studies suggest that food like vegetables and fruits that contain fiber and certain nutrients help protect us against some types of cancer. Ultraviolet radiation also leads to the formation of skin cancer, while drinking large amounts of alcohol increases the risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus and larynx. It is, therefore, important that women have their breast mammogram done once a year and men have their prostate checked routinely.

Stomach acidity is another common disorder that is created when the acidity level (pH) in the digestive system exceeds 2. The digestive process takes place as food passes through the mouth, stomach, small intestine and large intestine. At the stomach, the gastric acid helps to break down proteins for further digestion at the small intestine. This acid (*hydrochloric acid*) along with *pepsin*, *trypsin* and other enzymes are secreted when the stomach receives food. The amount of acid secretion depends on what type and portion of food is consumed. Plain yogurt is good for stomach as this is basic in nature. Make sure to include foods that are high in complex carbohydrates in each meal. Avoid high fat meals and fried foods such as those from the fast food chain. High fat foods will remain in the stomach longer in which more acid is secreted to digest them. Eating too much of any food will stimulate the stomach to secrete more acids for digestion.

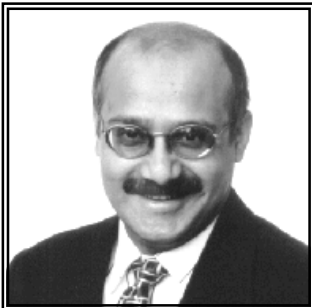
Heartburn is a burning feeling in the middle of chest caused by acid leaking upwards from the stomach into the esophagus. The *lower esophageal sphincter* (LES) is a ring of muscle at the bottom of the esophagus that acts like a valve between the esophagus and stomach. In a normal person, this valve allows only chewed food to travel to the stomach (one way passage). But for some person the LES does not close properly and acidic stomach contents leak back, or reflux, into the esophagus, a condition called *gastroesophageal reflux disease* (GERD). It is believed that overweight, smoking, spicy foods, fatty and fried foods, tomato-based foods, citrus fruits, chocolate, drinks with caffeine, etc. contribute to GERD. In addition to controlling the above foods, one should avoid lying down for 3 hours after a meal or raise the head of the bed 6-8 inches.

Health is not simply the absence of diseases; it is the state of optimal physical and mental well being. Taking personal responsibility for your health care by developing positive health behaviors is the most cost effective way to ensure a longer, healthier, perhaps more fun, and

ultimately more productive life. Periodic check up of blood pressure, blood sugar (HbA1C), lipid profile (LDL, HDL & Triglycerides) and thorough discussion with the primary care physician should be one item at the top of the to do list for everybody.

---

*\*Sources that contributed to this article include, National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse, U. S. Food and Drug Administration, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, American Heart Association, National Cancer Institute, American Diabetes Association and U. S. Department of Agriculture.*



**Syed Rahman**  
Home Real Estate

**I can save you  
Thousands of Dollars  
When you buy  
Or sell a home  
\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$**

**Cell# 303-564-3689**



**When you buy, you pay NO Real Estate commissions.  
When you buy a home, I will pay you \$1,000  
When you buy a Condo, I will pay you \$500**

Currently the home prices and the interest rates are relatively low. It's a great opportunity to move into a bigger home. Depending on some available loan programs, your monthly payments may not go up. Don't let this opportunity pass by. **Call me for details.**

**Call me TODAY for FREE Consultations or a FREE Market Analysis.**

## **Foreign Investment In Bangladesh**

Kabir Newaz, Thornton, Colorado

Bangladesh has opened up new opportunities for foreign investment providing various fiscal incentives. Bangladesh probably offers the most liberal investment opportunity in the South Asian Region- there is no limit for investment, almost all sectors are open for private investment, full return on investment can be transferred in foreign currency. As non-resident Bangladeshi, we should put our hard earned foreign currency in investing in Bangladesh instead of investing abroad for two reasons. First, the incentive structures of investing in Bangladesh offer good prospect for high return. Second, by investing in Bangladesh we can fulfill our moral obligation to contribute to the long-term development of Bangladesh.

Many of us are concerned of the political stability in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been practicing democracy since 1991 and three successful free and fair general elections held since then. Disagreement among political parties is common in democracy, but interestingly there is a broad consensus among Bangladeshi political parties on foreign investment that guarantees safe environment for investors in pursuing long-term ventures.

Here, I have compiled relevant information from various government sources on foreign investment policies and incentives that Bangladesh offers to the foreign investors. I hope the following information will be useful for foreign investors and non-resident Bangladeshis who are looking for long-term investment opportunity.

### **Industrial Policy**

The gradual liberalization of industrial policy in Bangladesh started at the time of General Ershad's government with the announcement of Industrial Policy, 1982. This was followed by successive reforms and amendments within the broad theme of a liberalized and competitive market economy. The Industrial Policy, 1991 (Revised in 1992) is based on the philosophy of market economy. The objectives of the Policy are to:

- Develop the industrial sector in order to increase its contribution to the gross domestic product, income, resources and employment;
- Expand industries by putting more emphasis on development of the private sector and in this respect to make the role of the government 'promotional' rather than 'regulatory';
- Encourage domestic and foreign investment in overall industrial development;
- Develop export-oriented, export-linkage and efficient import-substitute industries;
- Encourage specially the development of small & cottage industries;
- Expedite development of labor intensive industries through acquisition and improvement of appropriate technology;
- Encourage the development of agro-based and agro-supportive industries;
- Stimulate development of industries based on indigenous raw materials and indigenous technology;
- Motivate investment in the intermediate and basic industries;
- Confine the role of the Government particularly in establishing strategic and heavy industries and to improve efficiency of the public sector;
- Create possible opportunities for revitalizing and rehabilitating sick industries;
- Make effective arrangements for improving standards and controlling quality of products; and
- Take appropriate measures for preventing environmental pollution and maintaining ecological balance.

## **Board of Investment (BOI)**

The Government of Bangladesh established the Board of Investment (BOI) in 1989 for accelerating private investment in Bangladesh. The Board, headed by the Prime Minister of the Republic and represented by Ministers and Secretaries of the concerned Ministries, is vested with necessary powers to take decisions for speedy implementation of new industrial projects and provide operational support services.

Private investment from overseas sources is welcome in all areas of the economy. Such investments can be made either independently or through joint venture on mutually beneficial terms and conditions. In other words, 100% foreign direct investment as well as joint venture both with local private sponsor and with public sector is allowed. Foreign investment, however, is specially desired in the following categories:

- Export-oriented industries;
- Industries in the Export Processing Zones; (EPZ)
- High technology products that will be either import-substitute or export-oriented;
- Undertaking in which more diversified use of indigenous natural resources is-possible;
- Basic industries based mainly on local raw materials;
- Investment towards improvement of quality and marketing of goods manufactured and/or increase of production capacities of existing industries;
- And labor intensive/technology intensive/capital intensive industries.

## **Investment Guarantee**

Foreign Private Investment Act, 1980 ensures legal protection to foreign investment in Bangladesh against nationalization and expropriation. It also guarantees repatriation of capital and dividend and equitable treatment with local investors. Adequate protection is available for intellectual property rights, such as patents, designs and trademarks and copyrights. Bilateral Investment Guarantee Agreements have been signed with a number of countries. Bangladesh is signatory to MIGA, OPIC of USA, ICSID and member of WIPO Permanent Committee on development co-operation related to industrial property.

## **Facilities and Incentives**

- Tax holiday from 5-10 years depending on location of industries
- 15 year's tax holiday for private power generation companies
- Facilities for repatriation of invested capital, profit and dividend
- Exemption of tax on interest on foreign loan
- Tax exemption on royalties, technical know-how and technical assistance fees
- Avoidance of double taxation on the basis of bilateral agreement
- Six months multiple entry visa for the investors
- TAKA, the nation's currency, is convertible for international payments in the current account
- Full repatriation of capital invested from foreign sources will be allowed. Similarly, profits and dividend accruing to foreign investment may be transferred in full. If foreign investors reinvest their repatriable dividends and or retained earnings, those will be treated as new investment. Foreigners employed in Bangladesh are entitled to remit up to 50 percent of their salary and will enjoy facilities for full repatriation of their savings and retirement benefits.
- Working capital loan, as well as term loan, from local commercial banks allowed to the industries set up with foreign capital
- Citizenship by investing a minimum of US\$ 5,00,000 or by transferring US\$ 10,00,000 to any recognized financial institution (non re-patriable)
- For foreign direct investment, there is no limitation pertaining to foreign equity participation, i.e. 100 percent foreign equity is allowed. Non-resident institutional or individual investors

can make portfolio investments in stock exchanges in Bangladesh. Foreign investors or companies may obtain full working loans from local banks. The terms of such loans will be determined on the basis of bank-client relationship.

- A foreign technician employed in foreign companies will not be subjected to personal tax up to 3 (three) years, and beyond that period his/ her personal income tax payment will be governed by the existence or non-existence of agreement on avoidance of double taxation with country of citizenship.
- Foreign entrepreneurs are, therefore, entitled to the same facilities as domestic entrepreneurs with respect to tax holiday, payment of royalty, technical know-how fees etc.
- The process of issuing work permits to foreign experts on the recommendation of investing foreign companies or joint ventures will operate without any hindrance or restriction. Multiple entry visa" will be issued to prospective foreign investors for 3 years. In the case of experts," multiple entry visa" will be issued for the whole tenure of their assignments.

### **Export Processing Zones**

Export Processing Zones in the port city Chittagong and capital city Dhaka with necessary fiscal and infrastructure facilities for export oriented enterprise. Another Export Processing Zone, near the capital city (at Gazipur) is under implementation.

### **Accelerated Depreciation**

Industrial undertakings not enjoying tax holiday will enjoy accelerated depreciation allowance. Such allowance is available at the rate of 100 per cent of the cost of the machinery or plant if the industrial undertaking is set up in the areas falling within the cities of Dhaka, Narayangonj, Chittagong and Khulna and areas within a radius of 10 miles from the municipal limits of those cities. If the industrial undertaking is set up elsewhere in the country, accelerated depreciation is allowed at the rate of 80 per cent in the first year and 20 per cent in the second year.

### **Concessionary Duty on Imported Capital Machinery**

Import duty, at the rate of 5% ad valour, is payable on capital machinery and spares imported for initial installation or BMR/BMRE of the existing industries. The value of spare parts should not, however, exceed 10% of the total C & F value of the machinery. For 100% export oriented industries, no import duty is charged in case of capital machinery and spares. However, import duty @ 5% is secured in the form of bank guarantee or an indemnity bond will be returned after installation of the machinery. Value added Tax (Vat) is not payable for imported capital machinery and spares.

### **Potential Areas for Investment**

Investments in areas of manufacturing and services are welcome. Investors are free to choose fields of investment. However, from the point of view of comparative advantage, the following are potential areas for investment.

**Textile:** export market of US\$ 2 billion from the garments sector and a large domestic market.

**Infrastructure:** energy, telecommunication, oil and gas, ports, highways and bridges.

**Agro based Industry:** dairy of poultry, processing of fruits and vegetables, shrimp, fish culture and processing, shrimp feed plants etc.

**Labor-intensive Industries:** electronics, data processing and software development, electrical goods and accessories, light engineering goods, toys, jewelry and others.

**Telecommunications:** Internet, telex, fax, international direct dialing services and e-mail facilities.

### **Sources:**

Board of Investment, Bangladesh. Website available at <http://www.boibd.org/>

Ministry of Finance, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Website available at <http://www.mof.gov.bd/>

National Board of Revenue, Bangladesh. Website available at <http://www.nbr-bd.org/>

Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh. Website available at <http://www.epbbd.com/>



### **Flora Apartment**

**Main features: 8 Storied Bldg♦total 21 units♦1150, 1170 & 1550 sqfts♦Parking facilities♦Community center and prayer facilities at the top roof♦two high powered elevators♦generator♦own deep tubewell ensuring continuous water supply♦fire extinguishers♦24 hours security**

**Locations and Surroundings: few minutes walking distance from Jhautola Railway station, Chittagong♦ close to scenic Foiz Lake♦Tourist Center♦Holy Crescent Hospital♦University of Science and Technology ♦Diabetic Hospital♦Eye Hospital♦Chittagong Girls' College♦Ispahani School and College**

**Contact: Shafiul Azam Babu and Luna Azam, Denver, Colorado, 303.660.0104 email: [mazam1@msn.com](mailto:mazam1@msn.com)**

## **Obesity, A Worldwide Epidemic**

Mizanoor Rahman

Research Fellow, Dept of Pediatrics, Endocrinology and Metabolism  
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Obesity presents one of the most serious health problems not only for the Bangladeshi community but also for the people of the rest of the world. In fact it is estimated that at present about 315 million people are affected by obesity. The disease is caused by an imbalance between the energy ingested in food and the energy expended. The excess energy is stored in fat cells that enlarge and/or increase in number. These unhealthy fat cells can in turn cause other diseases, such as diabetes mellitus, hyperlipidemia, heart disease and some forms of cancer.

The most widely used metric for assessing obesity is basal metabolic index (BMI), which is the ratio of the body weight (kg) to the square of the body height (sq. meter), and a person with BMI of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher is considered to be obese. However, for Bangladeshis and people from other Asian nations the recommended BMI value for obesity is 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and anything higher than that represents considerable risk. Although there is no reliable data available for Bangladesh, recent studies show an increase of obesity from 2 to 20% for middle aged men and women throughout the Asian countries, except for Japan. In Japan alone, however, over the last 40 years there has been a 3 to 4 fold increase in obesity for men over 30 years old and women over 40 years old. On the other hand, in the USA about 60% of the adults meet the criteria for either overweight or obesity, while in Canada the number is about 14.8%. Similarly, the rate of increase in obesity in Europe and Africa are quite staggering.

The increasing rates of obesity in adults have also been paralleled by similar increases in the rates for children. The rate of weight gain in children has been so large and so rapid that diseases of adulthood, such as type 2 diabetes, are now being diagnosed in adolescents and children. In the USA alone the prevalence of overweight in children (6 to 19 years) is 13-14%, a three-fold increase since the 1960s. In Europe, 14-30% of young people have been found to be overweight, while in Singapore the obesity rates were found to be increasing rapidly to a peak of 16.6% of primary students and 15.5 % of secondary students. The working group on obesity in China reports about 51% of boys and 26% of girls in the cities are overweight and this compares to the reported figures of 2% prevalence in boys and 17.4% in girls in Taiwan. Such an increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity in children should be of immense concern to us all. Overweight in childhood and adolescence does track into adulthood, and this means that the next generation has a far greater chance of developing metabolic disease.

Obesity has been shown to be more prevalent in women than men. These differences are probably biologically based and relate to men's ability to deposit more lean (muscle) than fat tissue when energy imbalance occurs with weight gain. Lean tissue is metabolically active and increases the basal metabolic rate in men, in part compensating the discrepancy between intake and output. Women, on the other hand, have more fat mass and less lean mass than men, and thus would need to gain far more weight to gain the additional lean tissue needed to provide the adaptive gain in basal metabolism to match any excessive intake.

While searching for the reasons behind increased rate of obesity, it has been observed in most countries that there exist an inverse relationship between education level/socioeconomic status and obesity prevalence. Increase in obesity is seen as a feature of the poor, making Bangladesh susceptible to this abnormality. Again this may relate to social circumstances and cultural differences that alter behavior. The choice of an energy dense diet may be determined by relative cheapness of

processed foods in which energy is derived predominantly from fats and sugars. The ready availability of foods, the constant stream of food advertising, the provision of large portion sizes as a marketing technique, and the immediate and widespread availability of fast foods all mean that individuals have to be constantly on the guard against the natural tendency to eat. The poor and less educated may also gain more enjoyment from watching TV. This sedentary activity is less expensive and requires less initiative than various other social and leisure activities that require more resources and energy.

Obese or overweight people are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes; in fact, 80% of patients with type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese. Weight gain leads to insulin resistance causing the beta cells to make more insulin and help keeping blood glucose normal. But the beta cells eventually become exhausted and individuals develop a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal. Similarly, it causes reduced free fatty acid (FFA) absorption and enhanced lipolysis by peripheral tissues. The net effect is the increased FFA delivery to liver and overproduction of Triglyceride rich lipoprotein. This event leads to hyperlipidemia characterized by higher triglyceride (TG) level in blood and liver. Scientists have found a well established link between hypertriglyceridemia and coronary heart disease. In addition obese people have higher blood pressure. Overweight and hypertension interact with cardiac function. The combination of hypertension and overweight leads to thickening of the ventricular wall and larger heart volume and thus to a greater likelihood of cardiac failure. On the same token, obesity has also been associated with elevated risk of several major cancers. Males face increased risk for colon, rectum and prostate. In women cancer of the reproductive system is more common and estrogen produced by fat tissue is considered as a key player.

It goes without saying that prevention of obesity reduces the risk of several complications mentioned above. Over the years weight loss has been found very effective to reduce the risk of obesity induced mortality. Several studies showed that weight loss maintained for 2 years reduces blood pressure, improves abnormal lipid levels and reduces the risk of diabetes. According to International Obesity Task Force, the government should conduct obesity-impact assessments for all new and existing policies and provide economic incentives for healthy food and disincentives for unhealthy foods. Food industries should develop, produce, distribute and promote food products that are low in dietary fat and energy. The media can regulate television food advertising that has negative impact on children and can incorporate positive behavior change messages into television programs and popular magazines. Non-government organizations can develop and implement healthy eating, physical activity and obesity-prevention programs. Healthcare services can provide training in obesity prevention and management for doctors and other healthcare workers and can introduce physical activity and/or nutrition and cooking skill programs for patients. Educational institutions can introduce nutrition standards for school meals and increase range of enjoyable, non-competitive physical activities at school. Neighborhoods, homes and families can set up community garden programs and food cooperatives and walking programs in shopping malls, parks etc.

**My Fellow Passenger**  
Mohammed Rahman (Sharif), Denver, Colorado

It was a cold winter night, sometime after 12 am. I was on my way home after a long days of work from downtown Denver. The trembling of the bus and my tiredness made me drowsy. I was dreaming of a hot bath and a nice warm bed. Suddenly a loud voice caught my attention. I opened my eyes and realized, the bus stopped in a stoppage and a passenger was arguing with the driver:

“Please let me in,” the passenger said.

“You have no money,” the driver said.

But our determined passenger continued arguing with the driver and tried to convince him to let him in, but he failed. He then was requesting the other passenger to pay his fare. No body was paying attention to him or didn't want to get involved! It was getting late, so I paid his bus fare of 75 cents. Did I know that I was buying some kind of trouble by helping that man!

He was too glad. He came and sat next to me.

“You are so kind,” he said.

“It's all right,” I replied.

Oh God! The terrible smell of beer from my fellow passenger made me feel sick to my stomach.

“Please give me your address,” he started again.

“For what?” I asked him in surprise.

“I will pay you back the fare, you are a very kind man.”

“No, no, you need not to pay it back.”

“I must pay you back,” my fellow passenger got angry.

I felt nervous at that moment as I realized he was drunk. So, I agreed, “Ok, if you like you can pay it back.”

“You are so kind,” he said. And started a delirious speech about why people should help each other, what the religion said about it. Then the topic changed to another topic.

My drowsiness had gone by that time. At every stoppage I strongly prayed to God, “Please take him out of the bus,” but in vain!

At last the bus stopped few stoppage before mine. The fellow passenger got up and said, “Good night sir. I have to go.”

“Get down quickly,” I whispered very softly to myself.

“I will send the money by mail,” he said with a big smile.

I agreed with him and told him, “Good night.”

Oh! What a relief at last.

He walked towards the door, but before he got down the steps, he turned to me and to my surprise, said very loudly, F----- YOU GOOD MAN.”

Did someone laugh from the back seat!

## **Bitter Band**

Wasima Wali, Highlands Ranch, Colorado

Heart is crack of a wood  
or a building collapse-  
ocean will burst out of my eyes,  
Salty Sore;  
dark night, pitch dark  
coal, sand, wild aggressive wind  
and the phone rings....

Barrel of holy water, just one black spot  
orange sky, thunder, cyclone.  
World is falling apart;  
lonely as an old lady in the moon,  
wondering about my dark side,  
which I know not to own.

Stretching of a rope, torn apart  
plastic, elastic or clay-  
there is no hope,  
the roar of my core  
believe I changed but how much more?  
I fail to satisfy thy soul.

Scratching on a yellow wall, with huge white nails,  
breaks and makes that incessantly fearful noise-  
a sand stone;  
owl inside,  
hazy looks,  
silent observer of the joke  
no one understands my cold  
still the phone rings....

## **Not Being Part of the Statistic: ABCD**

Efoma Ahmed, 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, Centennial, Colorado

ABCD. The first thing you think is American Born Confused Desi. An acronym used to describe second-generation Desis in the United States. Let's analyze this. Desis immigrate to the U.S., have children, and their by-product is referred to as an ABCD. Is this a fair title for desis who are born and brought up in America? Although it appears somewhat clever, it fails to explain the difficulties faced by children being raised amid two distinct cultures. A majority of the Desi population does think of the second-generation as being a bit confused but the problem does not lie within the children.

Not all desis born in the U.S. are mystified about their culture, per say. I, for instance, am definitely not confused. I believe I am one very confident desi. My desi culture and tradition is very strong and important to me. They are of great value and I know that I am nothing without them. Then comes in the American culture. There are many things that I am not able to do with my friends because my culture and religion will not allow it, and yes, sometimes it does get pretty tough and frustrating. But I was brought up in a way that taught me to take all of the good things from each culture. I thank my parents a great deal for that, because without them, I would have become part of the statistic: American Born Confused Desi.

Apparently, it is a crime if you don't know how to speak your native language, or don't know any of the famous actors, or hang out too much with your American friends, or even talk to a guy. When committing any of these "crimes", one becomes a "typical American". Meaning you are automatically assumed unworthy of your culture and out-casted in the South Asian community.

I have been a victim of this. By this I am connoting the fact that there are several people in my community that go behind my back and say many hurtful and fallacious things about me. It actually used to be a much more prominent problem several years ago, but I confronted the people and it stopped for a while. I know that there still are anecdotes around the air about me, but I know that nothing can ever be effusively stopped. So I learned to live with them. Not only that, but once the populace got to know me better and I came to be closer and closer to the community, the majority of them realized that none of the rumors were true and came to know about me through me, not through others.

I personally have never had an identity crisis, although most would expect that I should be the most confused desi in the world, especially because I've never even been to Bangladesh and since I keep up with the Bengali, Indian and American culture. I am fluent in Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish, and of course English. I know the famous Indian actors and actresses, watch Indian movies whenever I get a chance; I even watch Bangla natoks with my parents, and keep up with the buzz with Hollywood.

I was born and brought up in the United States and feel as if I have a triple personality. I am aware of my desi customs, keep my parents happy by knowing my religious boundaries, and easily "fit in" with my American colleagues. Basically, I am working on balancing the values imposed on me by my parents with the aspects of "free" American culture.

As a result, I am an American with especially zealous desi culture and values. I am extraordinarily indebted to my parents for rearing me the way they did and imposing such great morals on me. Without them I would not be able to proudly say that I am far from being confused. I truly am an American Born Confident Desi.

## **Pride of Culture in Bangladesh**

Maisha Mir, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, Aurora, Colorado

Bangladesh is a country of many races and extraordinary pride. Its diverse ethnicities and social backgrounds result in a mixed, uplifting culture. When describing a society, one sole attribute isn't adequate; you must include several elements. Accordingly, you cannot fully illustrate a county's culture without mentioning its festivals, music, transportation means, clothing, language, food, and religion. When you put these features together, it results in a way of life and in turn describes the culture.

We celebrate special people, events, and dates through holidays and festivals. Therefore our festivals are fundamentals of our culture. There are various religious festivals existent in Bangladesh. Some of the Muslim rites are Eid-e-Miladunnabi, Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, Muharram etc. Hindus practice Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Kali Puja and many other pujas. There are a few common festivities, which are observed countrywide by people irrespective of races. One of which is Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bangla year. National festivals are Independence Day (26th March), 21st February (the National Mourning Day and World Mother Language Day), and Victory Day (16th December).

Music is a big part of what defines a race. Each group uses separate instruments and has different styles of music. In fact, sometimes you can even tell what a group's ethnicity is by just listening to their music. The traditional music in Bangladesh shares the perspectives of that of the Indian sub-continent. Music in Bangladesh can be divided into three distinct categories -classical, folk and modern. The classical music, both vocal and instrumental is rooted in the remote past of the sub-continent. Ustad Alauddin Khan and Ustad Ayet Ali Khan are two names in classical instrumental music that are internationally known. Bangladesh has a good number of musical instruments that originated there. Original country musical instruments include, Banshi (bamboo flute), Dhole (wooden drums), Ektara (a single stringed instrument), Dotara (a four stringed instrument), Mandira (a pair of metal bawls used as rhythm instrument), Khanjani, Sharinda etc. Now-a-days western instruments such as Guitar, Drums, Saxophone, Synthesizer etc. are being used alongside country instruments.

Some transportation means in Bangladesh are traditional and part of the culture. In rural areas bullock carts, buffalo carts and tomtoms (horse carts) are commonly used. Rickshaw is probably the most common vehicle in Bangladesh. Palki (a box-like vehicle carried on shoulders by six men) is a wedding transportation means. The Palki carries brides to the bridegrooms' places. Bicycles are widespread and used everywhere. Being a land crisscrossed by rivers, Bangladesh has a wide-ranged tradition of ferry transport. Wooden boat popularly called nawka is a vital means of rural communication.

Many cultures express themselves through clothing. The materials and fashions used show their way of life. Bangladeshi women customarily wear Saris. Jamdani was once world famous for it's most artistic and expensive ornamental fabric. Moslin, a fine and artistic type of cloth was well known worldwide. Today many women wear salwar kamijes around the house and in public. Recently, women have also started wearing pants, shirts, and fatuas. Traditionally males wear punjabis, fatuas and payjamas. Hindus wear dhoti for religious purposes. Now a days common dresses of males are shirts and pants.

Bangla is the official language of Bangladesh. It is also spoken in West Bengal. Bengalis protected Bangla from the clutches of Pakistani oppressors in 1952 by preventing Urdu from being the state language of East Pakistan where a vast majority of people spoke in Bangla.

Bengalis had to sacrifice lives for their mother tongue on February 21st, 1952. February 21st was declared International Mother Language Day by UNESCO, Bangla became a very respected language. Bangla has two present literary styles. One is called "Sadhu Bhasha" and the other "Chalit Bhasha". The former was created during the sixteenth century, and the later was a cultivated form of dialect and day-to-day talk. The difference between the two literary styles is not very sharp. The vocabulary is practically the same. The difference lies mainly in the forms of the pronoun and the verb.

Food is an enormous component in the recipe for culture. According to one proverb, fish plus rice equals Bengali, although there are many other favorite dishes. A typical Bangladeshi meal includes a curry of fish, meat, eggs or vegetables cooked in a spicy sauce, plus yellow lentils called dhal and plain rice or bhat. Spicy kebabs or a meatball and gravy dish known as kofta are popular, as are warm thin flat breads called chapatti or roti. Muslims are forbidden to eat pork and may wish to find a halal meat store where the meat is butchered and prepared according to Islamic religious guidelines. Drinking alcohol is also prohibited by religious rules. Sweet milky tea known as cha is popular. Cold drinks include fresh lime sodas and tender coconut water, otherwise known as dub. Local desserts are a dream for those with a sweet tooth. They are mostly milk sweets such as sandesh, roshagulla, rosmalai, gulab jamun, chom chom, and kalo jam. The yogurt is pink in color and very sweet like custard. Foreigners usually find these too sweet at first, but most people soon learn to enjoy them.

The most prominent religion in Bangladesh is Islam. In fact, Bangladesh is one of the largest Muslim countries in the world. About 80 percent of the population in Bangladesh is Muslim with mostly Sunnis and a small Shiite community. Hinduism constitutes about 12 percent of the population. There are significant numbers of Buddhists and Christians in Bangladesh. In Chittagong, Buddhist tribes formed the majority of the population and their religion appeared to be a mixture of tribal cults and Buddhist doctrines. There were approximately 600,000 Buddhists in Bangladesh, representing less than 1 percent of the population, according to the 1981 census. In the 1990s, Christianity had about 600,000 adherents, mainly Roman Catholic, and their numbers were growing rapidly. Bangladesh also has a very small number of tribal communities that obey a different type of religious beliefs.

Bangladesh is a country of astounding scenery, amazing art, and wonderful people. Its culture is no less. The language, food, and religion make up the base of Bangladesh. The clothing and music are the walls, and the festivals and transportation means are the furniture inside. You can't have walls without a base and the house won't amount to much without any furniture. Bangladesh has a culture in which its natives around the world are proud of. The remarkable culture Bangladesh possesses now was the work of hundreds of brilliant minds, deaths, and years. And in the end, the immense pride Bangladeshis held of their heritage was all the reward anyone needed.

## **My Last Visit in Bangladesh**

Syed M. Ahsan(Adit), 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Aurora, Colorado

My last visit in Bangladesh was last summer, in June, 2004. That was, when I was eight years old. I was only two years old when I came to the US. Actually, I can tell that it was my first visit because, I was five, on my first visit. This time I really understood how my own country is.

Since I went there in the summer, I found out how hot it was. I also found out how humid it was. In Bangladesh, there is a lot of load-shedding. Load-shedding is when the electricity goes out for a few minutes or hours. The funny part is, in the US the electricity only went out for two days in my life. Also, it just went out for a few seconds (because of blizzard). But in Bangladesh it went out almost every day from one to four times. I really wonder how the poor people survive.

The transports are very scary because Dhaka is such a busy city. The main transport in the US are cars. Almost everyone has cars here. But in Bangladesh, not everybody has cars. There are many kinds of transports such as Rickshaw, CNG, bus, truck, bicycles and cars. We can say Rickshaw is the main transport over there. I liked the Rickshaw best. Riding those are fun.

In Colorado, there is west Nile virus from mosquito. But in Bangladesh, there is a mosquito called Dengue, and if it bites you, you have something called Dengue fever. I hated when the mosquitoes bite you. To avoid them you can sleep in the net which is called 'moshari' in my country. But I really enjoyed it a lot because it's like a tent. Also, they have scrumptious, juicy, and sweet mango which I really miss. There are a lot of plaza's in Bangladesh. In the plazas there's bound to be at least 1 restaurant. One restaurant That I really liked was HFC (Hot Fried Chicken), which is KFC here. They also have Pizza Hut.

One thing I also liked was the Theme Parks. One of the most popular board games is Ludu. I can't forget how me, my cousin Rahi bhaia, my grandma and Tamzid(grandma's servant) played it every afternoon. It was really fun. I don't like how little kids are working everywhere in my country.

I miss my grandma's and Luna's cooking. I doubt you know who Luna is. She's my favorite aunt. My cousin Ramisa is awesome. I have a lot of relatives over there. The coolest part is, everyone loves and takes care of you. They gave me a lot of presents. To me, the smartest person in my country is my dear grandpa. I wish I could live together with them. In conclusion, it was a great trip.

## My Country

Mohammed Mostafa (Anik), 5th Grade, Aurora, Colorado

Bangladesh is a country full of many pleasures. It is about the size of the Wisconsin State. It's capital is Dhaka, which is mostly dominated by the government offices. Most of Bangladesh is rural, which includes farmland, villages, and rivers. Bangladesh has many rivers compared to the other countries in Asia. The rivers provide water for crops, drinking, and hydraulic electricity. The water fertilizes the soil and helps planting a great deal... But have occurs when it rains(Not needed). The rivers flood the villages and crops. 75% of the people in Bangladesh are Muslims, 20% are Hindus, and 5% belong to other religion. March 26th is our Independence Day. On This day in 1971 nearly 12,000 Bengalis died. Many soldiers devoted their lives in making our country independent. The beauty of Bangladesh inspired many poets. It has many beautiful springs and valleys. In the fall the sunset seems like a large balloon drifting in the sky. The scent of the fresh fruit hangs in the air like a parachute. I was 5 years old when I came to America but I still remember my experiences in Bangladesh. The people in Bangladesh have domestic help. They hire people to work but, some times, they don't take care of them or treat them appropriately. Bangladesh is an independent country but many of the people don't seem independent. There are beggars on the streets and most people walk by without even noticing them. There are homeless children but, most of the time, people don't even stop to help them. Nevertheless, my country, Bangladesh, is still great. I can only speak Bangla but I can't read or write. I can only write few words in Bangla.

---

---

## Sailor Moon Battles A Really Tiny Heart Snatcher

Tanzilla Purnota, Kindergarten, Denver, Colorado

One night SailorMoon battled a heart snatcher.

“Help,” said SailorMoon.

‘Let’s go. There’s no time to waste.’

‘Let’s go, we got to get it.’

‘Oh no, none of us can get that heart snatcher. The heart snatcher is too fast. We have to use are (*our*) powers.’

Choopider (*Jupiter*), thunder, attack. Mars, fire, attack. Mercury bubbles attacks. Venus, chase attacks.

SailorMoon has a magic tiara. And she is attacking with it.

“We did it. We got the pure heart crystal! And the person is safe.”

*Note from parents:* Purnota wrote this story in her school journal. We have found out that some of the characters in the story are similar with her favorite cartoon characters. However, her teacher opined that, at Purnota's age, this is quite usual and can be considered as original work. She (the teacher) also said that kid's at her age spell phonetically (e.g., 'hart' for 'heart') and suggested that we keep her spellings in the same form. We, however, corrected some of the spelling and punctuation at the point of computer composition.

## **A Trip to Yellowstone**

Rehan Arman Choudhury, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, Highlands Ranch, Colorado

During my summer holiday we went to Yellowstone with some of our friends and families. Yellowstone is a national park in Wyoming, which is about 800 miles away from Denver. On the first day of our journey we traveled half way. Nothing exciting happened but in one place when our SUV was going fast there was a strong cross wind. I thought our SUV was going to be blown away and I was so scared. But we managed to carry on.

The next morning while we were going nearer to Yellowstone the scenic beauty amazed me. Once we pass through the clouds between two mountains it felt so cool and dark. We stopped inside the park, there were trail paths everywhere. We walked and saw many geysers. The most interesting one is called "The Old Faithful", because it gushes out steam and water every ninety minutes interval. My favorite one is called the dragon mouth. Steam and sound comes out from the cave which looks like the mouth of a dragon. Although I have never seen a dragon before. The smell was awful near some geysers. All the geysers seem so alive and violent. I was not really scared as so many people were with us. There were lots of small geysers with colorful water surrounding them. I like the one which has jade color. Some of the geysers are not active anymore.

We also stopped on a road to let a bison cross. It was so huge, it stared at us then slowly walked away. I have never seen a bison so near. There were also some deer and bison at a distance.

One of our family friends stayed in a log cabin which is surrounded by lots of trees. At dawn a bear came and roamed round their cabin searching for food. When we visited them in the morning they told us how scared they were. It was a huge brown bear.

On the last part of our journey we went to Montana. That was on 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and we watched lots of fireworks near our motel. It was also raining hard and we had many hailstones. The weather changed quickly and it was sunny. The next day we started off for Denver. It was a long, long drive, sometimes I could see long straight road in front of me and mountains on either side. We used to stop for meals and enjoy our delicious foods with friends and families.

It was a great fun especially when we traveled with our friends. We also used to play games whenever we had the chance. Time went very quickly and no sooner we are back in Denver. I really liked Yellowstone and did not know before that the earth has so many cracks. From these cracks steam, water, and sounds comes out from inside the earth. It seems to me that earth is alive. Now, I am in 1<sup>st</sup> grade at school and looking forward to summer and hopefully another exciting summer holiday with friends and families.

## Road Trip!!

Samiha Matin, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Denver, Colorado

Last summer my family and I went to Moab, Utah and Yellowstone (which is in Wyoming.) First we went to Moab, Utah. We went with three other families. While we were passing, we saw glorious landscapes including snow white, mountains. Every place we went past seemed so exceptionally beautiful that it looked like it was out of a picture.

After a few hours we got into Utah. At the beginning, the land was isolated with only sand on both sides of the road. Later when we got farther into the state, we could see motels, hotels, restaurants, and of course houses. We stayed at a motel. After we had put everything away, we went sight seeing. First, we went to a sight called Balancing Rock. The balancing rock is a sight with a big rock on a little rock. Even though it looks like the big rock is going to fall down any moment, the rock is actually balancing.

After that we went to Arches National Park. At Arches National Park, we saw a north arch, and south arch and we saw small arches including the four arch windows. It was fun there because we got to climb all of the arches. Also from one spot the north and south arches look like two eyes and a nose. This is because the north arch is the left eye and the south arch is the right eye and in the middle is a rock mountain joining the two arches together, and of course the rock mountain looked like a nose, giving us the eyes and nose. The small arch windows we saw looked like windows and you could see the other side through the window. It was so high, by looking down, the trees looked about the size of an ant.

The next day we went to Canyon Lands for a picnic. After we had all finished eating, we went on two hiking trails. The first trail was easy, especially because it was short, but the second trail wasn't easy at all. On the second trail it was easy at the beginning, but got harder when we got closer to where we were heading. There was a big rock with a bridge that went across to the next big rock and behind that last big rock was a canyon. Now is the time I tell you of the big fright I got at Canyon Lands. I was climbing down to the bridge from the first big rock. Suddenly my foot slipped and I almost fell into the deep canyon. My dad put me on his shoulders and I screamed. We were about 65,000 feet above the ground. I was still shocked when we got there but the beautiful sight in front of me took my fears away.

The next day was the day we were going home, but before we got there we went to two other sights. First we went to The Four Corners. The Four Corners is the only place where one corner of four states meet, and it is the only place where you can be in four states at the same time. There were a lot of booths there. Some of the booths were selling hand made dream catchers and some were selling Indian jewelry.

After that we went to Mesa Verde. At Mesa Verde we saw an Indian village from long ago. We did not go close to the village because if we did it would take us longer to get home and because the ticket booth wasn't open. You had to purchase a ticket in order to see any of the Indian homes up close.

If you think that trip sounded fun, you can't even imagine the fun on our trip to Yellowstone National Park, which is located in Wyoming. Before I tell you about our trip, I'm going to tell you some history about Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone was established in 1872 (which is before any surrounding territories had become states.) Also in the early 1800s Native American Tribes crossed the Yellowstone Plateau in search of buffalo, medicinal plants, and other resources. Since then Yellowstone has been visited for more than 11,000 years. Now back to the trip. This time we went with four other families instead of three. On the way we past Teton National Park. We stopped there. It was very beautiful. We took a lot of pictures there. When we were going up to Yellowstone we saw the coolest thing. We saw clouds stuck in between two mountains. We were staying at a motel the first night. When we got there we put everything away and we went to the West Thumb Geyser Basin. There we saw the Fishing Cone, which is a geyser. Also we went to Grant Village for a picnic.

In the morning we went to Old Faithful. Old Faithful is the world's largest geyser. When we went it was sunny but soon it became rainy. We were about to leave but as soon as we were leaving, Old Faithful shot up. We all started to take pictures. It was very exciting to see. Before we left, we stopped at Madison to eat. That night we stayed in a lodge but one of the families had to stay in a cabin. In the morning we went to the cabin to eat breakfast and that is when the family staying in the cabin told me of the bear they saw in the morning. Some animals we saw included baby prairie dogs, and when we were leaving, I over heard some people say it was the cabin the bear had come to. That day we went to Mammoth Hot Springs, but since that was far away from where we were staying we stopped at Norris to eat lunch. When we got there we immediately went to the place to look at the hot springs. The geysers smelt really bad because of the sulfur in them. Every body there kept staring at us because we were such a big group. We were twenty-six people altogether. That day we stayed at a motel in Montana. It hailed a lot in the afternoon but it cleared at night. At night we all took out chairs at the patio and watched the fireworks. The next day was the day we were leaving but before we left we went to some shops and bought souvenirs. And that is the end of the two trips my family and I took last summer.

---

# **Maharaja**

## **CUISINE OF INDIA**

**ALL YOU CAN EAT  
BUFFET 7 DAYS A WEEK**

**Free Soft Drink with Ad**

**1132 W. Dillion Road  
(corner of McCasila & Dilton Rod.)  
Louisville, CO 80028  
303.665.0230**

## **Our World**

Afrida Anwar Sara, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Denver, Colorado

I hear the sounds of the forests  
I love to walk in the woods  
I see the birds fly  
I like the blue sky  
I want to know all about the world  
I am therefore for the world.

I wish there was no violence  
I feel happy when everybody is happy  
I cry when I am hurt  
I worry when you get hurt  
I wonder when the world is going to end  
I am therefore for the world.

I understand your words  
I say everything is nice  
I hope there is peace  
I try to save our world  
I am therefore for the world.

---

---

## **The Cat Who Wants an Owner**

Kashfi Qainat Khan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Aurora, Colorado

One day there was a cat that was lost. Her name was Sydney. She wanted an owner that would take care of her. Sydney was outside strolling along the sidewalk and saw a rabbit that was chewing on some carrots, in a garden.

“Hi” the rabbit said, “my name is Lucy, what’s your name?” she asked.

“My name is Sydney” she said. “Nice to meet you Sydney, what are you doing here in a bright sunny day?” Lucy asked.

“Well I’m not doing much, you see I am very lonely. I wish I had an owner” said Sydney with a sigh. “Let me clue you in. Animals that have owners are from the pet shop” Lucy said. “Maybe I could take you to the pet shop.”

After one whole hour they got to the pet shop. “Pass! Sydney! When someone opens the door, we’ll jump in” Lucy said. “Someone’s coming, 1, 2, 3 ! ..” Lucy said and they took a big jump. When they were inside they saw a lot of animals. There were people buying animals and some were just looking. There was a girl who wanted to buy a pet. She noticed Sydney and Lucy.

“Oh.. Mommy can I buy them?” she asked.

“Alright” her mom said.

Sydney was surprised. Sydney never thought her dream would ever come true. The new owners took both of them to their house. The girl took care of them just the way Sydney wanted and they lived happily ever after.

## How I Became a Singer

Daiyaan Wali-Mahmood, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, Highlands Ranch, Colorado

I was walking with my dog Stacey.

I suddenly saw a limo in there was a girl singing my favorite song “Any Where But Here” by Hilary Duff.

Stacey started running by the limo. She was dragging Me.! While I was being dragged I was thinking if that could have been Hilary Duff. I was so excited I couldn’t even breathe. The limo had finally stopped. I ran over to see who would get out of the limo. There she was blond hair, hazel eyes, and she was wearing a pink top with a black skirt, Hilary Duff!

Hilary Duff said, “hi” I said, “hi” back. She asked me if I needed a ride with Stacey. I didn’t think and replied, “Yes”. We got into the limo. It was big. When I became comfy she asked me what my name was, I said Daiyaan Wali-Mahmood, one of your biggest fans. I know a lot about you, I replied.

She asked me,” What’s your dog’s name?” I said, “Stacey”. Hilary Duff asked me, “Are you going to be watching my concert tonight?” I said, “Yes” She asked instead why don’t you be in the concert tonight “I screamed I would love to be in your concert tonight”.

It was 3:00, she took Stacey and I to her hotel room and hurried and showed me what I should say, wear and how I should dance. I felt like I could do this forever.

It was 5:00 p.m. I called my parents to be at the concert I also told them the whole story. They were fine with it. It was already 7:00 and the concert started. I did all kinds of cool moves. She also let my friends come. They were so anxious.

## Ujala

*BADRA, Hair Stylist*

*Hair & Beauty Salon*

### HAIR:

*CUTTING*

*COLOR*

*PERM HIGHLIGHT*

**HAIR DRESSING**

### THREADING:

**EYE BROW**

**UPPER LIP**

**FULLFACE**

*WAX ~~~ FACIAL ~~~ BRIDAL*

**FOR APPOINTMENT CALL: 720-404-1743 CELL; 303-337-4276 BUSINESSES**

**(WALK IN’S WELCOME)**

***\$5 OFF FOR COLOR AND HIGHLIGHT WITH THIS AD!!!***

**OPEN TUESDAY-SUNDAY**

**HOURS: 10 AM – 6 AM**

**12200 E. CORNEL AVE. UNIT 4 AURORA, CO 80014  
LOCATED NEAR KEY BANK AT CORNEL & PEORIA**

## **Bangladesh Independence Day**

Nadira Matin, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Denver, Colorado

Bangladesh's road to independence was long and hard. After the separation of India and Pakistan, citizens of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, wanted independence from the oppression of West Pakistan.

Bangladesh declared its independence on March 26, 1971. On the night of March 25<sup>th</sup>, the western Pakistani leader Hanadar Bahini (attacking force), whose main goal was to extinguish all signs of Bengali nationalism, unexpectedly attacked the eastern part of Pakistan. Hanadar Bahini and his troop of men marched into eastern Pakistan and destroyed all of the Bangladeshi property and set fire to all of the villages in that part of land. The Pakistani's destroyed everything the Bengali's had worked for and had killed 3,000,000 people. But the Pakistanis main goal was to kill off all of the educators in Bangladesh so that there would be no one to teach the Bengalis what to do next. They killed professors, doctors, engineers, university professors, journalists, Rajar Bagh police stations, Dhaka university students and any one else they thought to be able to help the Bangladeshis gain freedom. That same night, the head of the Philosophy department, the head of the English department, the History, Physics, Economics, and Political Science department were taken and killed by the Pakistani. The Pakistanis also killed the Statistics department head Maniruzzaman, his brother, and his two sons. The Pakistanis next target was the Dhaka universities student hostile which included the Iqbal hostile, the Jaghonnath hostile, and the Rokeya hostile.

Throughout all of the killings, the Bengali's had kept their dignity and continued with the movement, which was led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The eastern part of Pakistan had been demanding their freedom, or *shadheenata*. Thousands of people took part in the movement and even the simple villagers worked together for one main purpose – freedom. When independence was declared the battle was on for the people of Bangladesh to achieve independence. Over three million Bangladeshi people were killed by the armies of Pakistan. This battle between eastern and western Pakistan for eastern Pakistan's independence, went on for nine long, hard months. Even though Bangladesh declared independence on March 26<sup>th</sup>, it wasn't until December 16<sup>th</sup> that victory was achieved. December 16<sup>th</sup> is now celebrated as Victory Day.

**The Underground City**  
Ramisa Azam, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Castle Rock, Colorado

One day there was a girl from Montana and her name is Mandy. Mandy is nine years old and she can figure out mysteries. One afternoon Mandy moved to a place called the Underground City. It was always dark and never daytime and she asked a few girls how old they were and they said, "We are 30 years old". Mandy never saw any boys. There was only dark clothing and secret codes. Every time she goes to restaurants and she never get sit right.

One sunny afternoon Mandy was going to the museum. When she got to the door she had to do the secret code. It was 7206973 And she got it right. When she got in there was a woman crying. "Why are you crying?" asked Mandy. The crying woman replied, "I'm crying because one of my best paintings are stolen." This is a job for Mandy, the crime fighter. So Mandy and the manager went down the hall, it was really quiet and the manager showed Mandy where the painting was fine. Mandy asked question, "What happened to the painting?"

The manger said, "Well, all I remember is that it was 9:00 at night and I was in the security room eating my diner and when I turned around the painting was gone. So I put on the siren and the robber was gone just before the security guards got him or her." Mandy was writing everything down. When Mandy left the museum she asked the police what happened but she didn't know. Mandy started to look around and she found footprints in the mud. So she followed them. The footprints stopped at the corner of junk yard and found the painting so she returned it to the museum and she starts to wonder where the robber went.

"If I was a robber where would I go?" Mandy asked herself. So she asked a few girls where the robber would go and one of the girls said, "The robbers are always in the hobby store and they always act out if they were the people that work there." When Mandy left she went to the Hobby Store and she tricked the robbers by taking their hats off and proving that they are the robbers. When Mandy called police, they took them away.

**Best Wishes from**

**ESSEX HOUSE MOTEL**

*5390 South Santa Fe Drive*  
**Littleton CO 80120**  
**Telephone 303.798.2551**

## Bangladeshi Families in The Rocky Mountain Region

*Note: To the best of our knowledge, names are sorted by first or known name, e.g., search for Afsar Ali under A but search for Kalam Bhai under K, not under A for Abul.*

Name	City	Home Ph	e-mail
Aamer and Omar Chowdhury (Siblings)	Fort Collins	970-419-5534	
Afsar Ali and Neharun Bhabi	Littleton	303-797-7592	aafsar@qwest.net
Alam : SM Mahabubul Alam and Happy Bhabi	Denver	303-671-6098	smalam75@hotmail.com
Alam and Mili Bhabi	Lakewood	303-232-1845	
Alam: Nurul Alam and Laz Bhabi	Aurora	303-699-8498	nurul.alam@dot.state.co.us
Alamgir : Mohammed S Alamgir	Colorado Springs	719-487-7418	alamgir@compactpower.com
Aman Ashraful	Fort Collins	970-377-3484	aas@fc.hp.com
Ansar Ali	Lakewood	720-962-0872	ansar46@msn.com
Anwar Uddin	Denver	(303) 226-3711	anwar_rhyme@yahoo.com
Anwar Hossain and Ruma Bhabi	Denver	303-744-7408	ahossain@du.edu
Ashik Momen	Broomfield	303-868-3850	momena@louisville.stortek.com
Ashraf Uddin	Thornton	303-920-4055	uddin_101@yahoo.com
Asif : Muhammad Asif Jahan	Littleton	720-283-6492	ma_jahan@yahoo.com
Asif : Syed A. Hoque (Asif) and Irin Bhabi	Aurora	303-766-0320	hoque@usa.com
Azad Hossain and Shoma Bhabi	Aurora	(720) 870-7259	taniazad@yahoo.com
Babu : Shafiul Azam Babu and Luna Bhabi	Castle Rock	303-660-0104	mazam1@msn.com
Bashiruddin Ahmed	Littleton	720-283-1097	
Bazlur/Aminur Rahman	Littleton	303-347-9696	
Dabir Ahmed and Nadia Bhabi	Littleton	303-795-1052	
Delwar Hossain	Fort Collins	970-472-0374	<a href="mailto:delwar@uwyo.edu">delwar@uwyo.edu</a>
Dost Mohammad	Denver	303-322-3466	mkahn7861@aol.com
Elias Hossain	Aurora	303-690-8276	
Fahim Haidar	Lakewood	720-962-9290	
Farhana	Aurora	303-632-0126	
Farid U Khan and Zabin Bhabi	Aurora	720-870-0505	faridukhan@yahoo.com
Faruk Mansur Mir and Apple Bhabi	Aurora	720-870-1714	faruk_mir@msn.com
Fazlu Bhai	Aurora	303-399-5624	
Feroz Shams Mithu and Riva Bhabi	boulder	303-487-9488	firozes@hotmail.com
Habib Rahman	boulder	303-543-0505	mhrahan286@yahoo.com
Haider Khan	Denver	(720) 748-2555	hkhan@du.edu
Hasan: Mohammad Hasan	Longmont	303-776-5235	hasan_it@hotmail.com
Hasan Ahmad and Lina Bhabi	Longmont	303-772-1647	hasan.ahmad@geomenon.com
Irfan : Mohammad T. Irfan and Mukul	Denver	303-750-3115	mtirfan@yahoo.com
Jaid	Fort Collins	(970) 231-8822	rabdur@hotmail.com
Jamal U Ahmed	Fort Collins	970-493-1357	jua@fc.hp.com
Jewel : Rafiqul Islam Jewel and Jinat Bhabi	Denver	303-375-9077	rislam@qwest.com

Name	City	Home Ph	e-mail
Kabir Newaz and Bokul Bhabi	Thornton	303-280-6080	knewaz4649@yahoo.com
Kalam : Dr. Abul Kalam	Morrison	303-979-0481	abul.kalam@ccd.ccooes.edu
Kamrul - AKM Alam	Longmont	303-210-1043	akmalam@us.ibm.com
Khaleq: Abdul Khaleq Howlader	Aurora	303-338-8396	
Khayer : Abul Khayer Chowdhury and Sapna Bhabi	Highlands Ranch	303-346-4867	sjchowdhury@aol.com
Lutfur Rahman and Shati Bhabi	Littleton	(303) 791-0540	lrk2665@msn.com
Litton: Mahbub Alam	Aurora	303-284-3011	
Mackey and Shibu Bhabi	Aurora	303-306-1368	
Mahboob Mohammad Hossain	Aurora	303-743-8922	runjumiha@hotmail.com
Mahbub Chowdhury and Teethi Bhabi	Denver	303-574-0590	mahbub_chowdhury@netzero.net
Mamunur Rahman	Littleton	303-797-3493	
Maruf Rafik and Kanta Bhabi	Stonegate	720-851-5421	maruf_rafik@yahoo.com
Mashiur Talukder and Libby Bhabi	Vail	970-524-7586	matt.talukder@centurytel.com
Matin : Dr. M A Matin	Denver	720-748-3160	mmatin@du.edu
Maznu : AKM Mazibul Islam Maznu	Aurora	720-857-8284	maznu2000@aol.com
Mehedi A. Sardar and Faujia Bhabi	Thornton	(303) 255-2784	mehedi_sardar@yahoo.com
Milan Rahman	Highlands Ranch	303-471-0770	therahmans@wans.net
Mithu : Abdul Muktader Mithu and Emily Bhabi	Centennial	303-753-2368	mohammed.muktader@qwest.com
Mithu : Khairul Anam Mithu	Denver	303-693-9966	mithu305@aol.com
Mithu: Md. E. Chy and Dipali Bhabi	Fort Collins		mschowdhury@hotmail.com
Mizanoor Rahman and Smriti Bhabi	Denver	(303) 757-2412	rmizanoor@hotmail.com
Mohakem Khan and Sabrina Bhabi	Denver	303-695-6905	<a href="mailto:mohakem.khan@gmail.com">mohakem.khan@gmail.com</a>
Monjur Rahim and Rain Bhabi	Aurora	303-847-4964	mrahim@qwest.com
Morshed : ASM Monzurul Morshed (Sohel)	Fort Collins	970-282-7578	asm_m_morshed@hotmail.com
Mujibur Rahman	Louisville	(720) 890-9557	
Mushfiq Mobarak	Boulder	720-323-8297	ahmed.mobarak@colorado.edu
Naim Razzak and Farah Bhabi	Westminister	303-635-2964	mrazzak@hotmail.com
Nannu Howlader and Maya Bhabi	Aurora	720-374-8518	mhowlader_99@yahoo.com
Naquib Hossain	Denver	720-273-6271	
Nasim Bhai and Lipi Bhabi	Parker	720-876-0501	
Nasim Mia and Munni Bhabi	Denver	(303) 632-6329	nasim131@hotmail.com
Nayeem Alam and Zerine Bhabi	Longmont	(303) 772-7461	nayeem_alam@hotmail.com
Nizam Ahmad	Superior	303-494-5546	shamim55@aol.com
Nizam Khan and Annie Bhabi	Longmont	(303) 776-0465	khanm@colorado.edu
Nizam : Mohammed Nizam Colin and Maisha Bhabi	Denver	303-730-0185	colin090@hotmail.com
Panna : Golam Faruque and Lili Bhabi	Parker	(720) 851-6971	gfaruqu@hotmail.com
Parash and Tania Bhabi			
Prince/Masud/Shahid	Denver	(720) 941-2840	
Quamrul Choudhury and Tanni Bhabi	Highlands Ranch	303-388-6731	qamrul.choudhury@uchsc.edu
Rabeya Akhter/A. Shahid Khan	Fort Collins	970-224-2175	<a href="mailto:abdus Khan46@yahoo.com">abdus Khan46@yahoo.com</a>
Rafeul Alam	Aurora	720-870-6716	alamr@njc.org

Name	City	Home Ph	e-mail
Rajib Rashid and Shahreen Chowdhury	Erie	(303) 665-8361	shahreen@dampened.net
Romena Sabur	Denver	(303) 777-2294	rsabur@du.edu
Ruhul Amin	Denver	(303) 321-0549	
Russell : Yousuf Khan and Sara Bhabi	Broomfield	303-635-1910	khany@us.ibm.com
Sadee Rozario	Denver	(303) 355-5468	sadee1974@yahoo.com
Sadrul Ulah	Laramie	307-721-3065	ulas@uwyo.edu
Saif : Mohammad S. Islam (Saif) and Shomi Bhabi	Parker	303-840-1669	saif_jde@yahoo.com
Salam : M. A. Salam	Louisville	(303) 664-5325	msalam@geomega.com
Samad : Dr. Abdus Samad and Khokon Bhabi	Highlands Ranch	303-797-7110	msamad1@aol.com
Samiur Rahman			g2bear@hotmail.com
Sarfaraz Khan	Denver	303-669-0259	sarfaraz47@yahoo.com
Shahan: Abdullah Masud	Highlands Ranch	(720) 344-1935	aam1135@yahoo.com
Shaheen : Al Helal M. Moshaddeq (Shaheen) and Moni Bhabi	Aurora	(303) 699-5384	alhelal91@msn.com
Shahriar Ali	Westminster	(303) 469-9130	shahriar_denver@yahoo.com
Shamim Ahsan	Highlands Ranch	(303) 716-6018	omee99@hotmail.com
Sharif and Munni Bhabi	Denver	720-941-8151	sharif111@hotmail.com
Shariful: M. Shariful Islam	Aurora	303-371-8820	
Shirin Chowdhury	Littleton	303-791-9107	shirinchowdhury@netzero.net
Shuja Ather	Aurora	303-617-7488	
Syed Rahman & Monika Bhabi		303-841-9840	
Syed Hossain and Anita	Denver	(303) 699-1789	syed_hossain24@hotmail.com
Tanvir Islam	Fort Collins	970-219-7989	tanvirz@yahoo.com
Tanvir Ather		303-745-3239	
Taufiq Raihan and Shammi Bhabi	Aurora	720-266-4221	taufiqraihan@yahoo.com
Tauz Ahmed and Ruma Bhabi	Aurora	303-200-4475	tauз3@comcast.net
Tofael and Marcia	Denver		
Tomal : Rizwanur Rahman	Denver	(303) 744-0794	rrahman@du.edu
Zahid Chowdhury	Longmont	303-485-0546	zahid.chowdhury@st.com
Zain Mahmood and Wasima Bhabi	Highlands Ranch	720-344-9448	zainmahmood@yahoo.com
Zaman: Mohammad Nuruzamman	Longmont	303-776-7867	zaman85@hotmail.com
Zunaid Khan	Northglenn	303-439-7384	

### **Bangladesh – Facts And Figures**

Compiled by: Faruk Mansur Mir, Denver, Colorado

**Official Name:** The Peoples’ Republic Of Bangladesh

**Area :** 144,000 sq km (Land: 133,910 sq km and Water: 10,090 sq km)

**Capital:** Dhaka (Area 414 sq. km. Master plan 777 sq.km.)

**Location:** Lat. 20 deg. 34' - 26 deg. 38' north. Long. 88 deg. 01' - 92 deg. 41' east.

**Physical Overview:** Most of the areas of Bangladesh lies within the broad delta formed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers. Lands are exceedingly flat (other than some scattered hilly areas in the eastern part of the country), low-lying, and subject to annual flooding. Much fertile, alluvial soil is deposited by the floodwaters.

**Boundary:** Bounded by India from the north, east and west, Myanmar from the south-east and the Bay of Bengal from the south.

**Currency:** Currency unit is Taka. (100 Poisha = 1 Taka)

**Language:** Bangla (also known as Bengali) is the state language. English is widely spoken and understood.

**Literacy:** 48.3% male: 70.7% female: 59.2% total (World Bank, 1999 Data)

**Universities.** There are 11 government universities and approximately 20 private universities in Bangladesh.

**Population:** 143.8 millions (2002 estimate) **Population growth rate:** 1.8 (2002 estimate)

**Age structure:** 0-14 years- 38%, 15-64 years 59%, 65 years and over: 3% (1999 est.)

**Sex ratio:** 1.06 male(s)/female

**Life Expectancy:** Total – 61.3, Female – 61.2, Male – 61.5

**Total fertility rate:** 3 children born/woman (2002 est.)

**Religions:** Muslim – 86%, Hindu - 12%, Christian , Buddhist and others – 2%

**Climate:** Tropical; cool, dry winter (October to March); hot, humid summer (March to June); cool, rainy monsoon (June to October)

**Major Cities:** Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet

**Principal Rivers:** Padma, Meghna, Jamuna, Brahmaputra, Madhumati, Surma and Kushiara

**Principal Crops:** Rice, jute, tobacco, tea, sugarcane, vegetables, potato, pulses, etc.

**Fruits :** Mango, banana, pineapple, jack-fruit, water-melon, green coconut, guava, etc.

**Major Industries :** Readymade Garments, Jute, sugar, paper, textiles, fertilizers, cement, steel, natural gas, oil-refinery, newsprint, power generation.

**GDP Per Capita:** \$390 (2002 est.)

**GDP Per Capita (purchasing power parity):** \$1,900 (2003 est.)

**GDP Growth Rate:** 5.3% (2003 estimate)

**GDP Composition by sector:** *agriculture:* 21.7%, *industry:* 26.6%, *services:* 51.7% (2003 est.)

**Population below poverty line:** 35.6% (1995-96 est.)

**Income Distribution:** *lowest 10%:* 4.1% , *highest 10%:* 23.7% (1992)

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):** 5.6% (2003 est.)

**Airports :** Dhaka International Airport, Chittagong Int'l Airport, Sylhet Int'l Airport

**Sea Ports:** Chittagong , Mongla

### **PLACES OF INTEREST**

**Cox's Bazar:** Located to the south of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar is the tourist capital of Bangladesh. Having the world's longest unbroken (120 km.) beach sloping gently down to the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal against the picturesque background of a chain of hill covered with deep green forests, Cox's Bazar is one of the most attractive tourist spots in the world.

**Sundarbans:** Located at about 320km. West of Dhaka. Here in the south, spread over an area of about 6000 sq. km. of delta swamps along the coastal belt of Khulna is the biggest mangrove forest, Sundarbans (beautiful forest) - the home of the Royal Bengal Tiger.

**Paharpur:** In Paharpur, a small village 5 km. west of Jamalganj railway station in the greater Rajshahi district, the remains of the most important and the largest known monastery south of the Himalayas has been excavated. This 8th century A.D. archaeological find covers approximately an area of 27 acres of land. It has been declared as a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

**FOR  
LEASE**

**7711 & 7717 W. 6th Avenue  
Lakewood, CO 80215  
Jefferson County**

## **6 th Avenue Business Center**

**Office / Flex / Service / Warehouse  
800 SF to 4500 SF**



- 30-100% Office Finish
- 3-5 Year Lease Terms
- 6th Ave. Visibility
- Access 6th & Wadsworth Blvd.
- Masonry Block Construction
- 12' Clear Height
- Dock and Drive-in Loading
- Ample Parking
- Built 1987
- Versatile Space
- Heat/AC - Gas/Ref
- 100% Office Units 455 - 4,133 SF

**GAROFALO**

Commercial / Industrial Real Estate

Contact: Ronald J. Garofalo  
303-740-9633 Fax 303-221-2556  
6940 S. Steele Street  
Centennial, CO 80122



**ডেনভারে এটিএন বাংলার পরিবেশক**

এটিএন ছাড়াও রয়েছে আরও ৪৬টি চ্যানেল  
এবং ফ্রী ডিশ সংযোগ সুবিধা  
ফোন - ৭২০-৯৩৬-৭১২৮

# Taj Mahal III

*AUTHENTIC  
INDIAN CUISINE  
High Quality Food-No MSG  
Open 7 Days A Week*



**Lunch Buffet 7 Days A Week**

*Feel the love at Taj Mahal III*

FOOD ★ ★ ★  
SERVICE ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2  
AMBIENCE ★ ★ ★ ★  
\$\$

Star Rating by Catherine Christiansen  
Daily Camera Restaurant Critic

1075 South Boulder Rd., Unit 145  
Northwest Corner of Hwy 42 & South Boulder Rd.  
Christopher Plaza Louisville  
303-926-0999

MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

## Haat Bazar

*(Only grocery store in Colorado serving our Bengali community)*

All types of grocery- dals, spices, fish, vegetables, farm, fresh, goat, meat, beef, chicken, lamb, duck, dry fish, audio video DVD, CD, Dresses, Alauddin sweet, snacks are available

Some of our new pieces are as follows

Ruhi (whole)- \$1.99/lb Hilsha (whole)- \$2.99/lb

Goat meat (whole) Australia -\$2.89/lb Goat meat (whole) local-\$3.49/lb

Chicken regular (whole)- 99c/each All SHAN masala mix packets- 79c/each

**Price on All Spices are Reduced**

Catering service (Bengali Style) available at very reasonable price

Special: we have variety of dresses- Saloar Kamij, Shari

2648 south parker road #6B

Aurora, co 80014

Parker and Yale crossing (near subway)

Phone: 303-750-1200 Hours: 7 days- 11:00 am to 9:00 pm

## Taste the best of India

Delight in the award-winning cuisine at Little India. Featuring traditional and innovative Indian dishes to satisfy any discriminating palate.

### Voted

- "Best Indian Restaurant"
- Best Lunch Buffet by Westword Readers for the past 6 years!
- Top of the Town 2002, 2003, & 2004. 5280
- Best Indian, Best Lunch Buffet-Inside Denver
- Top Lunch Buffet- Rocky Mountain news 2004 & 2005
- Best Indian Restaurant- CitySearch 2004

### Little India Fine Cuisine

1533 Champa St. at 15<sup>th</sup> St. 303.629.5777

303 E. Sixth Ave. at Grant St. 303.871.9777

Coming Soon: 2390 S. Downing Street Location



Clear Talk to  
**Any Destination**  
 in the World

**gTalk Calling Service**

**Sample Rates**

■ Dhaka Local : 4.75 c/min	■ India-Kolkata : 0.15 c/min
■ Chittagong : 7.75 c/min	■ India-Hydrabad : 0.065 c/min
■ Sylhet : 7.0 c/min	■ Nepal-Kathmandu : 0.25 c/min
■ BD Mobile : 0.12 c/min	■ USA/Canada : 3.25 c/min
■ India-Bombay : 0.13 c/min	■ UK/AU : 3.75 c/min

**Broadband IP Phone Service (gTalk IP Phone)**

- 1) Guranteed low rates. 50 to 80% lower than Vonage, Lingo etc.
- 2) Convenience of dialing directly from country code i.e. NO need to dial access number, PIN, or 011.
- 3) No initial or monthly fees. No minimum monthly usage.
- 4) Your balance is never lost.
- 5) Avoid frequently buying and scratching cards.
- 6) Transparency of billing - Manage your own password protected account, monitor call logs on-line 24/7.
- 7) Your ideal long distance service using desk top IP Phone set.
- 8) Call time charged for exact duration rounded up to a minute. ( Others round to 3 or 5 minutes.)
- 9) Recharge your balance on-line in any amount.
- 10) Guaranteed 30 day return policy for risk free trial.

**BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSCRIBING gTalk SERVICE:**

**Availability of broadband service (Cable Modem or DSL).**

**CONTACT :** 17106 Preston Bend Drive, Dallas, TX -75248, USA, Tel: 214-49339499 , 303-5430505

EMAIL ADDRESS: info@genusys.us, Visit [www.gtalk.us](http://www.gtalk.us) for rates, country code, account history.