



PIER 66



An Improbable Journey

PRESIDENT

TARIQ HOUSE

EIGHT

QUAZI NAZRUL ISLAM (MASUM)

Coming to America

"একটা টাকা দিবেন ভাই"

"কি করবেন এই টাকাটা দিয়ে?"

আমতা আমতা করে মাথা চুলকাচ্ছে এবার সে। পরনে জির্গবস্ত্র, চুল উষ্ণুষ্ণু, মলিন চেহারা ..একবার সে হাসছে, আবার কাদছে সে ..দস্তহীন মুখের কথাও ঠিক বোঝা যাচ্ছিল না।

লস এঙ্গেলেস এর বাঙালির এক দোকানের সামনে ফুটপাথে কথা হচ্ছিল দুই পুরনো বন্ধুর।



কিছু কিছু ক্রেতা মুখ ঘুরিয়ে নিচ্ছে ভিশ্বকের আবেদনে আর কিছু পথিক তাচ্ছল্লর হাসি দিয়ে সরে পরছে।

ভিশ্বক নাছারা বান্দা, এক টাকা (ডলার) তার চাই! এবার বন্ধু বলল তাকে, উঠে দাড়াও, যদি তুলতে দাও তবে এক ডলার দেবো।

ডলার রের নাম শুনতেই লাফ দিয়ে উঠলো ভিশ্বক। ছবি নিয়ে বন্ধু তাকে এক ডলার হাতে দিল।

এবার বন্ধুর ধর্মের বাধ ভাঙ্গলো, "ওই শুওরের বাচ্চা, আমাকে চিনিস না?"

উদ্ভান্ত ভিশ্বক একবার বলে উঠলো "হা, আপনাকে আমি চিনি, আপনি অমূকের ভাই না? তমূকের বন্ধু না?"

"শালা কুতার বাচ্চা, আমি মানিক, তোর এই কি অবস্থা?" এবার চিনলো।

"এইতো ওয়ার্ক পার্মিটটা হয়ে গেলেই চাকুরী শুরু করবো মাসুম, দুই মিলিয়ন ডলার হাতে পাবো কিছু দিনের বাদেই, তখন সবাইকে টাকা দান করবো ইত্যাদি।

টেলিফোন এ কথা হচ্ছিল আমার। তার বর্ণনা দিতে গিয়ে কষ্ট হচ্ছিল ... গলায় কাল্লার সুর। বলল জানিস ওর অবস্থা দুই বছর আগে যা দেখেছি তার চেও অনেক খারাপ, মন বলছে পরের বার শুধু একটাই খবর শুনব, ওর মৃত্যুর খবর, বলেই টেলিফোন রেখে দিলাম। রোজার মাস এইটা, এ মাসে নাকি আল্লাহ তায়ালা সবার প্রার্থনা শুনেন। বন্ধুরা, মন থেকে তার জন্য একটু দোআ করো। আমিন ...!

They will do better

When I came to Los Angeles what seems like a hundred years ago, a few others came

around the same time. Salim, Azam, Dalu, Saber, Kakon, Dentist Eshu a few of my childhood friends from Government Laboratory High School and a number of my lifelong friends from Elephant Road, all congregated around the mean streets of an unforgiving city. My crowd was split between the two extreme. One group, an overly religious and the other found everything glittering to be gold.

I grew up in autocratic environment. My father, an angry, egotistical, stubborn, honest and suspicious by nature due to his profession was the lightning rod. My mother, on the flip side, was kind, self-educated, spirituality and earthly religious. She was an open hearted woman who spent all her time and money to help other less fortunate relatives. I feared God, but more my father. My mother was the place where I found my sanctuary during my childhood.

This fear had a profound impact on my life in the United States. When my friends drowned themselves in alcohol and drugs, I could not lift a can of beer toward my lips. When my roommate made stylistic rings of smoke, I didn't have the courage to take a puff. When they took me to the dancing clubs, I froze on the sideline. When they brought women in our apartment, I fled. My friends understood. Fear dictated my act.

I was 25 at that time. It was ten thousand miles away from my parents and still I was acting like a child with hands caught in the cookie Jar in the middle of the night. Beyond the obvious regrets of not cashing in my youth, I solemnly wondered, what if? Had I made different choices?

I'll perhaps never know. But, I still wish I somehow found a way to moderate my friends. It would have saved a tear drop or two. A life or more. We had such dreams. Bright dreams. Big dreams. And we had no time.

Now, a father of three, working sixty hours a week in a cold windy city to give my children an opportunity that I may have missed. My fears have given away to love. Anger to compassion. Regrets have faded away for a resolute hope. They will do better. Much better.



Ships for Scholars

PHILANTHROPIST

QASIM HOUSE

SIX

280

ZAHIDUS MIA (DIPOK)



I was a young engineer back in those days, but my passion was always ORCA. There was always an intense desire to do something for my beloved alumni. With the limited fund I had at the time, Zanvir Endowment Fund was established in 1993 as a model of a self-sustaining scholarship fund. The target was to provide three to four students at Tk 300 to 500 per month based on needs, with a cap of Tk 16,000 per year in total.

Tulu (Mamdud) and Tunu (Mofazzal) were supportive and instrumental in getting Zanvir Fund off the ground. We established a legal structure executed by then ORCA President Moyeed Bhai (2/42), SG Tunu (10/567) and Scholarship Committee Chair Ahsan Bhai (2/36). The legal document was very specific in terms of the operating details of the fund. Unfortunately, many if not most ORCA members are not even aware of the existence of this fund and as such the fund has been at times underutilized. I'm attaching the entire text of the fully executed legal framework here such that it raises the awareness for the current generation of cadets. It is my personal mission to ensure that all cadets are able to receive education in Bangladesh regardless of their economic conditions.

SCHOLARSHIP CHARTER

THIS IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REGISTERED ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH OF APRIL IN THE YEAR 1993, IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH UNDER THE NAME OF "ZANVIR EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND", FROM HEREON REFERRED TO SIMPLY AS "THE FUND". THE FUND WILL

BE OPERATED UNDER THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES.

ARTICLE I

THE FUND IS BEING ESTABLISHED BY ZAHIDUS SALAM MIA, AN ALUMNI OF RAJSHAHI CADET COLLEGE. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE FUND IS TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE STUDENTS TO OBTAIN A DECENT EDUCATION WITHIN BANGLADESH.

EVEN THOUGH THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THIS FUND IS TO OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS, IF THE INCOME OF THE FUND PERMITS AND THERE IS ENOUGH INTEREST AMONG THE BOARD MEMBERS AND THE BENEFICIARIES, OTHER ENDEAVORS MAY BE UNDER TAKEN.

ARTICLE II

THE FUND WILL BE OPERATED BY TWO SEPARATE BOARDS. ONE BOARD WILL BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FINANCES OF THE FUND AND WILL BE CALLED THE "BOARD OF FINANCES". THE OTHER WILL OPERATE THE PROGRAMS, AND WILL BE KNOWN AS THE "OPERATING BOARD".

A) THE OPERATING BOARD WILL HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SETTING AND EXECUTING THE PROGRAM OF THE FUND. THE OPERATING BOARD WILL COMPRISE OF THE ORCA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE WITH AN ADDITIONAL MEMBER BEING ZAHIDUS SALAM MIA OR HIS DESIGNATE. THE ADDITIONAL MEMEBR WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO CAST A VOTE IN CASE OF A TIE IN PASSING ANY RESOLUTION.

B) THE BOARD OF FINANCES WILL HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HANDLING THE ENTIRE FINANCIAL MATTERS OF THE FUND INCLUDING INVESTING, CASH OUTFLOW AND REINVESTING. THE BOARD OF FINANCE WILL COMPRISE OF SECRETARY GENERAL ,ORCA AND THE PRESIDENT OF ORCA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE, ONE PERSON FROM THE FINANCE COMMUNITY (BANKING,INVESTMENT, ETC.), AND ZAHIDUS SALAM MIA OR HIS DESIGNATE AS THE ADVISOR.

C) MEMBERS OF BOTH BOARDS WILL BE UNPAID VOLUNTEERS. MEMBERS WILL BE APPOINTED TO TWO-YEAR TERMS, WITH NO LIMITS ON NUMBER OF TERMS.

ARTICLE III

THE FUND WILL OPERATE WITH THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RESTRAINT USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES

A) THE ASSETS OF THE FUND ARE TO BE INVESTED IN HIGHLY SAFE, HIGH YIELDING FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, PREFERABLY BACKED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

B) THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ASSET IS NEVER TO BE SPENT, BORROWED AGAINST, OR PUT ON LIEN. IN OTHER WORDS THE PRINCIPAL IS NEVER TO BE JEOPARDIZED.

C) ANY NEW DONATIONS TO THE FUND WILL BE CONSIDERED AS THE PRINCIPAL OF THE FUND, AND AS SUCH CAN NOT BE SPENT; UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY THE DONOR.

D) TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF THE FUND IN ANY YEAR WILL BE LIMITED TO THE FUND'S INCOME FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

E) ADMINISTRATIVE COST OF THE FUND IN ANY YEAR CANNOT EXCEED 3% OF THE INCOME OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

F) ANY INCOME NOT SPENT WITHIN TWELVE MONTHS WILL BE ROLLED OVER WITH THE PRINCIPAL, AND AS SUCH CANNOT BE SPENT.

G) IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP UP WITH INFLATION, EACH YEAR 10% OR TK 10,000 (WHICHEVER IS LESS) OF THE INCOME WILL BE ROLLED-OVER WITH THE PRINCIPAL, UNLESS NEW DONATIONS INCREASES THE ASSETS OF THE ENDOWMENT BY AT LEAST 10%.

EXCEPTIONS TO ITEMS E,F AND G MAY BE MADE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS WITH AN UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT OF THE BOARD OF FINANCES.

ARTICLE IV

THE BOARD OF FINANCES WILL MEET AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR TO DECIDE ON THE FUND'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT YEAR AND THE EXPECTED INCOME. AT THE SAME TIME IT WILL DETERMINE THE EXACT INCOME OF THE FUND FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

IN ADDITION THE BOARD MAY DECIDE TO MEET AS MANY TIMES AS NECESSARY TO EFFECTIVELY EXECUTE AND MONITOR THE INVESTMENT PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES OF THE FUND.

ARTICLE V

THE OPERATING BOARD MUST MEET, WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE YEARLY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF FINANCES, TO PUT TOGETHER THE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS BASED ON THE AVAILABLE FINANCING. AT THE SAME TIME IT WILL PUT TOGETHER A TENTATIVE PLAN FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR BASED ON THE PROJECTED INCOME OF THE FUND.

IN ADDITION, THE OPERATING BOARD WILL MEET AT LEAST ONE MORE TIME WITHIN SIX MONTHS TO MEASURE THE PROGRESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ONGOING PROGRAMS.

IN ADDITION TO THE TWICE A YEAR MEETINGS THE BOARD MAY DECIDE TO MEET AS MANY TIMES AS NECESSARY TO MODIFY, EXECUTE, OR MONITOR THE PROGRAMS.

ARTICLE VI

ANY NEW PROGRAM MUST BE PROPOSED TO THE OPERATING BOARD WITH A VERY DETAILED ACTION PLAN INCLUDING A REALISTIC AND CONSERVATIVE FINANCIAL PLAN THAT FOLLOWS THE GUIDELINES OF ARTICLE III.

ARTICLE VII

THE OPERATING BOARD WILL MANAGE THE SCHOLARSHIPS INCLUDING THE NUMBER AND AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS TO BE OFFERED.

THE GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION PROCESS ARE IN ATTACHMENT I. ANY CHANGES OR EXCEPTIONS TO THESE GUIDELINES WILL REQUIRE AN UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT OF THE OPERATING BOARD.

ARTICLE VIII

IN THE EVENT THE FUND IS DISSOLVED, THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ASSETS OF THE FUND WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY AN IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE MADE OF AT LEAST 4 PERSONS, SELECTED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE OPERATING BOARD AND APPROVED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE BOARD OF FINANCES. THE ASSETS SHOULD BE EITHER DONATED TO SOME WORTHY CAUSE OR GIVEN BACK TO THE

ORIGINAL DONORS, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

THIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS PART OF THE ZANVIR EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND. THIS PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE AND FACILITATE EDUCATION WITHIN BANGLADESH FOR QUALIFIED STUDENTS.

FOLLOWING ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION AND OPERATION OF THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

1. THE OPERATING BOARD OF THE ZANVIR EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND OR A DESIGNATED SUB-COMMITTEE WILL RECEIVE AND SCREEN ALL THE APPLICATIONS. AS A CURTESY, THE OPERATING BOARD IS EXPECTED TO SEND THE PARTICULARS (RESUME) OF THE SELECTED CANDIDATES TO THE FOUNDER OF THE FUND FOR HIS REVIEW AND OPINIONS PRIOR TO THE FINAL SELECTION OF THE CANDIDATES.

2. CANDIDATES MUST BE AN OLD RAJSHAHI CADETS ASSOCIATION'S (ORCA) MEMBER, AND THE CURRENT AND THE PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF HIS PARENTS (GUARDIANS IF BOTH PARENTS ARE DECEASED) MUST BE IN THE NORTH BENGAL REGION.

IN CASE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH QUALIFIED CANDIDATES, THEN THE OPERATING BOARD WILL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO SELECT ALTERNATE CANDIDATES.

3. CANDIDATES MUST BE PURSUING THEIR STUDIES IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE A) MEDICINE, B) ENGINEERING C) AGRICULTURE OR ANIMAL HUSBANDRY D) BUSINESS, ECONOMICS, OR FINANCE E) SCIENCES.

THE INTENTION IS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO PURSUE STUDIES IN THE FIELDS THAT WILL HELP BANGLADESH TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES.

4. ALL COMPLETE APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HIS BATCHMATE ON A PRESCRIBED FORMAT. THIS RECOMMENDATION SHALL BE SEND DIRECTLY TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE. NEW RECOMMENDATIONS MUST BE SEND EACH TIME THE SCHOLARSHIP IS RENEWED.

5. IN ADDITION TO NORMAL BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION, EACH APPLICANT WILL BE REQUIRED TO WRITE AN ESSAY IN ENGLISH (LESS THAN 500 WORDS). THE ESSAY SHOULD INCLUDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICANT THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED, WHAT ARE HIS FUTURE GOALS AND PLANS, WHY SHOULD SOMEONE INVEST IN HIS FUTURE (EDUCATION) AND HOW DOES HE PLAN TO RETURN HIS GRATITUDE.

6. CANDIDATES WILL BE JUDGED IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE A) FINANCIAL NEED B) ACADEMICS C) CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL D) ESSAY E) EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

7. ONCE A SCHOLARSHIP IS OFFERED, EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO CONTINUE THE SCHOLARSHIP FOR UPTO SIX YEARS, SO THE STUDENT MAY FINISH HIS STUDIES WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS. THE SCHOLARSHIP WILL BE RENEWED EACH YEAR BASED ON THE CANDIDATE'S PREVIOUS YEAR'S PERFORMANCE.

8. THIS SCHOLARSHIP IS NOT MEANT TO BE A FREE GIFT, BUT A PRIVILEGE FOR DESERVING STUDENT. AS SUCH, THE RECIPIENTS ARE EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS IN THEIR BEHAVIOR AND MORAL, AND BE A ROLE MODEL TO OTHERS. A CANDIDATE WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED FOR SCHOLARSHIP FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:-

IF HE DOES NOT MAINTAIN A MINIMUM AVERAGE OF 55% MARKS IN EACH GRADING PERIOD, AND 60% IN A PARTICULAR YEAR IN WHICH HE IS THE RECEIPT OF THE FUND, OR AN EQUIVALENT OF THE AFORESAID.

IF HE IS FOUND TO BE INVOLVED WITH ANY ACTIVITY SUBVERSIVE TO THE SOCIETY AND THE LAWS-IN-FORCE, AND HIS OVERALL ACTIVITIES ARE NOT FOUND TO BE SATISFACTORY IN THE OPINION OF THE OPERATING BOARD, THEN HIS SCHOLARSHIP MAY BE CANCELLED, OR SUSPENDED WITHOUT SHOWING ANY REASON FOR THE SAME.

IF ANY OF THE INFORMATIONS SUPPLIED AND RELIED BY HIM ON ASSESSING HIS MERIT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP IS FOUND TO HAVE BEEN FABRICATED, FALSE OR EXERATED, THEN HIS SCHOLARSHIP MAY BE CANCELLED, OR SUSPENDED AS THE

OPERATING BOARD DECIDES WITHOUT SHOWING ANY REASON FOR THE SAME.

9. AS EACH RECIPIENT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP BECOMES A WAGE EARNER, HE WILL BE URGED AND EXPECTED TO MAKE SOME VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS ON A REGULAR BASIS TO THIS FUND, NO MATTER HOW SMALL. THIS IS NOT BINDING UPON THE RECIPIENTS, BUT AS GRATITUDE TOWARDS THE FUND AND TO BUILD IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



Arts & Science of Structure

ENGINEER

QASIM HOUSE

SEVENTEEN

945

MOSHARRAF HOSSAIN

I am ordered to write something to some kind of publication of ORCA-USA. Right now I am feeling like that cadet Mosharraf of class-7, who has to obey the order of a senior or risk serious punishment. So I am in it to writing something that will probably be not pleasant reading to you all. Please forgive my handwriting, sorry hand-typing.



I will try my best to write something about myself, Mosharraf Hossain. I am a structural engineer by profession, more precisely, I design buildings. As a principal of a small structural design and engineering company named Axis Design Group (ADG) based in the New York City metro area. In the course of my career I have had extensive exposure to multi-story building design and construction. I really enjoy the analysis and design of high-rise buildings. I have been working as a structural engineer for more than twenty years. I love my involvement in all phases of the structural design of a project, from the development of initial analytical models and conceptual framing schemes to the performance of Contract Administration and quality assurance services during construction. To be honest, that is a lot of exacerbation, copied from my resume. You all know that's the way I have to present my experience to get a job.

Structural Engineering deals with the analysis and design of structures that support or resist loads. Most commonly Structural engineers are involved in the design of buildings, bridges and other large non-

building structures. Structural engineers must ensure that their design of any structure satisfy certain safety and serviceability requirements. In case of a building design, these given design criteria come from Building Code. While meeting the



safety and serviceability, the third and probably the most important objective of a structural engineer is to achieve the cost-effective solution. Safety, Serviceability and Economy; quite often, the third objective is in conflict with the first two. After all everything boils down to money, no one will build a structure which is not economically viable.

I am inspired by the work of Dr. Fazlur Rahman Khan; the legendary designer of 110 story Sears tower (now known as Willis tower), 100 story John Hancock Center in Chicago and Jeddah Hajj Terminal. Dr. Fazlur Rahman Khan is still probably the most revered structural engineer in the world. He died in 1982 at the age of only 53 years. The progressive ideas developed by Dr. Khan in the 1960s and 70s form the basis of modern high-rise building design.

Having described all technical jargons, let me tell you a funny quote about structural engineering from a structural engineer, Eric H. Brown, "Structural engineering is the art of molding materials we do not really understand, into shapes we cannot really

analyze, so as to withstand forces we cannot really access, in such a way that the public does not really suspect". So, you see it's not difficult to be a Structural Engineer.

Education

M.S. in Civil Engineering, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

B.S. in Civil Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Bangladesh

Registrations

Registered Professional Engineer (P.E.), New York, Texas, Michigan & Delaware

LEED Accredited Professional (LEED-AP, BD+C)



Row, row, row your boat

ADVENTURER

TARIQ HOUSE

SIX

308

ABDUR RASHID



One day in late July, 1969, me and my father left Dhaka by train, on our way to RCC, or the then ACC. On that day, or the day before, three astronauts left KSC (Kennedy Space Center) in Cape Canaveral, Florida, USA, strapped inside a huge 3-stage rocket, on their way to land on the moon, for the first time for any human. Why do I bring up these two coincidences, 46 years later? Well, if the Saturn 5 lifted off today, I could have seen it from my frontyard, and the thunderous liftoff would certainly have rattled the windows of our house. Unfortunately, we lack the technology today to go and land on the moon and come back. This is no joke. This is a grand anomaly in the history of human exploration. Early explorers have endured and struggled to establish traveling routes that we take for granted and travel the same routes with ease, speed and safety. Only when it comes to space exploration, we cannot do today what we did a generation ago. There is lot to learn here, about high level of arrogance and low level of long-term planning, but that is a different story.

How or why I did get to ACC? I have been told that my parents, more specifically my mother, had problem managing me, and a friend suggested that I be shipped to a cadet college. I was not a trouble maker. I was just a wanderer who marched to the beat of a different drummer. My daily walk back from school to home was routinely interrupted and greatly delayed by other activities, all harmless. This caused great concern and

distress to my mother, the extent of which was unknown to me until much later when my daughter would not return home as scheduled. Well, we did not have phones in those, even landlines; we were truly "wireless".

So when my parents suggested that I study harder so I could get admission in a cadet college, I did not fathom their motivation, and ended up helping them in their mission. After passing the written tests I went for the "interview". Principal Kayani said I was too little and asked me to come back the next year. Somewhat dejected, I was back to my local school. Later the same day, or the next day, my father rushed to the school to pick me up and take me to a second interview.

Thus, I ended up in Sardah. My years there, especially the first four, were not happy years. Still listened to a different drummer, and never got used to a regimented life. To preempt any misunderstanding, I must declare that those six years changed my life, and my two brothers' who also ended up there, for the better. Time served at the cadet college provided an atmosphere conducive to education and growth that was not generally available to my compatriots outside. And my family could not have afforded a proper education for the children.

In those days the library was new, and had a great collection of books, including a set of Encyclopedia Britannica. I think I read most

every book that was there. I might have been the only student ever to be thrown out of the library, and all I ever did in the library was read. There were hobby groups, one being an Aeromodelling Club, which I joined with great enthusiasm. We were supposed to build model airplanes, with or without engines, and fly them. Unfortunately, the supplies were dwindling and the club was discontinued. Like many kids who never grow up, I have been fascinated by flying machines and sailing vessels. Years later, I took some flying lessons, about 11 hours' worth. What I learned from my instructor is that take-off is optional, and landing is mandatory.

During my cadet college years, I was considered by few to be brilliant, but I managed to be consistently in the middle of the class in ranking. I never did put enough effort in studying, or in studying the right material for good grades, and relied on my "brilliance" to squeak by. Between you and me, to be brilliant is great, but to be industrious is required. So, if you happen to be not brilliant, do not feel bad; try to be more industrious; you will be more likely to succeed.

Much to my surprise, I graduated HSC with flying colors; I think I was 6th in Science group in Rajshahi Board. Eventually, I enrolled in the pharmacy department of Dhaka University. Eventually, because even in those days we had strikes (hartal) by different entities and academic sessions routinely got delayed; it took us 6 years to finish a 4-year program. Why did I select pharmacy when I could have picked most other specialties, such as medical school, or engineering? One of my cousin sisters was a university student in the statistics department, and she said that it was difficult to get admission in the pharmacy department. What happened was that at one time there was a shortage in pharmacy professionals in the USA, and pharmacy graduates from Bangladesh and other countries could easily get a visa to come to the USA. This preferential treatment had ended by the time I joined, but the slogan still was: "Join pharmacy school - go to USA".

I had a great time in pharmacy school and during my 6-years at Dhaka University - especially if you exclude the lesser-known fact that I also developed a broken heart by

the time I graduated. I excelled in academics. Our instructor in medicinal chemistry would write long equations, straight from an open book, and I would find something wrong in the equation, without the help of a book. Medical school admissions took place months after pharmacy school admission was complete, and many of the best and brightest enrolled in the pharmacy program but took medical school exams eventually moved on to medical school; and I did not have much competition. I studied a foreign language, German, at the German Cultural Center and at Dhaka University. I also studied a computer programming language, FORTRAN. This we studied on paper; we had no access to a computer. I think the certificates on German and FORTRAN helped me immensely when I applied for admission at universities in the USA.

I took TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and GRE (Graduate Records Examination). I sat for the GRE in a classroom at the Notre Dame University, along with 3 to 4 other students I did not know. When the long arduous test was over, these other students were in a celebratory mood, apparently having aced the test, and I was somewhat depressed, thinking that I had done poorly. I promptly enrolled for the next test date, and the process was expensive for my parents. I took the test for the second time, and my score was slightly lower than my score in the first test, which was 92 percentile, meaning if you lined up all the test takers, 92% would have been behind me. Apparently, I had hit my performance ceiling during my first try. It also appears that I had probably underestimated myself, and the other test takers probably did overestimate themselves. It is not easy to maintain a proper balance of confidence and humility - and my suggestion is to avoid vanity.

I had applied to quite a few universities in the USA, and I was offered admission to graduate school with full assistantship from 3 universities. These were in the states of Florida, Louisiana, and Washington (the state, not District of Columbia, where the president lives). I chose Washington State University. Why? Because Florida and Louisiana were too similar to Bangladesh in climate, I wanted to experience different terrain and climates. I bring up making of choices for the third time only to indicate how choices are made, even for things of grave and long-lasting consequences. Therefore my advice to children is - do as I

say, not as I do. No - it is: try to make wise choices.



I could not wait to get out of Bangladesh, such was my (sad) emotional state, which I kept mostly to myself. I sat for my master's exams, and left for USA before having the results published. Washington State University gave me admission with the condition that I would have passing grade in MS by the time classes start; when the results got delayed for month after month, I almost got into trouble; I just could not make them understand how things operate over there (here).

The state of Washington is a most gorgeous state in the USA. It has snow-capped mountains, green rolling hills, rain forests with tall trees, beautiful coastlines, grand islands, bucolic villages, and relatively few people in a relatively young state. My choice turned out to be a good one, although one can argue that Florida and Louisiana had better academic programs.

During my 5-years as a graduate student at the Washington State University, I did everything but study. Most of me tried very hard to fail, perhaps a little part of me did the required minimum to survive. I had left Bangladesh in a hurry. I had great knowledge about USA, its history and culture, but in reality I was ill-prepared to be

a stranger in a strange land. I had also picked a wrong location to spend five years; there was no Bengali community within hundred miles. Washington State University gave me a PhD diploma, with the stipulation that I do not apply for a faculty position there. I had lined up a post-doctoral research position at Ohio State University. One day I packed all my belongings in my car and left Pullman, WA for Columbus, OH. It was a great trip. There were beautiful lakes in northern Idaho, grand mountains in Montana, and more mountains in South Dakota. In South Dakota, I stopped at Mount Rushmore, the mountain with the face of four US presidents sculpted on it. Well, they used dynamites to get the job done.

As I had indicated earlier, I had not prepared myself for real life; I got fired from my first job as soon as I started. It was Christmas time, a time that can be pretty depressing, especially with snow, rain, ice, and sleet, and no employment. My car had a burnt engine that I could not afford to replace, and I was fast running out of money. And my visa needed to be renewed, and I needed a job to renew the visa. These were perhaps the coldest and darkest days of my life; at least, that is how it looked.

My younger brother offered me refuge at his residence in Atlanta, GA. I had to take a bus, since my car was not operational. I put few items in a small suitcase; rest of my belongings I packed in my car which I left at my apartment parking lot, with the hope that I would soon make arrangements to retrieve my life. Things did not turn better soon enough for me to get my car and my stuff back.

While I was in Atlanta, my PhD advisor in Washington State University found me a post-doctoral research position in Springfield, IL, and I repacked my little suitcase and moved to Springfield. If you have never been to Springfield, you have not missed much. Abraham Lincoln was a practicing lawyer in Springfield when he got elected to be the President. As he got on the train to go to Washington, DC, one reporter asked when he was coming back to Springfield. He replied - "you have to shoot me first." That was a joke, although he did get buried in Springfield.

How did I end up in Springfield? Because I had deliberately and slowly messed up my life, to a point of almost beyond repair. Why did I end up in Springfield? I will tell you why. There I met the woman who rescued me, and also became my wife.

Eventually I got a real job in Baltimore with a company involved in the conduct of clinical trial of new medicines. During my stay there, I studied harder than ever before, and slowly my situation began to improve. If I had put 1/10th the effort in graduate school, my life would have been much better, much earlier; however, as they say, it is better late than never. In my opinion, the pool of knowledge is relatively shallow; if something interests you, and if you keep at it, you may find someday that you know more about it than most anybody else.

I had always been fascinated with boating, and in Baltimore I had the chance to learn to sail. Over the years I have acquired several boats. Currently I am involved in modifying a 25 foot fiberglass boat to electric power. Please let me know where I can find a long extension cord.

There were few times in my life I tried to do the right thing, knowing that such action could seriously jeopardize my own interests. In all instances, the repercussions were much worse than I had expected. One time I joined this multinational clinical research organization and was assigned to set up a new facility. We were understaffed and swamped with projects. I had 4 young men and women working in a clinical data management unit. These 4 worked like 16 and moved the heaven and earth for me; when the time came for me to do their job evaluation, I gave them A grade. My supervisor, who was a friend of mine, asked me to downgrade their scores to B, because the company could not afford to give them the 4% raise that corresponded to A grade, but was willing to give a 2% raise. I said that I would rather tell them that they did a great job, but we can only afford a 2% reward. My friend said that I must change my evaluations and also that all managers have 2 weeks to turn in the evaluations. I told him that I am giving him a two-week notice and that he has to do the changing of evaluations. When I was employed at this company, I used to get serious job offers almost every week; after I resigned without first securing a job offer, no one would touch me with a 10 feet pole.

I studied German for a short while, and forgot most of it due to lack of use. I remember one piece we had to translate. It went something like this:

“Living our life is like rowing a boat through varying conditions, with all our values on the boat with us. When the weather turns nasty, we may throw overboard one or more values, to lighten the load. We may reach the other

shore, and much to our dismay, may realize that we have nothing left.”

The trick is to get to the other shore with as much as possible.



Sports is my passion

SPORTS FAN

QASIM HOUSE

TWENTY

1121

NAVEED AHMED

I graduated from RCC in 1989, & served ORCA as a foot soldier from mid-1989 until Dec, 1990 (during 1991 Silver Jubilee Reunion planning phase).

I came to the USA for pursuing education in Jan, 1991 as a 20-year old, spent 1st 2.5 years in Southern California at a couple of community colleges and receive my associate degree in Physics in 1993. I subsequently attended California Pomona School of Electrical Engineering.

In those days, computer engineering and science were making visible impacts to the student lives. I was introduced to the email on a midrange DEC VAX 780 server running Berkley Unix. Both of these are now defunct.

I missed ORCA Silver Jubilee Reunion 1991, after I worked for the program for over a year and got depressed not being able to see my fellow brothers.

Apart from communicating on the phone with a small number of batch mates based out of the USA, I had no communication with any of my friends in Bangladesh. Overseas telephone calls were expensive ranging upward of \$3 per minute.

In 1996, I went to University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities and graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering and Math. During this time, I became accustomed to the rugged landscape of the surrounding states like Wyoming, North Dakota and Montana. I spent a summer in Yellowstone National Park where I learned/debuted most of my outdoor activities, working 2 jobs saving for tuition fees and books. I spent the coldest winter, & a summer in Fargo in the middle of desolate landscape in North Dakota working three jobs. I learned to perfect my winter driving skills on treacherous icy roads with six feet snow banks.

I became active by joining a fraternity house, Theta Tau, where I served in their EC as a Scribe & House Commissioner in my last year. All of experience at the RCC came in

handy during this period. I became more engaged and became the Student Rep for the local IEEE chapter.

But, it was my passion for sports that really became a point of interest during my university years. I joined amongst other things the sailing club.

Once I graduated, I had to think about jobs and career. I was fortunate that I was able to secure my first job as a Field Service Engineer



at a Minneapolis based small software company, Spanlink Communications. This position required extensive travelling, so traveled between 40+ US states & 4 Canadian provinces in 8.5 years during my tenure with them. I was obviously much younger and I enjoyed the opportunity to see so much of this vast land, cities and people.

The first time I went back to BD after 6.5 years later and met batch mates and ORCA bro's in BD, but missed another reunion. Then I moved to Phoenix, AZ in 1998 for the first time & lived two winters. The first winter I met my love of my life (Sohani) from LA, CA and got married in the second winter in 1999. I then moved her to Minnesota in the spring of 2000.

I started my Master/MBA in 2000 & graduated in 2003 from U of St. Thomas with Information Management concentration. The email communications started with some batch mates around the world, as some more batch mates (total 12 by now) came to the States for their advanced degrees or Jobs. Finally I began connecting with email communications with ORCA brothers in 2002/2003.

I took another job and moved to Southern California (SoCal) in 2004 with Lending Tree as an AVVID engineer. Unfortunately, I didn't like the living in SoCal, driving from Corona to Irvine in the traffic everyday & even on weekends. I moved to Phoenix, Arizona with Calence, a Cisco partner, as a SME in Unified Voice Communications, just after a year in California.

I was able to visit BD almost every year from 1997-2005 to reconnect with my family of ORCA brothers and my personal family members. But, still I missed the first couple of ORCA-USA reunions being so far away in Minnesota, in 2003/2004.

I made to the ORCA Mega Reunion in 2006, first time after passing out or travelling from USA.



Another important and exciting phase of my/our life started in 2005 with our first child, Zuhayr.

I made it to my first ORCA-USA New Jersey reunion in 2005, and took the family for the first time in Houston in 2006. We then hosted an awesome ORCA-USA reunion in the valley of the Sun in 2009.

We had our challenges, but slowly we adapted in our family living & settled in sunny Phoenix, Arizona. We had our first daughter, Zarah in 2008 and many told us to stop, claiming we have completed the family. But, no, being a huge fan of the sports, basketball... I had to ask for more... yes, our little princess Zaynah came in 2011 to complete our happy family of five!!!



With the family growing, I had to take another change in my career and started working for Verizon, the giant communications company, in 2007. Finally I was able to use my MBA at this company to shift to the pre-sales side, as a Sr. Sales Engineer. In this 2nd phase of my career, finally no more technical responsibilities, no more after hours, or no more weekend on-calls. I get to work from home a lot, so spend more time at home w/ the kids, in fact my office room is right in between the kids' room.

This is the 8th year running with Verizon in the Global Sales Engineering team, covering the West, NW, SW, South, & SE regions now. That's a massive territory covering thousands of square miles.

We love the outdoors & travelling. We go camping, hiking, boating/rafting, and horse-back-riding in Arizona, California and Mexico a lot. Among some famous activities: hiking to the top of Mt. Whitney (the highest point in continental USA), hiking/camping in Yosemite (Half Dome), hiking/camping in

Yellowstone, camping/rowing in Boundary Waters Canoe Area & Wilderness (several times in MN), white water rafter in the Sequoia mountains, hiking/camping in the Grand Canyon (several times), camping/boating in Lake Powell (yearly for the last 4 years now..), snow-boarding in SnowBowl, Arizona. We even took the kids to a cruise to the Bahamas in 2010.

The Kids love the water & sands, so we have taken them to many warm /tropical places like, Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Jamaica, & many places in Mexico (Rocky Point is only 3-5 hours' drive away, so we go there 2/3 times a year). Also we have been to Hawaii three times in the last 7 years.



But we still go to BD every couple of years, with the kids, to keep up with the extended family, and of course w/ ORCA. I took my family/kids to a few ORCA picnics in Dhaka.

I made it to the 2012 ORCA reunion. Haven't missed an ORCA-USA reunion since 2005, but the family only joins in every two years or so.

You may smile, but it's not my family, nor ORCA brotherhood, but it is Sports... that is my ultimate passion! I still play cricket in local Arizona leagues. I stopped playing basketball after the 1st ACL injury, (though repaired it by a surgery) but an avid NBA/PHX Suns season tix holder. I stopped playing soccer after 2nd ACL injury (torn in the 2nd knee, but no surgery), only play baseball and soccer with sons' friends or deshi adults.

I have played badminton and tennis a lot in the past. I still play and watch tennis sometimes. Now days, I play Racquetball almost 2/3 days a week and 5/6 tournaments a year.

I love running, was a cross-country and long distance runner in RCC. I have been running 3-4 5k every year for the past few years for raising fund for philanthropic causes. The ACL injuries have made it more painful, but remember what I said about my passion! Now for the next generation.

I'm distilling my passion for sports into my son Zuhayr, who really loves & enjoys sports. He started with soccer at the age of 4, then played at club level when 7-8 years old. He then started swimming at age 4-5 and a Track and Field club (running) at age 6-7. He started basketball & tennis at age 7 and has been playing these 2 at club level now.

On his school projects about his future goals and dreams, he never mentions that he wishes to be a doctor, or engineer (like dad), or fire-fighter or a teacher like many in his class. Rather he wants to be a professional Basketball Player.



In Sha Allah, one day...



Family is the first priority

COMPUTER SCIENTIST

QASIM HOUSE

TWENTY ONE

1135

REZA NABI

I am a Primary Patent Examiner, Computer Engineering, at United States Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO), Alexandria, Virginia. Prior to joining USPTO, I worked as Software Engineer (Application Developer III) at Sage Software, Alachua, Florida from May 1999 to Nov 2010. Before joining Sage, I worked at DutchMill Group, Bangkok, Thailand, as Software Engineer from August 1996 to March 1999.



I received a Master of Software Engineering (MSE) degree in May 2010 from Kansas State University, USA. I majored in Computer Science and received Bachelor of Engineering degree from Zhejiang University, one of the most prestigious university in China, in July 1996 on full merit-based scholarship awarded by Bangladesh Government.

My research interests are Multiagent Software Engineering, Agent-Oriented Software Engineering, Service Oriented Architecture and Software development, high performance & grid computing, ultra-wide band, wireless (wi-fi) and broadband networks, web services infrastructure and internet security, database systems, software engineering, software management, software architecture, component-based systems, iPhone development, object technology, especially object-oriented analysis and design. I am a member of IEEE and IEEE Computer Society.

I went to China to do my bachelor in computer engineering and graduated in July 1997. Then, in Aug 1997, I started my first professional career at Bangkok, Thailand as a "Software Engineer". I came directly from Thailand with H1B working visa and joined Mednetix, Inc. which was later acquired by WebMD.

Every immigrant faces interesting challenges in his adopted land. This is a country that runs by credit. After 1 year of my arrival to USA when I tried to buy a property at Delray Beach, Florida, no bank would give any loan as I have no history of credit. The way I had

to convince the bank was to provide special letter from CEO of Mednetix, Inc (my employer), stating how valuable I am to the company and my financial strength that I would have no problem paying the mortgage.

I never thought of coming to USA. Since I

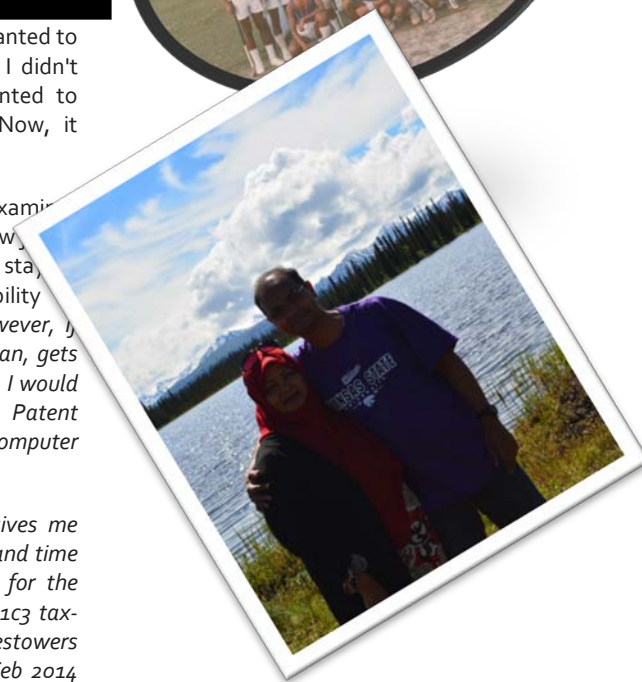


knew mandarin (Chinese), I always wanted to settle in Singapore or Hong Kong. I didn't have much hope except that I wanted to explore what USA has to offer. Now, it seems that this is my home.

Currently I am holding Primary Examiner position at USPTO and supervising few examiners. Professionally, I like to stay in my current position as it gives flexibility to be working from anywhere in USA. However, by Allah (swt) wills, if my wife, a physician, gets residency in the Washington, DC area, I would love to see myself at Supervisory Patent Examiner position in the area of computer engineering.

Besides professional work, nothing gives me more pleasure than spending wealth and time to seek Allah (swt)'s pleasure alone for the people in need. A public charitable 501c3 tax-exempt Foundation called "Bestowers Foundation" is being established on Feb 2014 and my goal is to implement as many self-sustainable projects as possible under the Bestowers Foundation in the area of advancement of education, helping the unprivileged and enhancement of religion and community.

As for my children, besides doing great in school, my only hope and wish that Tahsin and Samah would be a great example for other people to follow.



Life of a civilian

ENTREPRENEUR

QASIM HOUSE

SIXTEEN

888

ABU KAMAL

Life is a blur. Since, 1985, for some twenty seven years in the administration, operation, command and management in Bangladesh army, I dealt with hundreds of personnel for everything from administrations, budgeting,



capacity building, nation building project works, recruiting and human resources management. Another four years of study on double Masters Program on Strategic Security and Defense Management. The major subjects included Geo-Strategic Studies, Method of Analysis, National Security Studies, Leadership, Defense Management and Decision Making. Capable of preparing policies, operating procedure, providing guidelines for specific mission and objective oriented tasks, issuing instruction and order both operation and non-operation environment both at Strategic and Operational level. With all this training and education, I became a recognized International level analyst in Geo-strategy, irregular and asymmetric warfare, power-ideology-legitimacy and counter terrorism strategy. Even a stint at the Military College in Washington, DC during the Bush era further solidified my credentials.

Yet, when I look out of my windows of a tall commercial tower, I do not see my familiar settings of a military base or HQ, for I'm in a strange land. Fate has it that I call Alabama my home. The land where the civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr. struggled and died for freedom, dignity and equality for the blacks some fifty years ago is where I now make my living as a Financial Analyst. I'm forever grateful to their contribution as it

allows me to live peacefully in this beautifully lush green part of America with abundance of wonderful weather with only a short distance to the shores of Gulf of Mexico.

When I was the Chief of Operation in UN peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone in 2010, I hardly knew of Auburn or its famous college football team. Now, I see the massive stadium in the center of Auburn University that can seat more people than the entire population of the town with some 25,000 population. What a few years in life can bring. I maintain positive attitude and constructive motivation to accept that which I cannot control and actively work to change those I can. Life is dynamic and I remain vigilant to accept its demands.



A comic genius

ENTREPRENEUR

QASIM HOUSE

SEVEN

334

YAWER SAYEED



The Fable of Lucky Khan

Only Salams (as Kodombusi is Haram).

So you think I run a circus party and always ready to stack my team with any clown or princess Lucky Khan (hope you remember her) walking through my door claiming Charghat ancestry or lineage, and that would make me a good ORCA soul. What brand of Marijuana are you inhaling brother?

We run a quite successful business outfit precisely because we employ only 'qualified and competent' people according to our requirement, where under a resolution none of my relative or that of our shareholders/directors would ever be employed. Possibly we are the only company in the crony-ass-licking country adopting and strictly following such a principle. The result is, my recently graduated daughter is still unemployed but cannot be absorbed in my own company. This is my brand of Chutia-Imandari, you may say.

Among the maximum 20 capacity manpower, including cleaners & messengers with average age of 35 (unfortunately, we don't run a 'gudam-ghor' or 'churi-karkhana') we

had been fortunate to have highly qualified ORCA members, children and dependents of our respected teachers and even sub-staff on our pay-roll, who are still continuing.

Even the best of the most beautiful cities would become unlivable failing to rightly deploy the skills the cleaners (read 'methors').

The late lamented Farhad sir told me 'If you are a cobbler, be the best in town'. Well, I have been trying to, but the princess Lucky Khans would not let me

Elementary my dear

I was always curious if humans (Ashrafal Mukhlukat) are the last of the creations then Almighty must have created all others, including the promised 'Hur-Poris' prior to Adam and Eve (Hawa). What for?

Now in your infinite wisdom you are telling us that Heven is or was not designed/intended for procreation!!! Oh God, what fools we (and our Mullahs) must have been. You also claim everything is happening according to His will and, therefore, Adam was not made to be a Chinese. That is fine

with all of us. But what is going to happen to your quota of Hurs then? Please throw some light.



You see, there lays the problem. We intend to fix boundaries to our own likings and not community standards but if you flout with the common parameters, you risk opening the floodgate.

It is elementary my dear Watson. Let us keep it simple, devoid of sermons.

Raga Bhoirobi

At last going to have my life time golden opportunity materializing through entertaining a captive crowd with a Raga Bhoirobi duet rendering at the golden jubilee reunion having Shamsul Muktadir (T10/556) in unison and Habib Raisuddin (K8/428) with the Tabla!!! (As no Talebul Mowla Chowdhury (Q2/58) would be around to chase me out of the stage

Can't wait. Dare stop us. How we miss you Rume bhai with every re-union around the corner.

Bobita in Ramadan

The apparently complex drawings of the dreamed complex (OCC Report on Probable ORCA Complex at Diabari, Uttara) are technical issues founded on a wish-list devoid of capability considerations or any capacity assessment. There is ABSOLUTELY nothing to discuss on it (akin to our teenage dream of marrying Bobita).



Thanks to the President for keeping it under the carpet so long. It better remains there for the time being.

Most of us among the mango-audience would rather be interested on the financial part. How it is going to be structured and phased? Hope it is coming soon. I will waste time then InshAllah. Not now.

Prayer is better than wealth creation (by any means) in this holy month. This is the time to raise Zakat & Benevolent Funds from sinners like me.

Therefore, Mr. President please advise as the first priority on hand, when & where are we going to have the annual Iftar and are we going to have Halim on the menu or not. If you cannot ensure Halim then please resign and handover your charges to preferably Sardar Azad or Itu.

Meanwhile, ON A VERY SERIOUS NOTE, would someone knowledgeable please assure that the complex wish-list of the complex presented has got rid of the near perverted infatuation with the 'TUHIN

ENCLAVE' affair (read 'porokia') or we have to wait 44 years?

Happy air-conditioned Ramadan.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

(Recalcitrant children/grandchildren)

I do solemnly testify that the moving terror(ist) Herr Field Marshal Bamboo (2\37) from the notorious Gaforgaon (you all know for what kind of people the place is infamous) was the C-In-C (called Wing Under Officer) of Ayub Cadet College (ACC) and I was his last Duty Cadet (Batman) on March 08, 1971 when a special assembly was called by the Principal to declare the college closed sine-die.

It is my firm belief that since the regime would not allow any direct Bangalee recruit to the army as Field Marshal (as a head-on contender of Ayub Khan) they deliberately failed him in ISSB. Therefore, he joined the Multi Bahini and served as a Havildar (like the national poet Kazi Nazru Islam).

Power of prayers

Owing to pressing personal commitments I was not following mails until my nick name (the one by which Almighty will not roll call for me at Hasher for sure) popped up on the subject line.

Not being a physician, I cannot unfortunately certify anyone as blind or dumb. But can vouch that I am definitely not a 'Bharotio Hati'. You can call me a 'Deshi-Bolod' at best.

Well, I would also rather be the brothel owner in the following old story than the preaching pastor in ercc forum :

The Power of Prayer & A Judge's Dilemma

In a small town, a person decided to open up a brothel, which was right opposite a church. The church & its congregation started a campaign to block the brothel from opening with petitions and prayed daily against his business.

Work progressed. However, when the brothel was almost complete and about to open, a strong lightning struck the brothel and it was burnt to the ground. The church folks were rather smug in their outlook after that, till the brothel owner sued the church authorities on the grounds that the church through its congregation & prayers was ultimately responsible for the destruction of his brothel, either through direct or indirect actions or means.

In its reply to the court, the church vehemently denied all responsibility or any connection that their prayers were reasons for the act of God.

As the case made its way into court, the judge looked over the paperwork at the hearing and commented: "I don't know how I'm going to decide this case, but it appears from the paperwork, we have a brothel owner who believes in the power of prayer and we have an entire church that doesn't."

The juice is not so sweet

NAVAL OFFICER

KHALID HOUSE

THIRTEEN

727

S I M ZAHANYAR (MUKUL)

During my childhood I was a bit DNPITHE/DURONTO and fond of climbing trees. Whenever I was lost my mother used to search me on the branches of trees.

During summer holidays my main job was to climb different mango trees and look for mangoes. Half of the day I used to spend on the trees.



In Cadet College (1976-1982), one of our famous adventures was to climb date trees to collect juice. My friends of Khalid House preferred me to lead the adventure as I was an expert of the expedition.

On the first day we went at the back of Khalid House to climb a date tree. My friends were impatiently waiting to drink sweet juice. It was dead of night and nothing was visible.

I went up at the top. I was thrilled as the GHOTI or earthen jug was just in my hand. My friends were eager to see me coming down.

But I thought differently. I was thinking as I took the trouble to climb the tree so I should be the first to drink the sweet juice.

So without delay I poured the whole juice into my mouth.

I did not know that lot of insects especially black ants are fond of sweet juice. The jug was full of ants. They all entered my mouth and started biting severely. Some of them covered my face and eyes. It was difficult for me even to look around.



So I came down immediately and finished my first day's adventure. My friends could not drink juice on that day.

In the subsequent days we used to collect juice and drink after proper purification using towel/GAMCHA.

After few months I was watching a Bengali TV serial. I saw that a snake climbing date tree and drinking sweet juice.

It scared me. I thought the snakes also discharge poison while drinking juice. I would die if I take such juice!

Since then I never climb date trees; I never took date juice after my college life.



Granites to silicon

SCIENTIST

KHALID HOUSE

FOUR

151

GOLAM SARWAR



On a hot summer day of July, 1980 in Dhaka I received a telegram (yes, there was still such a thing then) from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook saying I had been accepted in their Graduate Program in Earth and Space Science and was awarded an assistantship. I had just submitted my Master's thesis in the Department of Geology of Dhaka University where I was going to join as a Lecturer soon if my effort to go to USA was not successful, but now I had to leave Bangladesh behind.

I did my MS in Geology at Stony Brook and later a Ph.D. at City University of New York. But, by the time I finished these programs, the global oil price had plummeted and geology jobs become extremely scarce, and I still didn't have a Green Card. I took a research job under my own advisor and spent two years in Troy, NY working on underground gas storage potential of New York State. One good thing that came out of this project was that I got a US resident permit quite easily on E-2 category. Another good thing that happened at this time was the birth of my only child, Niloy.

However, geology employment still remained difficult; so, I considered myself lucky when I was interviewed and offered a lecturer's position as a sabbatical replacement in East Texas State University, now Texas A & M University at Commerce. I fondly remember the 1800 mile road trip

with my six-month old son and the family in a rented Ryder Truck with my car pulled behind on a platform that brought me from Troy, NY to Greenville, Texas. This was summer of 1996.

I enjoyed my two years teaching in A & M at Commerce and I knew that the professor in sabbatical whom I had replaced was not going to come back, which

opened up an opportunity for me, but due to continued poor enrollment in Earth Sciences the university decided to merge the department with Biology and cut down staff. As the newest temporary faculty, naturally I was to be on the cutting board. I got winds of this earlier and had started looking for jobs in my field but with no success. This was also the time of the legendary 1990's IT bubble and I had started taking computer courses in apprehension of losing my geology job. Perhaps it was not a bad decision, because



when I applied with hardly a noteworthy background in Computer Science, I started getting a lot of interviews. Finally, within a short time I landed a job as an assistant

Oracle DBA in a company called Internet America here in Dallas.

I always thought the job in the computer field was only a temporary thing for me - something to pay my bills before I got back to my own academic field. But, it took too long for the geology field to awaken (it is on a downward spiral once again after a few years' boom caused by Fracking technology) and I realized I had to move on with my life. So, I have stayed with IT profession and gradually given up any thought of going back to a geologic profession. I don't think about it anymore.

I have lots of hobbies. There was a time when I read extensively, especially literature and history. Now, I hardly have any time to read other than National Geographic and news articles in the Internet. I love gardening and am passionate about fishing, especially Bass fishing in local lakes. Another passion of mine is music and I like all kinds, but these days my favorites are Baul and Fakiri music of rural Bangladesh and W. Bengal, Indian Classical and American Blues.

"I took the one less traveled by ..."

TRAVELER

KHALID HOUSE

FOUR

151

GOLAM SARWAR

August 24, 1980. The British Airways flight carrying Mahmood Ali (7/371) and I landed at JFK Airport around 2:00 in the afternoon. After that the plan was for me to head by train for SUNY, Stony Brook where I had a graduate assistantship and for Mahmood to go to Moni bhai's (2/76) place in Queens and later to University of Tulsa to start his undergraduate program. But, everything went wrong from there.

No one picked up the phone at Moni bhai's place. We tried for hours from the airport lounge, but to no avail. Mahmood finally confessed that he did not have a direct confirmation from Moni bhai, but Moni bhai's mother had said her son knew about his arrival and everything was ok. Obviously, that didn't seem to be the case anymore. As a last resort, I pulled out the telephone number of the Imam of Madina Masjid, given to me – just for emergencies - by Awal bhai (3/381), who at that time was a graduate student at City College of NY, a well-known personality in the Tablig circuit, and on vacation to Bangladesh where I had met him before leaving for USA. To our delight, Imam shaheb - a Bangladeshi from Barisal - picked up the phone. "Ok, come over ", he said and gave us the address.

When our yellow cab pulled over at the curbside of 1st avenue of Downtown Manhattan we found a drab, nondescript NYC tenement whose ground floor and basement served as the mosque. Imam Shaheb, who lived upstairs, dashed our naïve hopes of getting a warm bed and home-cooked meals for the night by quickly showing us the backside of the prayer room behind a makeshift partition where he said we could sleep that night, making no reference to food at all. Hardly had we settled down with our suitcases in that space, someone was giving Azaan for Maghrib prayer from within the prayer room. The last time Mahmood and I both prayed in a mosque was perhaps in a place called Mukhtarpur in Rajshahi; but there was no escape this time.

We called Moni bhai from the mosque's telephone and getting no response took the desperate decision of going to Queens and knock at his door. I was going to take the train to Long Island the next day, but Mahmood could not go to Tulsa yet. He needed a place to stay. We asked the Imam how to go to Queens and he showed us a hole on the sidewalk and disappeared. We entered the station, mistakenly without a ticket, through a door which we later realized was the exit door. There was no policeman around; otherwise, we might have been arrested on our very first day in USA. On the platform, we asked an elderly gentleman how we could go to Rego Park. Luckily for us, he was also going to the same place, and upon arriving there he walked with us couple of blocks and showed us the huge apartment complex where Moni bhai supposedly lived. The apartment was on the ground floor. We rang the doorbell, but there was nobody inside. We hanged around the place for about half an hour but no one showed up.

It was nine or so in the evening and we were very tired and very hungry. We were afraid to go into a restaurant, not knowing what to order or how much they would charge us. So, we went into a grocery store and bought what may have been a pound cake and two cans of soda and had our dinner walking on the darker side of the street. When we returned to the mosque, it was time for Esha prayer. In both prayers that evening, I can say the two of us increased the number of devotees by at least 20% - there were no more than 10 people in these jamats.

As we were ready to retire, a gentleman – a black Muslim named Belal who was the caretaker of the mosque, said there was a phone call for us. It was not from Moni bhai, but from his roommate named Sohel who had found our note when he returned from work and was nice enough to call us. He said Moni bhai had left for Indiana some time ago and, after learning about our ordeal, wanted to speak to Mr. Belal. Then he spoke to us



Finally, we left a note at the door with Madina Masjid's phone number and returned to Manhattan.

again and said Mr. Belal has agreed to drive us to Rego Park but not until the next morning.

We passed a sleepless night on the hard floor of the mosque, an experience made all the more interesting and scary by this other younger black Muslim gentleman who came in about midnight and lay down on the mat not far from us. He noticed we were not quite

us. One of them drove me to Jamaica Station but put me in the wrong train, which I corrected a few stations up the line and eventually reached Stony Brook just before they were about to close the dorm office. Mahmood stayed and enjoyed their hospitality a few more days before leaving for Tulsa.

Although my first day/night in USA was a difficult one, it is now one of my fondest memories of all time. Later, I spent ten more years in the great city of New York and enjoyed every moment of it. Both Mahmood and I ended up in Dallas some twenty five years after that memorable day. Life is a journey, often with surprising stops.



asleep and decided to strike a conversation with us. At one point he asked me how tall I was? Then he brought out a white robe (Alkhalla) from his bag and announced, 'I want to sell this to you for three bucks. It will fit you nicely.' I had to turn the offer down, which I could tell didn't make him very happy. Twice during the night a car honked on the street and he went out and came back again. I had \$600 in my socks, Mahmood must have had more – we were not sure the Mosque was a safe place for us on our first night in America. We could easily be robbed or worse. But, nothing untoward happened and we were all too pleased to put the dismal night behind us and say our Fazar prayer before heading for Queens.

Things looked up from then on. Sohel and two other Bangladeshis who lived in that apartment in Rego Park were extremely nice and hospitable people. They took us to a nearby restaurant and bought breakfast for

Best compliment to your teacher is to exceed him

SCIENTIST & MENTOR

KHALID HOUSE

NINETEEN

1027

M. SAIF ISLAM



Jane stopped by my office during my weekly office hour after receiving an F in the first midterm exam. The fact that she a very curious and inquisitive, seemed to signal that she was going to do well in the exam, although I was occasionally little surprised by her questions on simple and obvious matters of this device electronics course. I, however, never openly expressed my exasperation toward her. Even students who would remain busy in the class toying with smartphones, or skip and cheat on assignments didn't show such a sloppy performance in the first exam that is the easiest of all the exams I offer in this course.

Rather than discussing any device electronics issue, she shared snippets of her life's mundane moments that left a lasting impact in her life. As a ten-year-old girl, she was extraordinarily bright and skipped two grades. At sixteen, she received University of California's most prestigious fellowship to join our engineering program. 'I hardly made a good decision when I first came to the university. I never welcomed any guidance from anyone nor had the ability to navigate by myself' – she said. At seventeen Jane became a mother - totally unexpected and unplanned turn of event. Subsequently she got dismissed from the university for failing

to maintain the minimum GPA. Three years later she is now back to school and a long break from school turned her into a drag in each course. 'I was an overconfident and arrogant teenager and I thought I knew what I was doing. The truth is, I was a naive and an inexperienced girl with a big ego' – Jane's regretful inner voice kept repeating this sentiment for few minutes.

How can I help you in this course? I wanted to wrap up the discussion.

I am not going to give up on this course professor, she said. Please just don't get upset if my questions are little too silly. She made it obvious to me that some of her classmates suggested her to ask questions during office hours, rather than distracting the instructor during regular lectures.

I am paid to answer your questions Jane, during the lecture as well in my office hours. I tried to have a positive tone.

I lent her two of my reference books and asked the teaching assistants to offer little more help on anything she needed.

I want to graduate on time and find a job to support my son. Jane said before leaving my office with an expression of determination on her face as if she was not going to give up whatever the odds. She didn't want to remain dependent on her parents who once had high hopes looking at her academic pedigree and believed she was destined for great success.

I looked back at my past and I asked myself – did I experience such turmoil as a teenager? Was I in a similar confusing state of mind that Jane had before she got dismissed from the university? Like many cadets, after HSC, I received very little helpful guidance from anyone other than my close family. Many of us could effectively use some help from a close mentor, a guide who knew more than what we knew, who could say what we needed to hear, prepare action plan and who is supported by a trustworthy entity. In this

short write up and possibly in more future pieces, I will attempt a synoptic view of guidance and mentorship available to cadets immediately after the HSC exam. Every person's story is influenced by his or her own biases and I would not hesitate to acknowledge that, like many others, I made a large number of mistakes subsequent to my life at RCC. Those missteps profoundly

At RCC, I was a boy with a quite compliant and biddable nature. I was thankful to RCC because of the great resources I had access to. I was ecstatic to be surrounded by the greatest students of our time in all grades. Many teachers, some were itinerant though, profoundly touched my heart. It may sound embarrassing, but I really believed that we had the responsibility to become the savior

Pakistan era, we grew up with adults and country leaders who had inchoate yearning for individual success. Brutal murder of two top leaders and a number of prominent politicians, ruthless suppression of leftist movements, frequent bloody military coup and disastrous extremism in university campuses left permanent scars in our lives. Gen. Ershad surely deserves the credit for leading the process to maturity. Young cadets, like me, who spent all six years as cadets under twilight distress of controlled press, repression, favoritism and growing moral numbness, suddenly, in 1988, had to face a harsh reality and operate independently in an egomaniac society where many educated and bright young people wanted to live intensely and wildly, and others wanted to emigrate.

Let's Prosper Together

In a self-centered Dhaka, ORCA's slogan 'Let's Prosper Together' sounded very appealing to me. I got involved with ORCA during the long Ershad vacation days after my HSC exam when political unrest was at its worst. I found solace joining the flood relief distribution initiative when the extent of flooding was more than 82,000 sq. km in 1988 and vast majority of ORCA members contributed to an epic relief program. Enthusiastic volunteers in blood donation events, eye donation and other charitable acts deeply moved us all.

I, however, believe we didn't receive much of guidance from ORCA, from our teachers, from the society or from our friends and families. Some of us came from distance corners of the country for coaching and university entrance exam, rented flats in Dhaka or lived in noisy apartments shared with other non-ORCA people. Some of us were lucky to have relatives in the city. Many of us spent countless days hanging out aimlessly, not knowing how we could plan our future. A small minority even ran into delinquency through substance abuse. It was difficult to stay positive. Our youthful arrogance ignored the aged wisdom that was before us. Unemployed, toiling to collect ads for some ORCA publications, reading all the anti-Ershad writings, anti-military jokes and spending time in public library, Islamic



impacted my professional career as well as my personal life. I believe all cadets possess great talents and wasted talents are among the greatest tragedies for any society.

My childhood before Cadet College was full of boundless blue skies of Dhaka, endless excitement in the empty lands of Mirpur, fishing and boating in the man-made and natural lakes in many neighborhoods, and teachers full of compassion and care. When I was eleven years old, I joined 'Gurugriha', established by our beloved late teachers Abdur Rahman and Salahuddin Sinha. In 1981-82, to prepare for the intake exam, I spent a summer shuttling across town from Mirpur to Dhanmondi. I used every bit of soft-spoken encouragement and guidance of the Guru's of the Gurugriha to prepare myself to be part of a small group of seventh graders who joined RCC on June 6, 1982. I was full of excitement and enthusiasm on that hot summer day, convinced that I had embarked on an epic adventure to become an educated, inspired and inspiring citizen. It was there where I spent the most important formative stages of my boyhood.

of the masses. We had to be perfect, the best and there was little room for any failure. It may sound hyperbolic but not inaccurate if I claim that our batch had an envious set of cultural, sport and intellectual heavyweights and I was deeply touched and inspired by my classmates. Among the smartest bunch of seven graders, I was an awkward, plain, occasional bookish boy mostly ignored by my batch mates and seniors. By the time I was in tenth grade, I effectively employed all the available resources and ranked top in academic performance, secured the highest position in both SSC and HSC exams in the combined merit list in the entire country and I was the college prefect during 1987-88. I didn't lack confidence, I just lacked wisdom and experience and I resisted asking anyone for guidance out of pride. It is also true, to some extent, that there was no accessible mentoring body in my surroundings.

Dhaka I left in 1982 was not a materialistic place yet. Money was not the only king, and anarchy and lawlessness was not prevalent to the extent we experience now. Although my generation was born in the last years of

Foundation library, USIS and British Council consumed our time and youth for years.

I would occasionally ask myself, is Cadet College a success story? For every well-attested, heavily researched and authoritative argument made about cadets' positive role and contribution to the society, there are equally well-attested authoritative arguments opposing those. My three decades of affiliation and observations offered me a conviction that we were expected to run an expensive hundred-meter sprint race, while our whole society was watching us. Our starting blocks are at the Cadet Colleges and we successfully reach top speed covering sixty-meters through six years of intense programs. The remaining forty-meters remained incomplete or fragmentary, unless we got strong guidance from our family, teachers and alumni community. Unfortunately, many cadets are no different from my student Jane and their participation in the race don't offer much of excitement to the spectators. Some cadets can't even run last few meters and sadly drop out of the race.

People ask me about the end of Jane's story. Did she eventually graduate? Where is she now? I don't share much of the details about her. It is probably same old story - most talents are wasted. When I was the vice chair for undergraduate affairs of my department, I got a chance to see the reference letters that came with Jane's college application. 'Jane has an eclectic mind and a student of her caliber comes along rather rarely in our high school. She is destined for great success just like Dr. Angela Belcher'. This is how Jane's High School Principal expressed high level of confidence in her talent and extraordinary abilities. Prof. Belcher is a celebrated energy researcher from MIT. She received considerable media attention when President Obama visited her lab and the reference letter was written around that time. Jane eventually managed to graduate from University of California Davis with a bachelor degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering and went to work for a tech company in Silicon Valley as a design engineer. Harsh realities of her life didn't keep any door open for a graduate school or an advanced degree. There remained a great

gap between parents' and teachers' aspirations, her goal in life and reality.

I met Jane recently in an industry affiliates' meeting. She introduced me to C.H.A.M.P.S. mentoring program (Culturally Helping And Making Positive Success) that recently received blessings from President Obama. She enthusiastically mentioned about Mudders Mentoring Mudders (M3) of Harvey Mudd College and Banter Mentorship and Networking Program of Olin College (Franklin Olin College of Engineering). Both are top colleges in the country and Jane thinks 'they do a great job guiding young people; they know how to make guidance palatable and how to be effective mentors'. She received scholarships from both colleges after she graduated from high school but decided to go for a larger campus (my university). I didn't want to embarrass her asking if she regretted her decision not to



attend these prestigious small colleges.

Subsequent to my departure from RCC, I needed mentors, trusted advisors who would tell me what I needed to hear, offer long-term guidance and accountability in the areas of my life that matter most. I know many cadets strongly feel a visceral sense of repugnance on hearing about the concept of guidance for eighteen or nineteen year old young adults. Some even express outrage against such concepts of 'over parenting' and they would advocate experiments and learning from mistakes. I would accept that there are credible arguments on both sides of the view, but my student Jane would say some mistakes are too costly to make. We need to learn from other's mistakes and that is what a mentorship culture offers.

Let's offer active guidance to each other

We can perhaps have a discussion on establishing a strong tradition of mentorship for current cadets and our fresh graduates from RCC. I believe this would be an area of a small investment with big returns. I would put it on the top of my high priority list. In my current profession, every year I spend almost two weeks of my time on training and retraining myself by experts on matters that are important for my university's collective success. We can conduct a survey and until we have a good handle of the facts and data, I am fine if we call off the urge for a mentorship arrangement if that may not turn out to be worthwhile. Many of us are very aware of our own strengths and weaknesses and demonstrated superb individual success. Though individual success is unquestionably important and can show the limit of human potentials, collective success is what builds a better society for all. An ORCA or a joined ex-Cadet's platform with a true spirit of collective success is expected to plant and nurture the seeds of a strong culture of mentorship and guidance.

Mariner

MARINE ENGINEER

TARIQ HOUSE

NINE

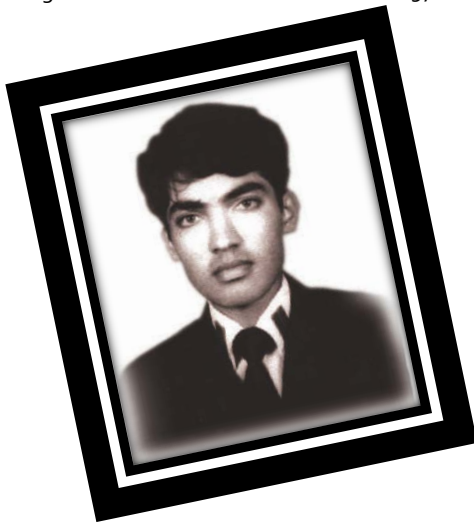
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SAJID HUSSAIN (RUSHO)



Marine Engineer SAJID HUSSAIN, DSc MSc FIMarEST is now serving at the helm of Bangladesh Marine Academy, Chittagong as its COMMANDANT since 15 October 2009. Informatively, he is the FIRST Marine Engineer to be a Commandant of Bangladesh Marine Academy since its establishment in 1962.

He was a *Minor* Freedom Fighter at Madhupur Freedom Fighters' Camp (near the border between Naogaon of Bangladesh & West Dinajpur of India) under Sector-7 during Bangladesh liberation war in 1971.



After graduating from Bangladesh Marine Academy in 1980, he joined Bangladesh Shipping Corporation as a Cadet Engineer; served on-board BSC ocean-going ships until 1995 (last 5 years as Chief Engineer); served Bangladesh Marine Academy as its Head of Marine Engineering Department (Chief Engineer: 1995-2009) and as the Commandant since 2009.

He studied in Liakat-Nazir High School (Pabna), Pabna Zilla School, Rajshahi Cadet College (SSC/HSC (3rd position/Ind. Arts)), Bangladesh Marine Academy (pre-sea Marine Engineering (2nd position)), South Tyneside College, UK (Marine Engineering) and in World Maritime University, Sweden (MSc in Maritime Safety Administration - Marine Engineering). Additionally he has also been awarded with a DSc in Marine Engineering as a recognition to his professional excellence.

He is a Maritime Expert (IMO-UN & GlobalMET-Australia), Chartered Marine Engineer (IMarEST-London) and a Member to the Board of Governors (2013-2015) of World Maritime University, Malmo, Sweden. He is a Member to the Senate, Syndicate, Council & Finance Committee of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU), Bangladesh.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST - London); Ex-Chairman of the IMarEST Bangladesh branch (2010-11); former Council Member & current Member of Professional Affairs and Education Committee of IMarEST London HQ.

He was Asst. House Leader of Tarique House for a term in 1977, Chief Cadet Captain in



1980 during his cadetship training at Bangladesh Marine Academy and was the elected President of the Asia-Pacific Students Forum & Class Representative at World Maritime University in 1998.



His publications include his thesis (*A proposal for establishment of a Maritime University in Bangladesh*), 20 technical/research papers, 15 books and around 225+ features/articles on shipping, sealife, IT, science & technology and science-fiction. He has achieved the IMarEST Branch Award 2007-08 for his research paper titled "Vision of e-Learning and its application into Maritime Education

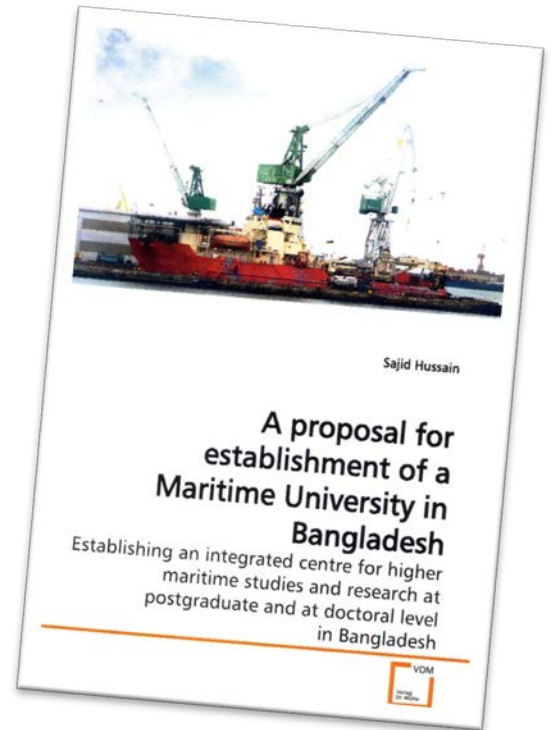
and Training" and the "IMarEST (London) President's Commendation" in 2012.

Sajid Hussain is a father of 1 son & 2 daughters. The son is an Architect (married to an Architect too); elder daughter is studying Bachelor in Computer Science & Engineering at EDU at Chittagong and the younger one is studying BBA at IIU at Chittagong. His wife Ms. Meher Nigar is former Head Mistress of Bangladesh Marine Academy K G School (1993-2005). His father is Late Al-Haj Adv. Amzad Hussain (Ex-MP (1973 Parliament) & a Freedom Fighter of Sector-7) and Mother was Late Al-Haj Prof. Janntul Ferdous (Ex-MP (1996 Parliament) & a Freedom Fighter of Sector-7).



constantly striving to transform my weaknesses into strengths.

ENVISION myself becoming a person who is caring, creative and loyal.



To find happiness, fulfillment, and value in living - I, Sajid Hussain Rusho will:

LEAD a life centered around the principles of patience, trustworthiness, human dignity and excellence.

REMEMBER what's important in life is fame, work and sincerity. I will also remember the importance of family and friends.

REVERE the admirable characteristics in others, such as being balanced, caring and committed; and attempt to implement similar characteristics like being fair, forgiving and trustworthy into my own life.

RECOGNIZE my strengths and develop my talents as a person who is a leader, a speaker, artistic, creative, energetic and open-minded.

HUMBLE myself by acknowledging that I can be fearful, reactive and inflexible and by



Changing the face of communication

ENGINEER

QASIM HOUSE

TWELVE

649

S. KAISER ALAM (SJUJA)

S Kaiser Alam was born in Bangladesh. He received his schooling at Seroil Government High School, Rajshahi Cadet College, and Rajshahi Government College. He then went to Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur and received the Bachelor of Technology (Honors) degree in electronics and electrical communication engineering in 1986.

Dr. Alam was a lecturer in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the Bangladesh Institute of Technology, Rajshahi from 1986 to 1989. He was happily employed and was living free in Father's hotel, but higher education bugs bit him. Thus, he travelled all the way to the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY for his graduate studies. To get rid of him, the university promptly conferred M.S. and Ph.D. in electrical engineering on him in 1991 and 1996, respectively.

Dr. Alam's Ph.D. thesis was on ultrasonic blood flow imaging. He somehow convinced the Patent Office to grant him a patent. Then he was at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston as a postdoctoral fellow from 1995 to 1998. There, he worked on elastography, a new ultrasonic imaging modality to image elastic properties of tissue. Dr. Alam was a principal Investigator at Riverside Research in New York for more than 15 years, where he worked on a variety of research topics in biomedical imaging. While there, he managed to convince the patent office to issue him more patents!

Dr. Alam got tired of his 100+ miles a day commute and in 2013, co-founded Improlabs Pte Ltd, an upcoming tech startup in Singapore, where he is the Chairman and the Chief Research Officer. As he loves living in New Jersey, he has been accumulating frequent flyer miles via frequent transatlantic flights. Dr. Alam has been a visiting faculty in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Islamic University of Technology, Gazipur, Bangladesh since 2010. Dr. Alam has been a visiting research professor of the Center for Computational Biomedicine Imaging and Modeling (CBIM) at Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey, since 2013. His research interests include diagnostic and therapeutic applications of ultrasound and optics, and signal/image processing with applications to medical imaging.

Dr. Alam has written more than 35 papers in international journals and holds several patents. He is the co-author of the textbook



on Computational Health Informatics, scheduled to be published in 2016. He is a member of Sigma Xi, the Acoustical Society of America (ASA), and the Society of Photographic Instrumentation Engineers (SPIE), and a Senior Member of the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM) and IEEE. Dr. Alam served in the AIUM Technical Standards Committee and the RSNA QIBA US SWS Technical Committee and is a current member of the RSNA QIBA Ultrasound Coordinating Committee. He is an associate editor of Ultrasonics (Elsevier) and Ultrasonic Imaging (Sage) and a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Medical Engineering (Hindawi). Dr. Alam was a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholar Award in 2011–2012.

Simple principles to live by

ENGINEER

QASIM HOUSE

NINETEEN

1072

TAUFIK ISLAM (SHOMI)

Thank you for taking the time to read my profile. Life is passing by so fast, would you agree? Seems like yesterday when we were in RCC and now with a blink of an eye here in Phoenix. Majority of the events in life happened without a plan or a goal, as if they were destined to be. The only focus was to choose the seemingly right path that was available at the time. For example, after RCC, choices were BUET, DU, IIT, USA, Singapore, and Malaysia. So, I chose to apply to only one University in the USA and got the I-20. Came to USA in 1989 after HSC result to pursue a dream to live life to the fullest.

I landed in the USA with a virtual backpack full of personal prejudice, language barrier, doubts, and some classic religious and cultural beliefs. Over time by opening up to new ideas, people and circumstances helped offload a lot of these preconceived beliefs eventually lightening the load. I am still in the process of offloading many of these prejudices from my backpack. Hope to get it all empty by my worldly departure.

My mission is to serve the purpose I was sent here for. This mission, which is only realized by the virtue of faith, varies year-to-year, month-to-month and sometimes day-to-day. But most importantly, I believe I was sent here to be a good father, a son, a brother, a friend and a citizen to serve who I come across. When a person or a pet becomes happy at my presence, I feel a sense of peace.

Whatever small I have accomplished in life, besides divine intervention, they are by merely adhering to the following principles,

1. Do what you say
2. Finish what you start
3. Show up on time
4. Say 'Please' and 'Thank you'

I aspire to live a healthy, happy and spiritually enlightened life. If the people I come across feel a sense of tranquility from my being in their thoughts, I consider myself

accomplished. My children are the joy of life. I hope they become good healthy citizens and enjoy life physically and spiritually. I enjoy learning from others. Leadership and business are fascinating aspects to me. Self-improvement by engaging with others to enhance life matters. But last but not least, I am here to serve the divine by engaging in and enjoying the nature and its fellow inhabitant.

You can reach me anytime at tislam007@gmail.com. Again, thank you for taking the time to read my profile.



Yearning for peace

ENGINEER & RN

KHALID HOUSE

FOUR

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Shusim Dewan

I was born in Rangamati, Chittagong Hill Tracts but moved around to different parts of Bangladesh due to my father's job as a government official. When I was admitted to RCC, my father was posted as CI of Police at Hatiya, Noakhali. I joined my older brother Manish Dewan (2/72) at RCC on July 1st, 1967.



I left RCC in 1972 after I passed my SSC Examination to study Biology in HSC with the intent to become a medical doctor as Biology was not offered in cadet colleges during that time. After I passed the HSC from Chittagong College, I was admitted to Sylhet Medical College. Unexpectedly, I received a scholarship offer from the Cuban government to study Mechanical Engineering while in Sylhet Medical College for which I even did not apply. But I applied for scholarships offered by USSR after passing my HSC. At first, I ignored the offer and continued my pursuit to be a doctor as math was never my strongest subject and I had barely passed it in HSC. But I reconsidered after one of my Chakma friends convinced me that taking the scholarship would ultimately allow me to go the U.S., only 90 miles away from Cuba. After discussions with my family and finding out that some of friends had also accepted scholarships to other socialist countries, I decided that I would accept the scholarship.

When I went to submit my passport for the visa, the education ministry had informed me that I would be leaving Bangladesh in a week. Accordingly, I went back to Sylhet and said

my final farewell to my classmates and friends. However, due to some visa complications, I was not allowed to fly out that week as I was told, and instead had to wait 2 whole years. Disappointed and embarrassed, I did not want to return back to medical college and instead waited for my time to come. Those two years were the most difficult time of my life. I was confused what I could do and my parents were unhappy with my decision of not going back to medical college. Finally, on August 1977, I flew out of Bangladesh and into Cuba. I quickly realized my apprehension towards mathematics was unnecessary as I excelled in my studies and graduated with honors in 1983 from Instituto Superior Polytecnico Jose Antonio Echeverria (ISPJAE).



I returned to Dhaka in October 1983, and started working with GoldHill group of companies till I sat for the BCS examination in 1984 for Railway Engineering Service. I joined Bangladesh Railway as Assistant Mechanical Engineer in 1985 and worked multiple positions in Chittagong, Dhaka, Parbatipur, and Paksey until 1997.

In May 1997, I migrated to the U.S. with my family at the age of 42 years after winning the Diversity Visa Lottery. First, I landed in California where some of my family and a small Chakma community had already

settled. This was my biggest challenge in life: settling down with my family in a brand new country in my 40s. And like most immigrants, I struggled early on and took my first job working in a gas station. After one week, I realized California was not ideal for me and my family and contacted ORCA younger brother Barkat (6/316) who immediately offered me to stay with him in Reno, Nevada ("The biggest little city of the world"). I moved to Reno in July 1997 and started working at a casino. While in Reno, NV I tried to validate my Diploma of Mechanical Engineering with University of Nevada but failed as my school (ISPJAE) in Havana refused to send my transcript to the U.S. I then had the sad realization that I may be forced to work odd jobs my whole life.



But while in Reno, I got a job offer from United States Postal Service (USPS) as a clerk in Los Angeles. Thus, I moved back to California in 1999 and worked for the USPS for 3 years. During this time, I found a certificate program in a local community college for a job in the state hospital. In 2002, I enrolled in that certificate program of Psychiatric Technician and completed in 2003. Then I started working with Department of mental health of state of California after getting my license as licensed Psych Tech. With hope of retiring in a better financial situation, I went back to school to study nursing and received my license as a Registered Nurse (R.N.) in December 2009 at the age of 55. To this day, I am still working as a R.N. at Patton State Hospital in the department of State Hospitals in California.

My family consists of my wife and two children. My wife, Kanika Dewan, works as a Clerk in local Indian Casino. My daughter, Suchita Niti Dewan, completed her masters

in Exercise Science from University of Pennsylvania and is working as Health and Wellness consultant with USI Insurance Services in Irvine, CA and pursuing her PhD in Public Health. My son, Shoumyo Dewan, completed his BBA from UC Irvine and is working as Strategy Consultant with Ernst and Young in New York City.

My greatest fear: The way Bengali settlers are migrating to Hill tracts and grabbing the land of indigenous people, I am afraid that one day there will be no indigenous man in our own land (Chittagong Hill tracts).

My greatest challenge: Settling down with my family in the U.S. after migrating from Bangladesh at 42 years old.

My greatest achievement: Raised my children in a foreign land who have completed their studies and settled with professional jobs. Also completing the RN program in the U.S. at the age of 55 years was a major achievement.

Why I moved to USA: I was lucky to win the DV lottery to migrate to USA. I thought at the sake of my hard work if my children could find a good life and opportunities to explore, I should migrate. Thus I am here now. But I always talk to my children about their birthplace (Rangamati, Bangladesh) and want them to contribute in any way for that Country, Bangladesh.

What I want to see: Constitutional recognition of Indigenous People of Chittagong Hill Tracts and Peace in that region.



90% is how we react

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT

KHALID HOUSE

TWENTY NINE

1535

ASLAM TAJIM



time. Luckily I got the student visa and my friend never got it. I felt really sorry for him and this is what destiny is! Here I am in the USA in December, 2000. I was 19 when I came here and did not have any clue what to do. All I knew if I had money I could go to the moon all by me. Usually anyone who comes to US has some kind of family connections, relatives or at least someone who that person knows. I had no one and I took the challenge pretty well when I think about it. I came to Winona State University in the spring semester with a student visa in computer science. Later on, I realized computer science is not for me, so I switched my majors into two majors in Business Administration and MIS (Management Information Systems). Undergraduate degree seeking students face lot of challenges in the USA and I am one of them.



There is lot of challenges in undergraduate level. From my experiences, I would say I would have dealt those challenges if I had in touch with family, senior friends or if my family were here with me. Like I mentioned earlier, financing the education in USA in undergraduate level is the key. I did work part-time all the time and I do not regret that because of the facts that I learned a lot of things through my employment during my

Been grown up in a large family with six sisters and one brother was amazing, if you ask me. Lots of fight, fun and focus were involved. I was lucky number seven out of eight kids in the family. I was adored by everyone in the family. My father, Abul Hayat Ahmed was a District Registrar (DR) in the land registration department. Before he joined this department he was a headmaster in a government high school. My mother, Momtaz Begum was a house wife and the best mom in the world. All my siblings are happily married and residing in Bangladesh.

I got inspired from one of my uncles to join in Cadet College. While coming back from a parent's day, my grandfather told me about the parent's day and Cadet College and his son. That became the motivator to join. I do not know why I chose Rajshahi Cadet College but probably because my father was in Nature at that time. While in Cadet College, I was one of the best swimmers in the college team and had a chance to go to ICC Swimming Meet. I still remember that I had at 30 medals from college swimming competition. After graduating from RCC, I was in the Dhaka University for a year but for some reasons I never liked the environment there. I always wanted to get into North South University and study there. While thinking about North South University, one of my closest friends tried hard to convince me for studying abroad. He was into this right after Cadet College. He had perfect scores in all the standardized tests. I kind of went with the flow and tried at the same



First of all, the age is very critical. Finance is a huge deal from Bangladesh as there are limited scholarships in undergraduate level. Luckily I managed two scholarships that paid part of my two degrees. I basically survived all the odds and graduated from Winona State with my target when I faced the student visa.

school year which is invaluable, money can't buy that. Basically your head has to be into the game of completing the degree no matter what. Ultimately that's what made me succeed. Even though I had faced challenges, when I go back and think, it was perfectly set up for me. Would I do better if I didn't work part-time in school year, probably but I don't regret or think twice because I had fun. Right before graduation, I did intern with a power company and eventually I got hired in the planning department. Later I did complete a graduate certificate in Geographic Information Science (GIS) from Saint Mary's University in MN and

also an MBA in Business Administration from Florida International University in FL. I am still continuing my education and hope to do so all my life.

In 2011, I met my beautiful wife Nasrin Akther (Shumi) and we got married in 2013. I am lucky to have her as a life partner.

In future I would like to dedicate some of time to work for some non-profit organization that help in the developing countries. I would like to spend more time in traveling and go to Bangladesh and see family. I am a very happy person with no fears and disappointments for long term. I believe life is a journey and there will be lot of things coming in my way good and bad but in the end I have to deal with it. My philosophy is "Anything that happens in life is, 10% is what really happens and 90% is how we react to it".



I am passionate about my family, friends and traveling. I would like to spend more time with my wife and travel around the world. So far I haven't had a chance but I am waiting for the moment.

We do not have kids yet but we plan to have. I have high hope for my children to grow up as honest dedicated hardworking human beings. If these qualities exist in a person, I believe everything just falls in place.

Coming to abroad was not a plan but once I came here, it was hard for me to go back. I assume others will agree. Regardless of the facts, with the communications in today's world it actually does not matter where you live anymore. Bangladesh is always my first home and will be. I definitely don't know now that I will spend all my life in the USA. After all, traveling is my passion.



Getting old gracefully

ENTREPRENEUR/EDUCATOR

KHALID HOUSE

NINE

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ZAHID IQBAL (TINKU)

I came to United States at the age of 20 to pursue graduate studies in business. It was my decision to leave the country. I was young, and I wanted to experience life in a foreign land and chase new dreams. Around the time we were getting out of RCC in 1978, there was a lot of interest among college students to study abroad especially in colleges in the U.S. After graduation, I started exploring these opportunities, but decided to hold off until after my bachelor's degree. As soon as I finished my final exam in the University of Dhaka, I took off.

After travelling halfway around the globe and landing at LaGuardia in August of 1982, my journey in the United States began. I was in Tennessee for two years, moved to Dallas in 1984, and settled down in Houston after graduating in summer of 1988. On the job, I am currently a professor of finance and department chair. While I earn my living as an educator, I am finding out at this old age that I have other career interests and that my true passion is in sports. I love to play tennis and soccer – we have a soccer club named Kicks. At age 53, I am managing to keep up with our bhatijas and bhaignas in the soccer field and tennis court. I am happily married to my wife Lipi. We have two daughters, Taneesha and Natasha. Taneesha goes to college and Natasha is a 12th grader.

Like most immigrants and foreign students, my life was not smooth and easy at first. My earliest memories of the United States are about running out of money, having car accidents, going to night clubs, studying for exams, and making trips to the INS office for green card. I had to work on and off campus, and sometimes graveyard shifts to pay my bills. Eventually, I all figured out how to deal with the financial problems. I did not face any major challenges adjusting to the Western way of life. I realized early on that there are different aspects of Western culture and that the best way to handle is to adjust according to your own needs.

My main motto is “to be successful, one has to prioritize the goals and stay focused”. My personal aspirations are to have a fulfilling life for me and to have a positive impact on my family, friends, and society. I try to help make my family a better place to live, help friends in need, understand societal needs and help as much as possible.



At this stage of my professional career (I am getting old, Raja bhai), I would like to be more independent and find more time for personal enrichment. I am still sorting out my options.

I would like my daughters to be well-rounded, responsible, and ethical. My wife and I try to make them realize that they are being blessed, and therefore, it is important to make a difference in other people's lives.

I do not wish to think about regrets and disappointments in professional life. Although I am now part of a huge community of Bangladeshis in Houston, I still miss my old days with RCC and BD friends. I am in touch with most of my good RCC friends. My major fear is getting old and not able to do things that I am currently doing.

A lifetime of service

DIPLOMAT

TARIQ HOUSE

FOUR

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TOUHID HOSSAIN



I am a retired government servant since January 2014. My last assignment was as the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to South Africa with concurrent accreditation to Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Before being appointed as High Commissioner, I worked as Principal, Foreign Service Academy from July 2009 to July 2012. Prior to this I served as Foreign Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh from December 2006 to July 2009. I also served as Additional Foreign Secretary, Director General and Director in the Ministry, as Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner in Kolkata India from 2001 to 2005, and as First Secretary in Bangladesh High Commission, New Delhi, India from 1988 to 1993. I began my career as a Foreign Service Officer in January 1981.

As Foreign Secretary, I led Bangladesh delegations to Senior Officials', Standing Committee and Council of Ministers' meetings of SAARC, BIMSTEC, NAM, Commonwealth and OIC. I was alternate leader of the Bangladesh delegation to UN General Assembly, New York, in 2007 and 2008. I also served ex-officio on the governing bodies of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA), National

Defence College and the Defence Services Command and Staff College of Bangladesh. I also served as a Member of the Board of Directors of Bangladesh Biman when it turned into a limited company in 2007. (I had to buy a share for Tk. 100 from my own pocket. There were only seven such shareholders. Theoretically, I was one seventh owner of Biman for more than a year!!)

As I left RCC in 1974, I entered Dhaka University, initially in the Department of Law and then History. For post liberation Bangladesh, this was perhaps the worst of times. The devastating floods were followed by drought bringing in a double crop failure and famine. Death, destitution and despair were everywhere (except for a handful for whom it was an opportunity to make their fortune). Just out of the sheltered life of a Cadet College, the reality was rude and unforgiving. My father, a class II government servant (a non-bribe taking one), who was considered a well to do person in our village, suddenly found his monthly salary worth the price of 100 kg of rice. And he had a 10 member family with three sons in the university. We did not starve, but let me confess, for the first time in life we did not have enough food on the table and whatever we had, had to be rationed. I missed classes for weeks; there was simply no money to

sustain me in Dhaka. I did not complain, for I saw that most of the people, including some close friends, were even in worse straits. I am eternally grateful to Mosharraf bhai (2/37) who allowed me to 'double' with him in SM Hall, I had no place to stay. I never lost hope, however. I felt sure this desperate time will pass, for me, and also for the society I lived in.

It did pass, but then came the first major frustration in life. Determined to make a career of teaching at the University, I needed to do well in studies. At the Honors exam, I missed the first class for a few marks. This was by itself devastating. To add insult to injury, I was second class second, and a lady friend occupied the slot above me. We however remained close friends, and then I was placed First Class First at the Master's and she First Class Second. Among many defeats in life, this was a sweet victory. But she was furious! She bore a lot of grudge initially, even challenged me to take another course together, maybe a law degree. And then finally, she fell in love! Women have strange ways of reacting to events! We got married six years later and now have two pretty grown up daughters. Both are Masters in English literature, teaching in universities. My friend-turned-lover-turned-wife retired last May as Member, National Board of Revenue.

Apart from studies at Dhaka University, I obtained a Diploma in International Political Relations from International Institute of Public Administration, Paris, France. I am an ndc from National Defence College, Dhaka, have attended Executive Course at the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA and Senior Executive Seminar at the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at Washington, USA. Both Institutions are under the US Defence Department and form part of the National Defence University. Apart from English, I have a working knowledge of French and Hindi.

I pursued a profession in which concrete achievements are difficult to demonstrate. Personally, of course, there are many rewarding experiences. During my rather long stint in Kolkata (4 years and 2 months) I developed excellent rapport with the Left Front leaders and Ministers, some of whom I

still count as friends. I mingled extensively with the political, cultural and social elite as well as the common people in West Bengal. Once a Western Consul General had asked me what my main job was at Kolkata. I told him in a lighter vein that my job was to create such an ambience in Kolkata that if ever India were to invade Bangladesh (I strongly believe that will never happen), the first demonstration against that aggression would come out in this city.

I take great personal satisfaction in the fact that as Foreign Secretary, I led the Foreign Office of Bangladesh during a critical time of its history. It began with the declaration of emergency a month after my appointment, culminating in the holding of a general election and establishment of an elected government two years later in January 2009. There were two serious handicaps that made the job challenging. One was the overt interference and high handedness of the embassies of many foreign countries. The weak government (or its military backers) did not have the will or the ability to resist this. The second was the domineering attitude of a handful of mid senior level military officers who were virtually running the show. They were basically mediocrities notwithstanding their know-all postures. Many civilian Secretaries were harassed or ill-treated by them. Personally, I could steer through the storm smoothly since many of the Generals were known to me because of Cadet College connections. Half a dozen of them were my course mates at the NDC. Not all civilians were so lucky.

I continued to serve the new government as Foreign Secretary till July 2009 when a new Foreign Secretary was appointed. The end was not too glorious, as the government was pleased to send me to the Foreign Service Academy as Principal (with the same rank and status though). But then someone said that the journey was important, not the destination. I am a strong believer in this.

There are two crises that I withered successfully during the last few years of my service career. In 2006 I had a serious hitch with then Foreign Minister (I was then an Additional Secretary). He had insulted me in public during a regional event. I paid him back two days later at a debriefing session attended by all officers. My well-wishers were alarmed. The state Minister called me and advised me to make up. I thanked him, but said no. The DG (Administration) who was a longtime friend (batch mate of JCC) urged me to do the same. I told him, my father was a class II officer. His son, I was

already an Additional Secretary and that by sheer dint of whatever merit I have, not by anyone's favor. The only aspiration that lay ahead was whether I might or might not make a Secretary or an Ambassador. For the sake of honor, I could take this much risk. The Minister was a businessman, and a very intelligent one. Within next few days he made up with me at his own initiative. We still enjoy good relations. I would not however recommend to my successors to take such stands. Times have changed and they may not survive.

The second was the face off in the Bay of Bengal between the Navies of Bangladesh and Myanmar over oil exploration by Myanmar inside Bangladesh claims. Bangladesh Government did not want a conflict and the Navy Chief, well, was very nervous. I was asked to try to diffuse the crisis before things got out of hand, if necessary to lead a delegation to Myanmar. A visit was arranged. Meanwhile I came to know that Hyundai, the Korean giant was actually doing the drilling. Korean Ambassador in Dhaka was a friend of 25 years. I called him and told him that vessels of the two navies were positioned on two sides of their drilling ship. I hoped there would be no shooting incident, but if it did happen, there are likely to be Korean casualties. I requested him to ask Seoul to tell Hyundai to stop drilling and remove the vessel. Four hours later at 11 pm, he called me to say that Hyundai bosses had been woken up from sleep, and they have agreed to move out. They asked for a day's time to seal the hole and another to move out. They asked for safe passage which I instantly agreed. When I boarded the plane for Yangon, the crisis was already over. We just went through the motion. (In the recent verdict of the court of arbitration, that spot and much beyond have been awarded to Myanmar).

Talking about passion, the strongest bond between my wife and I, apart from our two daughters, has been our obsession with travel. We have spent much of our savings on travelling at every opportunity. I have been to more than 70 countries, some on official visits, but much more on personal accounts. I have been to almost every state of India, almost every district of Rajasthan; travelled extensively in southern Africa and been to many other corners of the continent; seen most of Europe and South and South East Asia. There is however, no end to seeing. One lifetime is too short to explore the world. I am yet to see South America, but

planning a visit soon. Any ORCAN in Argentina or Uruguay?

Aspirations? Professionally there are none (naturally, I am retired). Personally, I want to do something to improve education standard in my native village and areas around (no political intention absolutely). I hope, or rather dream that Bangladesh becomes a trillion dollar economy by 2050 (I shall not be there to see it) and not all of that growth is stolen by the political-business-bureaucratic elite. My two fears are: one, that in spite of such phenomenal growth, the country will remain as unlivable as it is today, and two, instead of becoming stronger, the semblance of democracy will gradually wither away making room for a completely autocratic and fascist polity.

Have fun, but ...

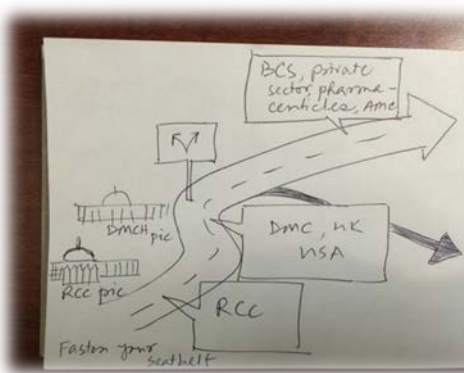
PHYSICIAN

TARIQ HOUSE

TWENTY FIVE

1369

UTPAL MONDAL



It's not where you go in life but how you get there. It's a journey and you should enjoy the ride.

At RCC, I tried to read whatever there was in the textbooks. I really liked the comparative biology atlases in the RCC library (mostly gifts from the oxford publishers). Today, I wonder why was there only one 40 min unsupervised library period allowed in the entire week? Librarian Sir was also underutilized. We should have been given projects based on our individual interests and required to submit some reports to teachers based on library work. I hope with the availability of Internet and computers, it is happening now. Anyway, I loved our biology lab, demonstrator Rashid Sir, P. K. Paul and Israil Haque Sir. After SSC results, did not think twice, before deciding on taking Biology for higher secondary and I am so glad for my decision.

Post HSC, once you escape from the RCC boundary, have fun! Stay away from smoking, drugs and chicks! Do read (or keep practicing obstacle courses if you are planning for a career in the military). You will have plenty of time to show off qualities you developed in RCC when you entered the best schools as the best students. Medical admission coaching classes were helpful but do your own planning and preparation. I had accommodation issues in Rajshahi or Dhaka, so decided not to continue "Classic medical coaching". But if you are staying in one of their hostels, be careful as the water is not as safe as it was at home or RCC. Too many people, including my own brother, caught Hepatitis A, typhoid and other diarrheas. So boil the heck out of the water before you drink it. If you can't attend coaching classes, make sure you collect their class materials and quizzes while you prepare at your

hometown (not sure if they offer internet based classes now). On the exam day, leave home early to be at the exam hall on time as it is not a quick walk under the tin shed to the auditorium (RCC exam hall). I could not find a rickshaw, ran (finished 7th on cross country race once) all the way from the farthest end of Kazihata to Rajshahi Medical College. By the time I found my seat, I was 25 min late, sweaty, panicky, angry, could only answer 123 questions out of 150 before ran out of time. I feel sorry to this day and no one should go through this agony!

DMC (and later in the UK and USA)

Well, I guess I am writing this to help younger ones. A career in Medicine is certainly not for everyone. On the first day, one of the teachers (like the guy in three idiots movie) declared "mediocre but studious ones make the best of doctors (correction: medical students) and if you are too smart (eccentric, genius of some kind) go do something else". Well, I like to read a lot, anyway. So that was not a problem. But where do I stay? Literally, at first, two second year students and then whole student wings of DMC Awami league and BNP started to fight saying "aita amar murgi, ami age dhorchi". I could not compare it with my first day reception at RCC at all. If you can avoid staying in a student hostel, do that by any means. To command your house in the parade ground and to scream "Jalo Jalo agun Jalo" while you should be studying or sleeping, are two different things. One is about discipline and the other is total chaos. Seeing how unfair medical school exams were and listening to many seniors who were not from well to do families, I thought about quitting medical college during my 3rd and 4th years, even took TOEFL, decided to study genetics or biochemistry in USA or Canada. But found nothing easy. I will skip this part because it was difficult and somewhat irrelevant. Everyone goes through difficult times. What I could not find was guidance. Mistake I don't want others to commit are: have faith in you, study, don't worry about the exams, how those so called teachers grade you or judge you, learn the exam tricks, if you don't like memorizing (sorry for you) still do it. Don't give up. Don't read too many books for the same subject (hate to say this) rather know 1-2 authors very well. Read with your group or buddy or girlfriend than alone. By the way, ladies don't

bite (even if they are from MGCC) and if one looked at you, it does not mean she is in love with you! DON'T LISTEN TO ANYBODY WHO SAYS IF YOU are NOT FROM A RICH FAMILY, FORGET ABOUT DOING POSTGRADUATION FROM THE UK OR USA. But you will need money (so ask from parents, do tutorships, do nightshifts in the clinics during internship, save!) Getting visa can be a barrier (may be, try to make Facebook friends with Obama daughters!) Networking with alumni is a must.



If UK, prepare for IELTS, PLAB and MRCP during internship. If USA, start preparing for USMLE. Nilkhet is a great place to collect materials. Many will rather go for Masters in public health or other related subjects (need toefl, gre, student visa), do odd jobs, pass USMLEs. It is certainly doable but be prepared to put some of the golden years of your life into this endeavor. As a bright cadet from RCC, at the age of 25 you should not be afraid to face whatever life throws at you. I have been through the UK and USA, faced many odds over the years, but today I can say when you can't find a path, God will carry you in his hands, you just need to believe and try! I can't think of a better profession. It is hard work but so rewarding and stimulating. Everyday there is something new to learn.

While rules, regulations, job market, training opportunities, visa, etc. are never fixed; try to contact seniors who went through the process, even if years ago. Nothing is

impossible but I must say it is hard to get into training positions in surgical specialties. But you must also follow your dreams. I do appreciate that at least in Dhaka Medical College we did not have the practice of "chotha" (written class notes by some unknown prehistoric author). Reading current English text books certainly helps. Also get involved in research and publish whatever you can. Publish with the community medicine department during 4th year and publish clinical cases from 3rd year on. Try to join ICDDR, joint BSMMU, BIRDEM and do research and publish with big names. Try to take a young faculty or instructor position in one of the new private medical colleges. Prepare and enrich your resume.



Journey to East Germany that no longer exist

SCIENTIST

KHALID HOUSE

FIVE

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MOHAMED ALAMGIR



Journey to East Germany- the country that no longer exists

In September of 1975, while the country was still in turmoil after Sheikh Mujib was murdered, thirteen of us left for higher studies to East Germany (the country that no longer exists) on government scholarship. Among the thirteen were three from RCC- Akhteruzzaman from 4th batch, Humayun Kabir (Helal, 5th) and me. Both Akhter and Helal are still in Germany (Berlin and Frankfurt). Of course, we all went there not knowing a single word of German!

The saddest part was that I could not say bye to my father since he was in a different vehicle and could not reach the airport on time for my flight. He passed away three years later without seeing me. I have lived with this pain of not being able to say bye to my father ever since. I guess we all pay this

hefty price for living abroad to make a better living!

Among all the scholarship subjects, I chose Chemistry. I enjoyed the subject quite a lot and the fact that I got 100% in Chemistry in HSC must have also contributed to this selection. While in East Germany, I did Electroanalytical Chemistry as my concentration and wanted to do my PhD in this field also. While I got admissions in two West German Universities, I could not attend them due to the slowness of funding arrival, and my deadline for leaving East Germany was fast approaching. To hedge, I also did apply to few US universities secretly since it was completely discouraged. In fact I was warned once by the school administration not to pursue such a path. Since we did not have any opportunity to do GRE from East Germany and did not have dollars, I could only apply to US universities that did not require any GRE and also waived application

fees. That did not leave too many choices and later I felt quite bad that I could not apply to big name universities such as Harvard or MIT due to this disadvantage of my position.

However, I was very fortunate to get a wonderful Graduate Advisor at my new university, Brandeis, a Jewish university near Boston. My Professor (a Physical Chemist) just started research on oscillating chemical reactions and he had a small group consisting of two post-docs from Hungary and France. While all living beings are examples of oscillating chemical systems (that is they have certain cycles...), these are complex systems but examples of oscillating chemical reactions were serendipitous and rare and my Professor and other chemists wanted to design simple chemical reactions that exhibit oscillating behavior (eg change in concentrations of certain species, color change etc...). Right after joining his group, I got very interested in this field and worked with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement. The hard work was very satisfying as I was able to discover a number of new oscillating chemical systems that were published in premier journals and I was able to publish 7 papers in 3 years completing my PhD.

It was my Prof who also introduced me to my future boss working in the field of Lithium batteries to work on reaction mechanisms of high energy density primary batteries that are still used in backup memories, heart pace-makers etc.

That is the beginning of my over 30 years career in Lithium batteries which literally powers the current civilization. Imagine we do not have cellphone, ipads, laptops or anything that is portable; our civilization will just come to a standstill. All these devices are powered by lithium ion batteries which were introduced by Sony in 1991. Since then the use of these batteries has been expanded to include electric vehicles that is expected to partially substitute for gasoline-engine driven vehicles and thus lower carbon dioxide emission and global warming.

Since there was not much corporate support for advanced batteries in the US (main support came from Department of Energy and Department of Defense), I had to work in

GM Chevy Volt, Bolt, Ford's Focus BEV, Volvo XCgo and several more on their way to introduction. That's a small contribution I could make to the well-being of this tiny

knowing that my 96% score from HSC did provide inspiration to some of our younger brothers.



several small companies some of which were not very stable. As a result, I had to move from Boston to Philadelphia, Madison, Chicago, Colorado Springs and for the past 10 years in the Detroit area. Good thing is that we got to see a lot of new places, make a lot of new friends but also had to bear with the sadness of leaving behind a lot of good friends. I have now been with LG Chem, one of the largest battery producers in the world, for the past 15 years. It has been a professionally very satisfying for me to see vehicles on the road on whose batteries I had the good fortune to work on. These include

planet we share with over 7 billion of our fellow earthlings and the next generations!

I am passionate about environmental issues in Bangladesh and I try my best to donate generously to BEN (Bangladesh Environmental Network) run by an MCC alumnus, among others.

My biggest passion and desire, however, remain to help folks in Bangladesh in the education sector. I come from an illiterate, poor family and it is only through education and hard work that I have been able to change my lot. I do get a lot of delight in

My favorite hobbies are sports (football and NFL), reading, Indian classical music and recently astronomy.

Accidental soldier

GENERAL

KHALID HOUSE

FOUR

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AMINUL KARIM



Joining Army was, in fact, a kind of accident. It was destiny that pulled me in the Army in April 1975. It was, in no way, by design. I reached almost the pinnacle of Army hierarchy. I retired in March 2010, as a Three Star General, an achievement beyond my expectation.

After retirement from the Army, I joined the University of Malaya, more as pass-time or as part of self-actualization Needs. It was more on the insistence of my wife and the children that I joined the University. Good luck that I was awarded a PhD degree by the University of Dhaka in International Relations in 2007.

I remain mostly pre-occupied with research and supervising PhD and Master's students.

At times I regret not-joining academic life at the start of my career. Overall I am fully satisfied with whatever I have so far achieved Alhamdulillah.

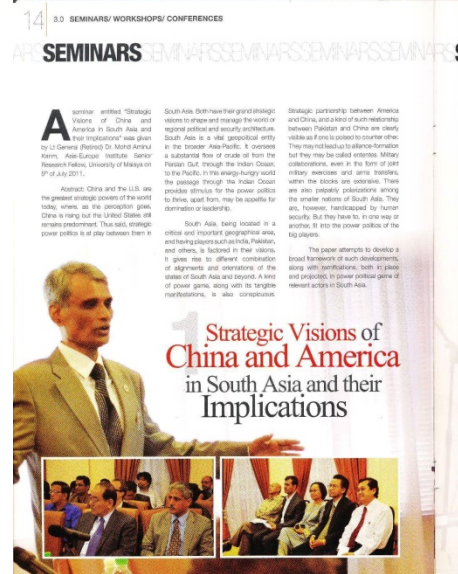
Stress management is a great challenge in the Army. Mental stamina, under extreme circumstances, is of essence for a higher military commander.

Problems of adjustment to the Army life were a great challenge for me initially. In its initial days I made few attempts to run away from the Army. My first attempt was in the second or third day after I joined the Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA).

Over the years I gradually got sucked into Army life and took it as fait accompli. All said and done, I always received above average annual confidential and course reports. My intelligence reports were clean slates, as I understood, throughout. I was always placed in Medical Category A and passed physical efficiency tests all along my career.

Army is a tough and risky life. You have to keep cool despite bullets flying all around. Leading soldiers and officers both during war and peace was a great challenge as could be true to any higher-level commander. I understand I succeeded or else I could not

become a General.



One single mistake or a bad intelligence report or any physical or mental incapacity, at any time of career, may damage your career once and for all.

I am enjoying my self-actualization (Needs) moment of life. I want to die as a good Muslim. In the meantime I want to give best possible education to my only son Rommel and my only daughter Fatima. I am happy with their brilliant performances. They are also being groomed as good Muslims.

I want to continue this process of self-actualization and plan to do more social services to the teeming millions anywhere in the world. At times I regret as to why I did not join the academic life to start with.

My mother died relatively at an early age in the year 1981 after a prolonged illness. I could not take good care of her. That remains my foremost regret throughout my life. May Allah place her and my father in eternal bliss in the Jannatul Ferdous.

I am happy, so far, that I have achieved Alhamdulillah. Personally I want to be a better Muslim and a better human being. I will continue to seek knowledge.

I have faith in the Creator, and look for a united, prosperous, and just Bangladesh. I lead a decent yet a humble family life. I have no longing for lot of riches.

I care for values such as integrity, honesty, creativity, reflecting, deep-and-critical thinking, justice, patriotism, freedom, compassion, empathy and family-bondage, straight-thinking and so on.

I'm passionate about instilling ethical and moral values to the younger younger-generation of Bangladesh. I hope and expect my son and my daughter will grow up as great scientists and educators with full of integrity and high moral standings. I pray that they become good human beings and good Muslims.

I have been here in the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur for last few years. This is a contractual job, not a permanent one. I hope to go back to my native country anytime soon. Once back I want to do some good to the villagers and local people. I've been very fortunate in my life and I would like to share my life experience to enrich others.



Memory lane

ARMY OFFICER

QASIM HOUSE

FIFTEEN

828

MD. ANISUR RAHMAN (ANIS)

অস্থিত স্মৃতি

স্মৃতি আসলে কোন এক সুখ স্বপ্ন
যা বহু কাল পরেও মনে পড়ে যায়।
মনে পড়ে সেই ত্রিমহিনীর গাবতলা,
কলেজ রোডের পথ প্রান্তরের নিমতলা।

আমি যৌবনের ফেলে আসা দিনের কথা ভেবে
আনমনা হয়ে যাই, খুঁজে ফিরি সেই পথ।
যে তুমি আমার কৈশোরের হেঁটে যাওয়া
পথ ধরে প্রতিদিন জেগে ওঠা কোন রথ।

কি আশ্চর্য শিশুকাল, কৈশোর, তারুণ্য, যৌবন,
প্রৌঢ় প্যার হয়ে আসে বার্ধক্য।
অথচ স্মৃতি জীবনের পাতায় পাতায় মাতম তুলে
পরে থাকে ভালোবাসা বিশ্বাসের চাতালে।

একদিন সব স্মৃতি ফুরাবে আমার
প্রদীপের অন্ধকারে বা কোন অন্ধকার অমানিশায়
তোমাকে খুঁজে ফিরি সেই অন্ধকারে,
হাজার বছরের পূরনো কোন এক জানালার শিক ধরে।

সেই পদ্মাপার, সেই কাশবন যেন এখনো তেমন,
একটু বাতাসের দোলা পেলে পাতারা শব্দ করে ওঠে।
পরম অস্থিরতায় বৃকের মধ্যে কাঁপন তুলে,
মনে হয় ফিরে গেছি সেই অস্থির তলে।

আমার বয়স আর বাড়ে না, স্বপ্নময় পুরুষ আমি,
তোমার প্রান্তরের সুরে জেগে উঠি,
তুমিও কি জেগে ওঠনি?
ডগডগে লাউ লতার সবুজে এখনো তুমি
তরুণীর মতো বিহ্বল,
তোমার চোখের ছলছল নোনা জল,
মুছে নেবে আমার সমস্ত ক্লান্তি তোমার আঁচল।

মনে পড়ে কোন একদিন পদ্মা পাড়ের সোনারোদে,
আলোছায়ার গহীন নদীর দহে
ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে শাপলা আর কচুরিপানা বহে,
ভুলে গেছ? না, ভুলেও মনে রহে।

হা হা করে খুলে যেতে থাকে মন,
বৃকের মাঝে যখন তখন।
এত স্মৃতি, এত স্বপ্ন,
এত আঁখিজল, এত ঝলমল,
এত ঘুমহীন নিশিরাতে,
রাত শেষে সেই প্রভাতে।

হাত বাড়ায় বন্ধু, শক্ত করে ধরো
আঁচলে না হয়, বৃদ্ধশ্রমে হবো জড়ো।



Learning from a baby

ENTREPRENEUR

QASIM HOUSE

FOURTEEN

765

MIR MASUD KABIR (APU)



I am an Entrepreneur. I am a Co-Founder & Managing Director of Mango Teleservices Limited. Mango changed the ICT sector of Bangladesh and we look forward to contribute more in future. I am leading the enterprise & providing life changing experiences to the nation since 2007. I initiated many ventures in my journey as an entrepreneur since 1999. Few struggled & some failed, fewer were successful. I have keen interests in a wide array of businesses, I see myself playing more active mentor and investor role in future. I am a learner & want to repeat success.

I had a very interesting international career (1990-98) in the best multinational oilfield technical services company, Schlumberger (NYSE: SLB) in the role of field engineer to senior Manager in wireline services. I had the opportunity to receive international standard training and worked in many exotic places starting from offshore locations to the deep rain forests and glamorous metropolises across 4 continents and 12 countries. I worked with the brightest, an extraordinary spirited group of people. I was exposed to one of the best company cultures in the world. I learnt a lot. I came back to Bangladesh after 11 years as Shlumberger country manager in mid 90s.

I am a petroleum engineer by education; I graduated from Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey under government scholarship (85-90). I also attended Istanbul University for a year to learn Turkish (84-85). I travelled extensively in Europe & Turkey. I was socially very active.

I learnt to explore & saw the world from a happy transforming nation.

We live in Dhaka. My wife Mehtap is from Turkish Cyprus. She is the country HR Manager of H&M. We have three kids. Our eldest son Joshua (19) has just completed his 1st year in computer science at

Aberystwyth university, Wales, UK. Amara & Bushra, our lovely twin daughters (13) are year 8 students at Grace International school, Dhaka. Joshua is a self-declared Geek. Amara & Bushra are outstanding students, gymnasts & swimmers. Mehtap & I play Tennis. We are active members of International Club (IC), Dhaka. We are Kurmitola golf club member but I hardly manage the time to play golf. Mehtap is a Reiki master and has many students. I was a part-time faculty in Petroleum & Mineral Resource Engineering (PMRE) department, BUET. Both my Parents were faculty of department of Psychology, Rajshahi University since 1963. My father is a martyr; he was killed by Pakistanis in 1971 during the freedom fight. My mother mostly lives in Rajshahi after her retirement from RU, she is 75 and still very active. I spent my childhood at beautiful Rajshahi University campus. Our ancestral home is at Gafargaon, Mymensingh, our maternal home is at in Rajshahi town. I attended Rajshahi university school till class 7 prior to RCC. We are 4 brothers & sisters. I am the eldest, my sister Dr. Mahbuba Kaniz Keya is a professor of Psychology at Rajshahi university, the 2nd sister Marufa Kaniz Peea is a senior VLSI design engineer at AMD, CA, USA (she was a faculty of EEE, BUET in 90s), my younger brother Masum Mir is a Vice President (VP) at Juniper networks, CA, USA.



I am lucky to have an extensive network of friends all over the globe. I do not have the concept of boundary or border in my mind, I often challenge conventional wisdom. I aspire to change lives. My happy accomplishment, sometimes I could really succeed and change LIVES.

When asked, how I came to be here from the doorsteps of RCC. Honestly, I came here by the love, aspiration & help of many people. There were always someone to show me the way and help me; I had to find that person. I



learnt from every one. I always tried to cross the border and innovate. I evaluated reality and set my goals. I learnt to make the best use of whatever options & resources I had & prepared myself. I think I was lucky in making

my choices, probably the believe system was correct.

Military discipline and way of life was not my cup of tea. I understood that from RCC. I also realized that I may not be the best foot soldier but I could probably be a good general. I needed the space to think independently, innovate and bring larger changes. Working in a confined & predefined domain would not stimulate me. I needed to move out to the sea from the pond. I needed a path.

Going to Turkey on a scholarship was my best option after RCC in 1983; I competed for it and got it. Turkey was a great experience. A strong cultural heritage, nice people, good food and the mind opening beauty, history & culture of Istanbul, the outstanding creative environment of METU, all were really conducive for a young mind. I studied hard and put equal importance to social skill development & travelling. I learnt from school, people and places. I worked in summers in UK that helped me to earn & see life from a different perspective. Equipped with education, travelling & real life



experience, I competed with hundreds of people for the best job in the industry at Schlumberger and got it. Schlumberger is a unique company with excellent people, culture & practice. They exposed me to the world & made my thinking real global. I learnt a lot. The spirit & culture of Schlumberger played a great role in shaping me for the next part of my life. I was ready to run a marathon at high altitude.

Then initial struggles in business, failures and shocks hardened me more and prepared me better for a more successful subsequent role. Political & social turmoil, their negative impacts created disasters for my business, but at the same time they forced me to innovate & find the blue ocean. I did and moved on, people always helped me.

I think my learning ability, intention to excel & motivation to cross the boundary helped me, but other people's support was a major factor. I was lucky to make the best out of every situation. I keep on learning & trying. I dare to dream & lose my sleep for the dreams.

The challenges from process, tools, system or environment can be resolved with innovative approach. Challenges created by people are the real threats. I had to overcome those challenges with the help of people again. Relationship development skill & networking strength helped me to overcome challenges.

I have no regrets, disappointment or fears. I will be happy to repeat my life. I take life as it comes. I take decision based on the best path available to me and do not regret. I think linear like a baby. Why have fear, when you can still learn, trust people and be happy. My believe system has fewer words in its dictionary hope that I can do that effectively.

I want to see Bangladesh producing world class entrepreneurs and enterprises, only then we can transform & change millions of lives. I want to be a successful & exemplary entrepreneur in Bangladesh. Then I would like to be a successful mentor & investor to create an ecosystem where more entrepreneurs would emerge and innovation would drive us.

If I am more successful in business then I would have access to more resources and would have more knowledge & skills. This combination would allow me to really change more lives. I want to support the process of creating more entrepreneurs. Success should not be a fluke; it should be a process that can be repeated with right ingredients.

My personal philosophy is simple though have expanded over the years with age. Love is the driving force of Life. We must develop

a believe system. We got to have faith & trust. Fundamentals do not change. Innovation is the driving force of progress. Must create inclusive & supportive environment and ensure right to induce innovation. Resource, knowledge & skills must be put together for success. And, I am not the center of the world, but I can change the world.

Interestingly, some of my passions are not so ambitious. I love to cook for people I enjoy. I love sports, travel and socializing. I encourage others to learn, innovate and



create in all aspects of their lives. I hope to continue contributing in the sharing of knowledge and empowering people.

I wish that our children would be happy with whatever they have or achieve in their lives. I hope they contribute for the betterment of humanity to the best of their abilities.

Initially I left Bangladesh as I thought it was more rewarding & best available option for me. With time, my thoughts matured. I do not live for rewards only. It is more important to contribute and change lives. That's why I am back to Bangladesh.

As a parting thought, my mantra is to fly high, dive deep and enjoy the surfing of life. So, explore, cross the border and challenge the conventional wisdom. INNOVATE. Have faith, people will help. TRUST. What got us here may not take us there (Let's keep on learning and sharing). Let's make best use of our resources and BE HAPPY.

LET'S LEARN FROM A BABY

Muktarpur to Maritimes

COMPUTER SCIENTIST

KHALID HOUSE

THIRTY SIX

1942

MD SAROER-E AZAM



This is a journey of more than 12 thousand kilometers of air (flying) distance. There are two continents and one great ocean in between Muktarpur and Maritimes. This is an experience of living in two extreme environments. Let's just start with my dearest alma mater Rajshahi Cadet College.

When I look back to my College life I realize I was a confused character. I was not the naughtiest one not even the proper Cadet. I was not even the leader but whatever it was that 6 years changed the direction of my life.

The second part started with IUT (Islamic University of Technology), Gazipur. I still think I would never be exposed to the information about IUT if I was not in RCC. Well, I started studying computer science without a single knowledge of Computer. Only experience about computer i had was watching people operating computer. But here I am, now ended up in International Business Machine. Well, that's the last part of my story.

As expected finished my undergrad education quickly within 4 years on Nov, 2009 and started working in a software company named Ensii Global Network. It was

owned by some of our ORCA members. After around a year, I got an opportunity to work for Banglalink. But in the meantime, I was also working for my dream to get higher education in Western Countries preferably Canada. Finally, I got an opportunity in Acadia University, NS to pursue my masters. I know this story is a

typical story. But from the beginning of 2012 the story of my life changed to a different direction.



After lots of uncertainties, I finally got the permits to move to Canada. But I choose the wrong season to get into Canada. Yes, it was in the middle of "Canadian" winter. When my flight was landing on the Halifax airport, it was looking like a white desert. On top of that It was snowing as well. I was thinking- "Am I going to die or what?" On the immigration line I was feeling like an alien. My alien feeling increased when I got out of the airport. The feeling was like "Brown guy on a white desert!"

Well next journey of my life started when i first put my feet on the beautiful little town of Wolfville. It looked like a fairy land to me with snow-white winter color and beautiful houses. I felt like living in a "No Man's Land" where population density is 1.714/sq mi. Not a single person on the road when I was entering Wolfville for the first time! I knew this happened because of the winter but still not a single person! First few months in Wolfville, I used to walk on the roads where I could see people.

After one and a half years, I got a chance to move to a little more populated land which was Waterloo, ON to work for Blackberry as a Co-Op. That was an amazing 8 months. Except work what I did was eating and traveling around.

I don't know the reason but back of my mind I was missing my sweet little Wolfville. But after coming back to Wolfville I had to face a lot of reality. Most of my friends I had or people used to know were gone or about to graduate. Unfortunately, I was nowhere close to my graduation. The journey of next one and half years was really tough for me. It gave me lots of self-realization and also self believe. But at the end, I got my degree. Then another new chapter started with some things to worry about. I couldn't afford to stay jobless for few months. I was already in a lot of debt.

Thankfully by the grace of Almighty, I didn't have to wait for long. I got the opportunity to work for IBM. By the way, I didn't have to leave the land of Irving's to take this job which is the Maritime Provinces as we all know. I ended up in Fredericton, NB. This is a beautiful city of New Brunswick. But my fate of living with crowd still not changed. Here the population density is 1.002/sq mi!

A great life changing events happened to me in the meantime. I have started another journey of my life in a way that I never thought in my wildest dream. I got married to a girl who lives in Belgium though we share a common ethnicity and origin. That's another long story of how we met and got married.



Eternal hope

EDUCATOR

EAST/WEST

ONE

1

ABDUL HAMID



Dhaka, Mukhtarpur, Dhaka, Moscow, Dhaka, Canada, Dhaka, Boston. My locations in life. Last thirty years in Boston.



In 1965 I was in Shaheen School, Dhaka. My father was transferred from Dhaka to Rajshahi. His major responsibility as Project Director, WAPDA, was the protection of embankments running from Rajshahi to Sardah. It was before Farakka Dam was constructed. The Padma was in devastating fury. His scope of responsibility included protection of the-then Ayub Cadet College. His transfer brought me to ACC. The extreme

physical rigor of the first ten days coupled with blistering cold of February made me write to my father every day during that period. I craved to go back home. He was tough as a tiger. He did not respond to a single letter. Initial achievements and successes at ACC made me feel I belonged to the place. Soon I resolved to spend every day in pursuit of excellence. I resolved to do everything in the best manner possible. I was bent on developing skills in all aspects and was bent on competing in every field. I resolved to persevere, persist, and prevail as an all-rounder. I think I largely succeeded. If I had the opportunity once again I would again want to be a part of such a wonderful institution in an idyllic setting under the tutelage and patronage of the same set of caring and compassionate administrators and teachers. I was the longest serving college prefect and

took the responsibility very seriously. Even during prep time I made rounds to ensure every cadet was utilizing the time properly. As a result, my own study was badly affected. I would barely pass the test exams before Board exams. I prepared for all the Board exams in the last 6-8 weeks before the exams. I worked 14 to 16 hours a day. I realized that none of my extra-curricular achievements would be of avail if I could not

excel academically. Whatever I could achieve through the short spurts of preparations I could hardly expect. The Almighty was Kind.

The vacation travels from and to the college gave me the opportunity to see the plight of villagers. The fleeting sights of countless languishing villagers on the road to and from Mukhtarpur caused recurrent wounds on an impressionable mind. I felt a sense of oneness with their sufferings. My eyes would well out. The compassion calcified into a desire to make relentless effort to change the lot of the common villagers. The desire transformed into life's ambition. The ambition metamorphosed to obsession. I was obsessed with the desire to bring change much like what leaders like Mahathir Mohammed did in Malaysia and Lee Kwan Yew did in Singapore. But those changes materialized much later. We did not witness their transformational examples in late 1960s when my transformation was taking place. ACC offered me the platform and the opportunity to develop skills I dreamt I would need to transform a country: people management skills, time management skills, communication skills, and above all the ability to dream, inspire, motivate, and mobilize people towards realization of a lofty set of visions. Possibly no other cadet of ACC/RCC graduated with the burning desire as I did. The experiences of ACC kindled fire in my belly. I did not dream of pursuing a professional career, acquire a cozy home, buy a luxury car, and spend quality family time at the end of the day. My dream centered on power politics as means of

bringing changes and creating opportunities that overtime would improve the lot of tens of millions of disadvantaged masses.

But the Almighty had other plans which I will come to later. We grew up under the rule of Field Marshal M. Ayub Khan. I felt the best way to capturing power was by rising up to the highest rank in the Army and then stage a coup. But after initial move to enter the Pakistan Army right after passing out of ACC I withdrew from that path. We were given the impression Bengali officers were not promoted beyond Colonel.



Couple of months after life in ACC I was misdiagnosed with TB. I was administered multiple medications including 50+ streptomycin injections which at that time was banned in some countries and since long has been banned worldwide. The injections caused a lasting damage to neurons in my brain that created neurological disorder and continuous headache. That was in September-October, 1970. Looking back, one is apt to think that if I went to PMA I would have been spared the injection regimen--and the subsequent reactions and side effects. But what is to hit us will not miss us (and what is to miss us will not hit us). I rested thereafter hoping to recuperate in due course. During this time I saw the massive death and destruction in the-then East Pakistan and the eventual birth of Bangladesh. The newly created country was on path to socialism. An opportunity to study socialist economics knocked at the door. I figured obtaining a degree in socialist

economics would further my ambitions. Along with some of my batch mates I flew in July 1972 to study Marxist-Leninist economics in Moscow. It was a disaster. My neurological disorder and headache did not allow me to attend classes for more than three weeks. The first year involved intensive Russian language program. Unable and highly distraught, I had to fall back to Dhaka with the hope of coming back next year after treatment and rest. The treatment process in Dhaka proved at least as disastrous as the first round. The continuous headache worsened. I could not talk for more than a few minutes at a stretch and could not even bear to read a paragraph. The mental toll—the prospect of not being able to pursue my ambition - was telling.

After the brief sojourn in Moscow and the second round of medicinal side effects, I made another attempt to join the Army--but this time it was the Bangladesh Army. Against all expectations I had hoped to recover enough in few months to go through ISSB in late 1973. I faced another huge setback. I could not appear. Years 1973 to 1975 were very torturous in terms of headache and mental toll. My dreams were dashed by the day. I could not see the end of the tunnel.

But often when one door closes another one opens up. The spiritual door opened up. It saved me. Otherwise the daily anguish of tattered ambition would have consumed me in emotional inferno. I would be a complete non-entity. I found religious meditation—which over time extended to four hours a day—brought my headache to tolerable levels and enabled me to function the next day. That devotion leaves me with 20 hours per day. But that was better than no life at all. Religious immersion deepened the realization that beyond this transient life lies an eternal life. We were created for eternity. Even if worldly ambitions remain unfulfilled or completely dashed to the ground, success in the eternal life would not be automatically lost. Success in the eternal life has its own set of rules. 1975 was the most transformational period of my spiritual life. I spent that year with my uncle in Haragach – the tobacco hub on the bank of the river Teesta near Rangpur. 1975 also saw the sun-set of my political ambitions. I saw after the assassination of Bangabondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975 there was as if nobody to mourn for him; there was no one in the streets to protest the assassination of a person who made colossal contribution for the emancipation of a nation. More importantly, my continued medical

limitations made it impossible for me to pursue political ambitions which some day could have drawn me to be part of murder and mayhem to protect political interests; I was saved from that.

1976 was a turning point in my chequered life that since 1970 was on a downhill. My cousin, Dr. A.B. Mohiuddin Ahmed sent air ticket so I could join him and his family in Canada (Raja's family). He wanted to treat me. The medications coupled with very deep immersion into spiritual exercises enabled me for the first time in over 4 years to read over prolonged periods without the nerves of my head being too constricted. That was a big breakthrough in years. My cousin offered to sponsor my undergraduate education in the USA. I got admission in couple of universities but the US Embassy in Toronto refused to grant visa. I went back to Dhaka in early 1977. That year I tried to take the B.A. (Pass course) exam. But I found my headache was not sufficiently improved by exam time to enable me to take the tests. That same year I made futile attempt to get admission to BUET (I won't tax you by explaining the reason for this change of mind from studying economics to engineering). Next year, with great effort I appeared and passed the B.A. exam. I got admission to the MBA Program at IBA in 1978 and with Herculean effort graduated in 1980 (I should rather say, by the Almighty's Grace). Teaching career turned out to be suitable for me given its light load. In due course I joined IBA as a lecturer. I hesitated to avail a World Bank scholarship fearing replay of what happened in Moscow. Finally, in January 1986 I came to Boston and to get a Ph.D. I had to struggle for years because of continuous, relentless, respiteless headache. But long before that I lost my job at IBA because of departmental politics though I was on study leave for a little over 2 years. When I finished doctoral program there was no other business school for me to go back and join. My children grew up and my roots went deeper and deeper every year. I was stranded in Boston.

I tell my story, as briefly as I could, for two reasons. It may inspire those who are struggling in life; I had more than my share of failures but I did not give up. The other reason is that my inability to pursue my ambition enabled me to devote time for ORCA. The demise of my ambition in that sense was connected to the rise of ORCA as a global entity. Otherwise I could not have devoted time for ORCA. As GS, ORCA, from December 1980 to about November 1985 I devoted more time for ORCA than to my parents and family. That was the period in

which I graduated from IBA, got married, and had two children. Virtually not a day passed without effort for ORCA. My home housed ORCA office for 5 years.

My deep sense of frustration at not being able to realize life's ambition might have goaded me to devote time wholeheartedly to making ORCA the most dynamic organization of its kind. I wanted to make it a brand that would represent brotherhood and service to society. But the first step was to forge a strong sense of brotherhood. I searched for ORCA members through their friends and visited them. This took me to their homes or halls: at DU, JNU, DMC, SSMC, and Dental College. My expression of caring for them brought them closer to ORCA. To strengthen bonding we arranged quarterly get-togethers and annual picnics. We formed ORCA Cine Club (registered with the Film Censor Board) and held regular cine shows. We published SPAN—ORCA quarterly newsletter that sought to build bridge across batches. It was mailed to all members regularly — even to overseas members. We formed ORCA Scholarship Program to help needy ORCA student members; it was funded largely by members in USA/Canada. We arranged a Reunion in 1982. A new and comprehensive constitution was adopted in 1984 after extensive deliberations. We went all out to help members facing all sorts of problems which by itself will be a long list. One example of collective help ORCA provided was in resolving the walk-out by 13th batch in 1981. These are examples of steps we took to forge ORCA brotherhood. We adopted the motto: "Let all of us prosper together". We sought to live by it though we may have failed in some cases. We formed ORCA Basketball Team that played in Dhaka First Division League. But I felt an alumni association cannot differentiate itself just by forging brotherhood. We have to set ourselves apart through service to society in some form. And as ex-cadets we are hugely indebted to an impoverished country. We cannot ignore payback to the country. We obviously pay back through superior professional contributions. But we can also pay back collectively. And that is what ORCA set to do along with cementing brotherhood. A high impact means of service we relentlessly pursued was promoting voluntary blood donation since May 1982. In the ensuing 3 ½ years we organized 48 blood donation programs—on average one every 25 days—nearly all of them widely publicized via newspapers and BTV. ORCA became widely recognized. ORCA members were proud. That brought further sense of belongingness. Each batch that passed out was given

reception at Red Cross (now Red Crescent) Blood Center during which they also donated blood for the needy. ORCA has continued



this flagship ORCA project; up until few years back ORCA had organized about 220 blood donation programs. ORCA plans to continue with this project. We operated a cadet coaching center to train candidates for cadet college admission test. The goal was to generate some funds. We sought to involve in ORCA activities brothers from each batch as they passed out. I was supported by ORCA foot-soldiers from 2nd batch to 15th batch who immensely contributed to these various activities. All these activities would not be possible without their drive and support. I wish I could mention their names. But I have already exceeded page limit. These brothers are spread in my mind like a rainbow. I am deeply indebted to them; I pray for them every day.

A large percentage of our members in the first half of 1980s were students which limited our ability to raise funds and hence limited our ability to pursue social welfare projects. So our plans like operating free clinic for the poor or imparting health and hygiene education to people living in slums could not materialize.

I left Bangladesh for Boston on January 3, 1986. I visited my parents every two years. Before my visits brothers in USA/Canada obliged me by contributing to ORCA Scholarship Fund. In the wake of the devastations caused by the massive flood of 1998, I undertook fund-raising effort in New England area of USA. The approximately \$38,000 that was contributed by Muslims hailing from all over enabled ORCA to rebuild a large number of damaged huts as well as purchase 3 ½ bighas of land adjacent to RCC with left over fund and constructed 30 brick-walled tin-shed houses that became ORCA Palli 1. After the enormous flood of 2004 we

took initiative in the USA/Canada to collect similar sums of money from non-ORCA entities and ORCA members which enabled ORCA to construct four similar Pollis (2, 3, 4, and 5) in most affected Ulipur near Rangpur. After SIDR we again mobilized funds from within and outside ORCA to enable ORCA to carry out major rehabilitation operations and also build ORCA Polli 6 in Kuakata housing 80 families. Few months before SIDR ORCA undertook to purchase land for its office construction. Over time it all added up to 26 kathas. Years 2007 to 2010 took me through 3 ½ years of relentless fund-raising of about Tk. 2 crores. Many ORCA brothers obliged and contributed. I am forever beholden to them and deeply grateful to them. The property is now worth over Tk. 10 crores. Every year ORCA lived up to my expectation of providing warmth to those harried by shivering cold. Infused by spirit of payback, some 12 years back brothers in Chittagong established ORCA Homes-Chittagong. With help from all over about 3 years back they built permanent facilities on land leased from Bangladesh Navy. ORCA brothers once again rose up to the occasion by chipping in to build and operate ORCA Homes - Gaibandha in 2014. Recently ORCA EC approved the establishment of a girl's wing adjoining the Gaibandha orphanage for which we will raise money from corporate contributions.

ORCA-USA has been the vanguard of a number of welfare projects since 2003 — including the offshoot Imdad and Sitara Khan Dialysis Project with 9 dialysis centers at present in different parts of Bangladesh. The list of ORCA-USA projects that started from the period when I was President and continued by subsequent ECs is too long to be mentioned in this article.

A notable aspect of our activities has been the fund-raising we did at various times to support medical treatment of needy ORCA brothers (and sometimes their near family members) and Class IV employees who served us. Before Eid, for at least 15 years we have financially supported all Class IV employees—serving or retired. All the effort that ORCA undertook over last 3 ½ decades was possible because significant brothers subscribe to my conviction that an alumni association cannot soar ever higher without two strong wings: wings of brotherhood and service. Our value in society depends on how useful we are to society. No exercise is better for the heart than reaching down and lifting up people. Real generosity is in doing good for someone who will never find out who did. Happiness is like Coke; it is the by-product of

making others happy. To whom more is given more is expected.

One practice I have maintained for some years now is calling at least one ORCA brother every day to inquire about his wellbeing. It is personal touch via our voice that has the most drawing power. It makes them feel more strongly a part of ORCA. And over the decades, in keeping with the common bond to the same institution, many ORCA brothers have extended selfless help to other ORCA brothers in various needs. However, in spite my effort and the effort of many others we have not been able to fully tap for greater benefit of disadvantaged people the huge talent and resource pool that ORCA is. The cause endures, the effort continues, and the dreams shall never die. Water stranded gets polluted; running water preserves its freshness. An organization that is alive with activities stays lively, sprightly, and dynamic-like ORCA.

This is the story of a person who wanted to change his country and the lot of his people but ended up not being able to change his own condition. My eyes still well up at the sight of human suffering, but in place of deep desire to take radical steps to remove human misery there is deep sigh and despondency; the sunset is near and the curtain can fall any time.

*Editor Raja Ahmed gave me the parameters of this article otherwise it would not see the light of the day; however, I could not stay within the page limit.

What limit? China Man has already exceeded the total budget. - Editor



Seek knowledge in Deutschland

EDUCATOR

QASIM HOUSE

FIVE

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HALIMUR KHAN



Studying in Germany

While Germany has just one university ranked within the top 50 in the QS World University Rankings 2014/15 – Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, at 49th in the world – the nation boasts a total of 42 entries in the ranking, more than any country outside of the US and the UK.

These 42 internationally ranked German universities are split amongst the numerous German states (Länder). While large numbers are concentrated in North Rhine-Westphalia, Bavaria and Hesse – the nation's most populous regions – German universities are in fact very well distributed throughout the country, with major cities such as Munich and Berlin boasting no more than three top German universities each.

Government investment in German universities

Those looking to study in Germany will already be aware of the changes taking place within Germany's higher education market. As of September 2014, all undergraduate tuition fees were axed for both domestic and international students. At the same time, the government has continued to invest in

funding schemes such as the Excellence Initiative Grants Committee in order to provide almost €2 billion (US\$2.52 billion) in grant money to 85 institutions, with a further €2.4 billion (US\$3.03 billion) approved over the past two years in order to continue development across a total of 99 institutions.

Technology is another frontier on which the nation continues to focus, helped by the recent establishment of TU9 (Technische Universität 9), an alliance of nine of the top technological universities in Germany, known for excellence in research and popularity among international students, with a 15% international student average at all TU9 institutions.

Below are the top universities in Germany, divided by Länder, based on the QS World University Rankings® 2014/15.

Top universities in Baden-Württemberg

The third largest German state in terms of both population and size, Baden-Württemberg is home to 11 million people. As well as thriving automobile, engineering and metallurgical sectors, Baden-

Württemberg is famous for its fairytale forests and historic towns. Baden-Württemberg is home to two TU9 members (Universität Stuttgart and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, KIT) as well as the highest-ranked university at which to study in Germany – Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg.

The capital and largest city of Baden-Württemberg is Stuttgart. The top universities are:

- Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg (49th in the world; 1st in Germany)
- Universität Freiburg (121st in the world; 4th in Germany)
- Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT, 127th in the world; 5th in Germany)
- Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (141st in the world; 7th in Germany)
- Universität Ulm (249th in the world; 16th in Germany)
- Universität Stuttgart (274th in the world; 19th in Germany)
- Universität Konstanz (310th in the world; 24th in Germany)
- Universität Mannheim (328th in the world; 25th in Germany)

Universität Heidelberg in International Comparison

- QS World University Ranking: No. 1 in Germany • No. 14 in Europe • No. 49 worldwide
- Shanghai Ranking of World Universities: No. 1 in Germany • No. 12 in Europe • No. 49 worldwide
- Times Higher Education Ranking: No. 3 in Germany • No. 18 in Europe • No. 70 worldwide
- CHE-Excellence Ranking: Biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics are all in the "Excellence Group" of highly research-intensive subjects in Europe with a strong international orientation.
- BIX - German Library Index: University Library ranks No. 1

Top Position in Germany, Leading Role in Europe

In 2014, Heidelberg University has asserted its leading position among universities in Germany as well as internationally: In all three of the major international rankings, Heidelberg University is among the top three of German universities, therefore making it

one of the world's best 100 universities in each. After coming out on top in the previous years, Heidelberg University Library is once again a front runner in the renowned BIX Library Index. (More...)

Excellent results especially for medicine in Heidelberg

Heidelberg University ranked highly in a total of eleven subjects in the recently published CHE University Ranking. Human medicine at the Medical Faculty Heidelberg fared best in the 2015 ranking, scoring in the top group in five assessment criteria: overall study situation, support from teachers, graduations in appropriate time, scientific publications, and dovetailing of pre-clinical and clinical studies. The Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE) evaluates more than 30 subjects at over 300 hundred universities and institutions of higher education in German-speaking countries. Each year one-third of the subjects are re-evaluated.

Top Universities in Germany to study Engineering

Germany is an outstanding study destination if your desired choice of a subject is engineering. Providing for the fact that Germany offers excellent educational possibilities for national and international students alike, with low to no tuition fees and great campus lifestyle, the country is becoming irresistible for prosper students and future experts.

Engineering is a broad subject comprised of numerous specified subfields, each one very different and challenging, essential for the world market. The Universities in Germany pack a highly progressive infrastructure luring international students to an expat friendly environment.

Top 5 Universities in Germany to study Electrical Engineering

Electrical engineering now covers a wide range of sub-fields including electronics, digital computers, power engineering, telecommunications, control systems, RF engineering, and signal processing. The top universities in Germany to study electrical engineering are:

TU DARMSTADT

The Darmstadt University of Technology, whose official name is "Technische Universität Darmstadt", (abbreviated TU Darmstadt) in Darmstadt, plays a significant role among German universities. It is one of Germany's leading universities and well known internationally for its outstanding

achievements in the areas of engineering, political science and computer science. As an institution it provides excellent research in selected fields to face the challenges of the new millennia guided first hand by experts in the field. In electrical engineering students often work on projects which give them the opportunity to use their theoretical knowledge in practical applications. In their last year the students are asked to work on their bachelors dissertation encouraged to be creative and genuine.

TU KAISERSLAUTERN

As the only technical and engineering university in Rhineland-Palatinate, the TU has acquired a considerable reputation since its founding in 1970. With around 14,200 students in twelve subject areas the University of Kaiserslautern has a manageable size, the close contact with professors and excellent service guaranteed. Electrical Engineering and Computer Engineering are offered as two separate graduate courses with varying technical orientation. The sound basic education in the four-semester undergraduate program is followed by the graduate program with technical specialization in one of the seven majors.

TU MUNICH

The TUM is one of the best universities in Europe regarding excellence in research and teaching, interdisciplinary methods and talent drawn from them. The strong collaboration amidst various companies and several other academic institutions around the world make for an optimal international environment. TUM is one of the first three Universities of Excellence in Germany. The bachelor's degree program in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology is divided into two study phases. In Part I, the first four semesters, students learn the fundamental principles of the following subject areas: Electrical Engineering (28 credits), Mathematics (32 credits), Physics (24 credits), Signals and Systems (20 credits), Information Technology (16 credits). In Part II, the second phase of study follows on from the fundamental principles. During semesters 5 and 6 students build on the knowledge gained in the first four semesters. They will be expected to accomplish the following: Engineering Practice (12 credits), Soft Skills (6 credits), Bachelor's Thesis (12 credits), Individual Advanced Modules (30 credits)

RWTH AACHEN

The RWTH Aachen found in 1880, has a long lasting tradition of excellent education

comprised of nine faculties among which, the Faculty of Engineering. The coverage of the RWTH Aachen engineering studies corresponds with the idea of expanding the electrical engineering potential. Students receive intensive basic studies – the mathematics, computer science, and electrical engineering education cannot be beat within Germany. Students begin their studies focusing on focus on mathematics, computer science, and the elementary stage of electrical engineering. The Basics continue for three to four semesters. The curriculum is quite mathematically challenging to ease up their way towards the essentials of technical principles and structural concepts.

ULM UNIVERSITY

Since its foundation in 1967, the youngest university in Baden-Württemberg showed a remarkable performance. Currently around 9500 students spread over the faculties of medicine, engineering and computer science, mathematics, sciences, economics and natural sciences. Its motto states "Innovative technology is in need of modern software and hardware solutions, but it must also take into account the people who will deal with this technique. Conversely, it is an inspiration for innovative technical mechanisms and algorithms human thought and action patterns.

Top 10 German Universities to study Medicine

As a highly desired destination among international students, particularly regarding Human Medicine and other related fields, Germany hosts numerous Universities that provide excellent Medical education. According to CHE University Ranking 2013/14, depending on the qualities students are looking for in the educational domain as academic studies and teaching, research, job market, infrastructure as well as the lifestyle as in location and accommodation, it's very difficult to differentiate and come up with a list of the top best, since the majority of the Universities do offer superb circumstances.

By analyzing several criteria – ready made by the Zeit Online (CHE University Ranking 2013/14), among the long list of prosper Universities one ends up with different results each time therefore we came up with an equation including predetermined domains as follows:

Support for stays abroad – Students assessed the attractiveness of the exchange program,

the attractiveness of the partner universities, the sufficiency of the number of exchange places, support and guidance in preparing the stay abroad, financial support (scholarships, exemption from study fees), the accreditation of studies performed abroad and the integration of the stay abroad into studies (no time loss caused by stay abroad);

Job Market Preparation – Students assessed the programs offered by their college to promote the relevance to the professional field and jobs market. This includes information events on professional fields and the jobs market, specific programs and lectures to provide job relevant and subject comprehensive qualifications, support in looking for work placements, arranging Diplom work subjects in co-operation with the world of work help when looking for a job after completing studies;

Treatment rooms – Students gave an assessment of the state of the treatment rooms, the availability of places, as well as the technical equipment;

Contact to Students – Students assessed Co-operation with other students and contacts to other students. An indicator for the atmosphere at the faculty;

Research Reputation – Which tertiary institutions are the leading ones according to the opinion of the professors in research? Naming the own tertiary institution was not taken into consideration.

After considering all the data on the given web-site relevant to each domain separately, the data based on facts, student judgments, alumni's judgments and professors judgments, due to comparison and segregation I came up with a top ten list of German Universities to study Medicine.

Heidelberg University

The University of Heidelberg has an excellent department of Medicine with holding 6 decades of tradition in education and research. This department aims to overcome the 21st century's medical challenges in the region and beyond. Into establishing such a renome, this department has undergone a series of struggles to establish a central scientific institution, emphasizing research and supporting and promoting research agendas. Nowadays, the university is a vivid and interactive environment of internationally recognized research institutions, luring students from all around the world.

Rwth Aachen University

RWTH Aachen University founded in 1966, hosts nine different faculties among which the exceptional Department for Medicine. The Klinikum Aachen includes several specialized clinics, theoretical and clinical institutes and other research facilities, lecture halls, schools for medical expertise, and other compulsory facilities for a decent hospital. There are approximately 2,700 prospective students who study in the Medicine Faculty.

Lübeck University

Provided for its fame in the research profile, the Lübeck Medical School is ready and set to fight the demons of the 21st century's medicine. Focusing strongly yet hardly solely on 1) Infection & Inflammation, 2) Brain, Behavior and Metabolism, 3) Medical Genetics and 4) Biomedical Technologies this educational institution meet the standards of excellence.

The students are provided with an effective cocktail of:

- Technical knowledge needed for the future
- Practical capabilities & skills
- Scientific work
- Social and ethical skills

Witten/Herdecke University

As for being among the oldest private Universities in Germany, founded in 1983 the Witten/Herdecke University is recognized widely to be highly prestigious. Around 1200 undergraduates study Medicine, Nursing Science, Dental Medicine, Economics, Philosophy and Culture. As for enrollment criteria, students have to succeed on explaining why they've made the certain choice for the certain profession during their interview. The astonishing part of this conquest is the fact that the interviewers attribute the merit to students personality opposed to their great grades. As aforementioned, this University is private therefore the tuition fees go up to 400 and 1000 euro a month. Yet, the excellent studying conditions at UWH are not for free: students have to pay between 400 and 1000 euro a month in academic fees. However, the international students can always apply for grants and scholarships.

Magdeburg University

Following a merger of the existing Technical University, the Teacher Training College and the Medical School in the 1993, the University of Magdeburg is one of the youngest Universities in the state. The

Medical School provides for around 1300 trained experts in dealing with a wide range of serious illnesses in the region of Saxony. A special emphasis is laid on the close cooperation between teaching staff and students. Around a year, this institution hosts around 45000 stay-in patients and numerous others in and out of the facility. With all this being said, the institution offers excellent practice oriented medical education for eager students.

Münster University

The Munster University was founded in 1780, withholding a long-lasting tradition spread over its seven facilities hosting 15 departments and offering 250 different courses of study. The University takes pride in their exquisite staff of 5000 certified experts and 37 000 prospective students. Additionally, it has around 400 partnership agreements with various academic institutions all around the world. The University runs by valuing knowledge, research and curiosity.

Würzburg University

The Würzburg University was established more than 4 decades ago by the Prince – Bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn and the Prince Elector Maximilian Joseph. The University department facilities and its additional institutes are all situated within the old town allies. The University hosts a modern library, a new liberal art campus and several research institutes among others. Of the 25.000 students around 1000 students come from the international domain.

Tübingen University

The University of Tübingen is one of the oldest classical Universities, situated in an optimal university town. It is internationally recognized for its success in medicine, natural sciences and humanities. The university is associated with some Nobel laureates, especially in the fields of medicine and chemistry. The Medical department including the clinic, the scientific institutes and the theoretical facilities makes for the greatest medical training institute in the Baden-Württemberg region.

Freiburg University

The University of Freiburg belongs to the long tradition of successful and rich curriculum in humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. The University operates under 11 faculties luring students from every corner to join the quality and expertise. The Freiburg medical center has a staff over 10

000 professionals taking care of around 58 000 patients in need of medical attention. The University Medical Center believes that basic science and clinical research are prerequisites to realize the newest medical expertise and treatments and therefore encourages ongoing and new research by its physicians.

Leipzig University

Leipzig University of Saxony is the second-oldest university in Germany. Famous predecessors of the nowadays prospective students of this establishment include Leibniz, Goethe, Nietzsche, Wagner, and Angela Merkel adding to the composition also nine Nobel laureates associated with the Leipzig University. The Faculty of Medicine is an educational institution of over 3,000 students in human medicine and dentistry and operates closely with the Leipzig University Hospital. The Faculty of Medicine together with the University Hospital is among the greatest medical institutions in Saxony hosting 48 clinics and institutes operating in five separate departments. The motto of Leipzig Medical School is research, teaching, healing – a tradition of innovation.

How Much Does it Cost to Study in Germany?

Last year we saw the last of Germany's 16 states abolishing tuition fees for undergraduate students at all public German universities. This means that now, both domestic and international undergraduate students at public universities in Germany are able to study in Germany for free, with just a small fee to cover administration and other costs per semester.

These low charges certainly help to make studying in Germany an attractive option for prospective students, with recent higher education data showing it to be the fourth most popular country for international students in the world (after the US, UK and Australia). German universities now also hold some of the lowest education costs in the world, based on countries providing internationally reputed higher education systems.

Based on official figures from the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), the average cost of studying in Germany is just US\$10,520 (€9,170) per year, breaking down to US\$540 (€470) for school fees and US\$9,980 (€8,700) for 12 months of living – covering food, transport, accommodation, entertainment, course materials and other necessities.

Bear in mind that these figures are averages, and the amount you pay will fluctuate depending on the length of your program, your level of study, the German state (Länder) you live in and whether your university is private or public. Read on for more precise figures about the costs of studying in Germany for international students.



Fire in your belly

ENGINEER

TARIQ HOUSE

TEN

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FIROZ KABIR

If you have absorbed Bachchoo bhai's message of opportunities for good education, here is a moon-shot (a formidable but rewarding challenge) for you, the young members of ORCA, who are still students and doing good at a reputable university in BD or elsewhere: Aspire, you are going to MIT or Harvard.



While the "need blind" (and "passport blind") admission process (at BS/BA level) is a good news for the high-school going children of ORCA members, we would hope that the ORCA's young members would also aspire to get to those good universities (e.g., Harvard, Princeton, MIT, Stanford, Yale, Berkeley, etc.), preferably for advanced level studies (MS/MBA/PhD), for which financial aid (scholarship) has been available to the world's best and brightest corps of students for many years.

There is no doubt that getting a scholarship from a top university is a highly competitive process that requires sustained planning and efforts, high GRE/GMAT and TOEFL scores, great recommendation letters from teachers, stellar results at the BS level in the country of residence, an attractive essay by the student on his/her goals, etc. However, large contingents of Indian and Chinese students have been successfully availing themselves of such scholarship opportunities year after year. You, the young ORCAns, too, can do it. But, do it when you are still young – best if by age 25, and the possibilities of yours having a distinguished career are limitless, especially in a globalized world. You will very likely be able to contribute significantly to your country of birth as well. Here are examples of three persons (of which two of them -- Gupta and Majumdar -- are Bangalees from the

neighboring country), about whom I heard from friends and colleagues.

Rajat Gupta

After earning a BS (1971) from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, he obtained an MBA (1973) from Harvard University (with a scholarship) at age 25. Then, at age 46, he rose to become the Chief Executive Officer of McKinsey & Company (USA), a pre-eminent management consulting firm worldwide, regarded as one of the world's best, often the very best. He also founded an internationally well regarded business school – Indian School of Business (ISB) in Hyderabad, India. (Note: Recently, he got entangled in some legal troubles in the U.S. that tarnished his impeccable image.)

Arun Majumdar

After earning a BS (1985) from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, he received his Ph.D. (1989) from the University of California, Berkeley (with a scholarship) at age 26, where currently he is also a professor of Mechanical Engineering. Recently (2009 – 2012), he served the Obama administration as an Under Secretary (a rank equivalent to a State Minister in BD) of the U.S. Department of Energy.

Indra Nooyi

After earning an MBA (1976) from the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, she earned a Master's in Management from Yale University in 1980 at age 25. Legend has it that she amusingly put on a Saree when she interviewed for Boston Consulting Group (a blue chip firm), which actually hired her. Then, in 2007, at age 52, she became the Chief Executive Officer of PepsiCo (USA), the second largest food and beverage business in the world.

I wish they were from BD and RCC! Obviously, there is a selection bias in picking three individuals as above, coming out of the finest universities, as examples of success, but there are also more of similar examples of entrepreneurs, consultants, investment bankers, engineers, venture capitalists, and deans of Asian origin that I have heard of or read about, who stood out with a top university pedigree and distinctive achievements. Not every person of Asian heritage earning a degree from Yale, Harvard, MIT, Berkeley, Princeton, or Stanford will turn out to be a shining star like

them, but the likelihood of your achieving a distinctive success, if you can get there at an early age, shall remain very high.

There is also some help available at your disposal. You have a couple of senior ORCAns to look up to. They will not toot their own horns in eRCC, so let me do it instead, even at the risk of inviting their wrath upon me. Reza bhai (3/101, arhassan@gmail.com), a diplomat at the United Nations' Kabul office, earned a Master's degree from Princeton University; Bachchoo bhai (5/216, halimurkhan@hotmail.com), an associate professor at the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado, earned a Master's degree from Harvard University. Indeed, both Princeton and Harvard are great universities. Write to them for some inside secrets!

Also, this year (2012) saw that two of world's finest universities chose their commencement speakers (chief speaker at the annual graduation ceremony) someone with roots in the Indian Subcontinent: Fared Zakaria, a well-known television (CNN) anchor, Time Magazine columnist, and author spoke at Harvard University; Salman Khan, famous for Khan Academy, spoke at MIT. Zakaria, born in Mumbai (India), studied at Yale (BS) and Harvard (PhD); Khan, fathered by a pediatrician from Barisal (BD) and born in USA, studied at MIT (BS, MS) and Harvard (MBA). Google them and find out what made them so distinguished that Harvard and MIT gave them the high honor of being a commencement speaker. Both of these men have geographic roots close to you – the Indian Subcontinent. Can you possibly be one like them or even better? Take a shot at going to Harvard or MIT. Do not forget to get me a front row seat to watch you if you return there as a commencement speaker; I will smile very broadly!

As you can imagine, none of us, those who are parents, have the ability to choose our children's aptitude, we can at best help them grow it, perhaps, whereas, you, as cadets, were actually chosen as a group for your special aptitude and skills, just as Principal Azim has chosen the 2012 intake of RCC this year. So, you are actually someone special, a chosen one. Aspire, and act early while you are still young having a fire in your belly.

The art of giving

VORACIOUS READER

TARIQ HOUSE

TEN

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FIROZ KABIR

At times I wrote in this forum about some consequential persons of South Asian connection, such as Iqbal Quadir, Sal Khan, and Fareed Zakaria. Lately, I thought I would write about a Yankee I had come to know from a distance. Here it is. Self-styled as a narrative of Questions and Answers, it is about a Yankee's passion for giving back to his alma mater.

Our love for RCC is genuine. But how do we show our gratitude to RCC for the outsized role she has played in shaping our lives? For those among ORCAnS who have done well financially (or will do so) by virtue of their hard work and the Almighty's grace, there is, perhaps, a luminous model -- a person to look up -- to find inspiration for how to give and what it means to give back to an alma mater that helped him find his life's mojo (charm). This person is Michael Bloomberg, the current mayor of New York City. Let us try to know him a bit better.

Who is Mayor Bloomberg? Trained in engineering (BS, Johns Hopkins, 1964) and business (MBA, Harvard, 1966), Bloomberg is an entrepreneur, a self-made multi-billionaire businessman turned politician. Elected three times as the mayor of New York City, now serving his twelfth and the last year, he has all along declined the mayoral salary of \$225,000 (per year) and, instead, taken a remuneration of \$1 (one dollar) annually. So he does not work pro-bono as you can imagine, but he does work hard to serve the people of his city.

How is the mayor's gratitude toward his alma mater? On Sunday (January 27, 2013), he gave a \$350 million (U.S. dollar) gift to the Johns Hopkins University, bringing his total donations to Johns Hopkins, which he initiated with a small gift of \$5 (five dollars) 40 years ago, to a staggering sum of 1.1 billion U.S. dollars over the course of past four decades. His is the one of the largest donations to any university by an alumnus in the U.S. history. (Let it be noted that the USA's entrepreneurs, who made a fortune for themselves, have been generous throughout the history in giving substantial

gifts of gratitude to their alma maters, in addition to their giving to other philanthropic causes.)

What has been the impact of mayor's gifts of gratitude to his alma mater? His gift to Johns Hopkins University "has fueled major improvements in the university's reputation and rankings, its competitiveness for faculty and students, and the appearance of its campus," reports the New York Times (January 26, 2013), adding further, "His wealth ... has bankrolled and molded the handsome brick-and-marble walkways, lamps and benches that dot the campus; has constructed a physics building, a school of public health, a children's hospital, a stem-cell research institute, a malaria institute and a library wing; has commissioned giant art installations ...; and has financed 20 percent of all need-based financial aid grants to undergraduates over the past few years."

What does the mayor plan to do with his enormous wealth? "The mayor, who is 70 years old, has pledged to give away all of his \$25 billion (U.S. dollar) fortune before he dies, and he has built up a foundation on the Upper East Side of Manhattan (New York) to carry out the task," wrote the New York Times.

How did I get to know about the mayor, is he an ORCAn? It is a tenuous connection. I attended the Johns Hopkins University to earn a master's degree, so technically Michael Bloomberg is a fellow alumnus. Thus I get to know a bit more about his love for and generosity toward his alma mater. But, as a commoner, I know my limits and do not expect to hobnob with the nobles. I, however, wish that the mayor were a fellow ORCAn, though, so I could have shown up at Michael bhai's mayoral office at the City Hall for, yes, a bit of brotherly/friendly hobnobbing, eh, and thanking him for his gargantuan gift of gratitude to RCC/ORCA, too. It was not to happen, we know, so we have to keep nurturing Bloomborgs among us, the ORCAnS.

Are there Bloomborgs in ORCA? There are, will be, and should be. They are the ORCA's entrepreneurs, they are risk takers, and their contribution to the country through job and wealth creation is outsized and is a source of pride for us. They are the likes of Sakhawat (10/553), Sabbir (10/557), Akhter (10/548), Polin (10/534) -- I am biased toward these guys to lead the pack -- plus Tanim bhai (1/..), Siddique bhai (2/..), Monju bhai (3/..), Moyeed bhai (3/..), Mujtaba bhai (4/..), Dipok bhai (6/..), Rashid bhai (6/..), Tulip bhai (7/..), Raja bhai (8/..), Monjur Faruk (12/..), Masud-Apu (14/..), and many others whose names I have risked missing out unintentionally. They are ORCA's Bloomborgs or Bloomborgs in the making. No matter where they belong on the wealth scale of Mayor Bloomberg, there they are to inspire the rest of us and to pin our hopes on them, which leads to the next query.

What can ORCA learn from the mayor? ORCA's landscape of political leadership is pretty much desolate. We hope that ORCA's Bloomborgs shall venture to become mayors of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Khulna, Karachi, or your/my city, shaping the lives in those cities and taking a remuneration of at least one taka annually for their services (no pro-bono service, please); like Mayor Bloomberg does. And, how shall they express their love for their alma mater -- RCC/ORCA, or Dhaka/Other University, or a school in their hometown/village? With generous gifts of gratitude; like Mayor Bloomberg does. What will they do with their wealth if vast enough? Pledge to give it all away; like Mayor Bloomberg did.

What else should we be mindful? The Bloomberg way of giving back has the power of creating massive impacts that shall endure. Let us be mindful, though, that it is one of many ways to serve an alma mater, and many ORCAnS have been doing it differently and exemplarily.

Seek China, knowledge will follow

ENGINEER

TARIQ HOUSE

TWO

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ANWARUL HAQUE (CHUNNU)



Oh my dearest younger brother and Moharaja,

2007 then and now 2015, many years have gone by, days gave away to nights, dear ones died and made space for new to live, and



now I am in England from China for my daughter's wedding.

Life has no soul for me lately, Moharaja. I feel I am just a floating little straw in the big sea of life. I read again the magazine you produced; it brought sadness, happiness and most of all hankering for the life I left behind in USA. Now I travel the world like I did then, from sky slope of Mount Pocono to allure of NYC, from Rockies to Grand Kenyon to Las Vegas, from Monsoon Rain of Vietnam and India to hopping islands of Indonesia to deepest French Africa (Algeria, Morocco) to the land of Changis Khan where he took no prisoner, Mongolia.

Now I have come to my adopted home, England, where my princess getting married, I am watching everything as a bystander, all the ceremonies, all the family occasions, all the fun and rituals. A little baby, when she was born I held her in my hand, and my mother was with us then. She said: why are you so happy? I said: after two sons a daughter brought me so much joy. She said: they don't stay too long. She was right. A mother is always right.

Life goes by and I watch. Where did my Mukterpur go, where did my RCC go, where did little Chunnu go! Now my Princess going. Do you see Moharaja, when I used to march to the command of Hamid Bhai in a dew soaked morning as a lanky little lad, when I reluctantly went to classes feeling sad and lonely away from my family that I have known all my life, I wanted to hold then what is mine just like now. Alas time takes away all.

I am in no mind to write another travelling piece, like the last one where so kindly Taneem Bhai and rest of you commented. I want to write about me, the part you don't see, the part who sits beside a Chinese fishing villager and talks - none understanding each other but spent an afternoon catching fish, the part spent hours talking to a Vietnamese peanut seller woman by the river Saigon who did not care about selling the rest but just talking in a languages alien to us, the part that gets amazed to see a woman in high heels climbing Taishan Mountain in China, the part that cried in the beach in Algeria that got bombed, the part that got tremendous pleasure driving cars from Italy to France Rivera along the Mediterranean sea through the endless Mountain Tunnels, the part that



got totally agitated travelling in Mumbai on a hot summer day in a smelly and absolutely crowded train, or the part spent laughing and joking with classmates in a posh mountain top rest house in Bandarbone, Bangladesh in a rainy afternoon.

Now it boils down to one thing. I am not 39 anymore. I am 39 + a day. Golam Sarwer may have something to say about that. My dearest Reza from Afghanistan will come for me with a machine gun blazing at me just because I got a day older. Hamid Bhai and



rest of the 1st batch will tut, and a few younger fans will lament for a passing day. And to you my dear younger brother, I apologize for not being able to submit an article for the forthcoming magazine.

I am now in a country of 1000 plus islands - Indonesia. After 11 hours and 30 minutes of direct flight from Istanbul, and the tiredness and jet lag that goes with it didn't dent my happiness of being in another country a zilch. This country is following China in developing. The sky scrapers and newly built highways

and flyovers are shining examples of a progressing country for all to see.

I have been here before. I stayed in a boutique hotel last time. Just outside my window a older looking tree that had so much subtropical flowers, I have only seen like of which when I was a young boy running to Korotoa river in Bogra for an early



morning dip.

The scent of flower was so heady, I was overcome by it. This scent, will stay forever with me, engulfed the room when I opened the window to see sudden tropical downpour one evening.

Alas, I am staying this time in another one of those international hotels with no character, just cleaned rooms, big mirrors, flat screen TV, and freeze full of drinks that nobody touches for fear of breaking banks to pay for it. Apart from that I am looking forward to few days stay in this beautiful country.

Hey, just before ORCA USA reunion, someone posted a photo in the email circle of your dining table and food. In the photo, the hostess (your wife) beaming with smile, a smile from heart that had always welcomed me every time I went to your home, you and other Cadets were standing in front of the dishes I long to feast on. I see your grand style hasn't reduced a bit. May Allah keep you in that style, your good healthy and big kind heart forever.

Here I am in Ankara airport today. Travelled yesterday for couple of business meetings. Flying soon to Istanbul on the way to Jakarta, Indonesia.

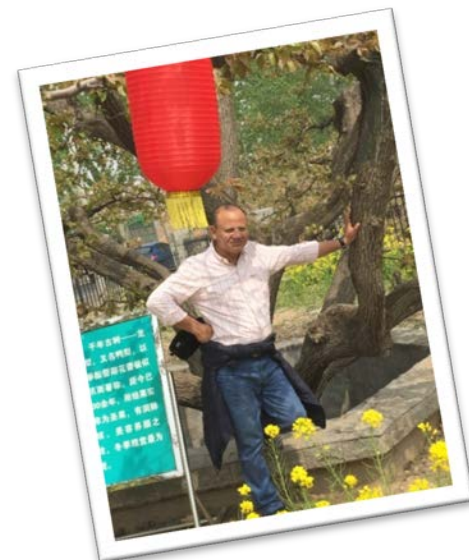
Isn't it true, these Turks knows how to build mosque - each one surpassing another, whether it is in old Istanbul or in relatively new city Ankara. I visited mausoleum (someone correct my spelling, or read eternal resting place) of Kamal Ataturk, the man who dreamt and road mapped for modern Turkey. What a pity, our Bongobondhu never had a chance!

One day I shall write about the Silk Road of ancient times. I travelled from Suzhou, China, literally buying an expensive silk scarf there, then on a late autumn day travelled to Xinjiang wearing it - sort of part Silk Road journey. Oh, on the way I went to Hailer, inner Mongolia (temp at that time was minus 15 deg C), where I met a doctor in a tent and in front of glowing fire over which a whole lamb being roasted, who became a pen pal for me. She is educating me on Chengis Khan and his ascend to power. I went to a place where Chengis Khan lived and had a palace and one of his many wives came from a village nearby. The name of that place I forget now. I will ask the doctor to remind me.

I have hope, one day I shall do the Silk Road - like they did, and go as far as I can. I am fascinated by it. I think it would be ultimate travel for me.

After a three hour meeting with an Algerian customer, headed by Thirty something Dr Amina at Intercontinental hotel, Istanbul Turkey, I decided to take a stroll in the center city and the very famous Takxim square. It is being Saturday I have the afternoon to myself.

After the positive outcome of the meeting, I was feeling



relatively happy. Amina invited me to Algeria to discuss her tablet and capsule manufacturing project. Happy days indeed. I asked the hotel concierge to call me a taxi. I want to go to Takxim square. He looked at me as the concierge does to a naive traveller and told me with a hand gesture - turn left and then left you are in the square. 5 mins that's all you need.

Yeah I thought. They all underestimate

Time. I have heard it before. 5 min my foot. Left then left, 4:30 sec I was there. Pleasantly surprised I was in good mood. The sun is out, the morning rain that came from Asia crossing Marmara sea has gone, and the square is getting crowdy.

I am in Istanbul, and in Takxim, therefore I must have Turkish Delight and Baklava. Where else shall I buy but from world famous- confiserie Hadji Ismail Hakkizade Hafiz Moudtafa's shop established by himself in 1864. His head adorned in Turkish hat and moustache to die for took prominent place in the shop front. It was busy, I hear as always. Visitor and local alike must step inside for the display of freshly prepared sweets. Buying is secondary activity after the wow factor.

Only the day before, from the hotel intercontinental sky top restaurant, I was looking 'down' at Asia from the European side. I tell you - days of looking down has long past. Asia is not a poor continent anymore. It is by far the richest if you add up all. I was mesmerized by the vista in front of me. It was getting dark. The sun was delaying over Asia before settling down for the night. Then from nowhere, and it is God honest truth, as if the could had dispersed, the whole view become golden. It was shiny and the buildings and skyscraper smiled at

Europe. A healthy, prosperous and happy smile. All on lookers like me gasped loudly at the sight.

That was yesterday. Now today before I set off to unknown street I said goodbye to Mustafa eating his sweet delights. It was fresh, as tasty as the day he first concocted together the secret recipe.



I had no idea where I was going. Now a days one can google everything to plan ahead. I am not that one. I like the thrill of getting lost, I like the unknown. I like the call of wind, sun, rain and scent of flower that allures me to places a few traveller has ever seen. So I set off down the steps to golden horn I saw from sky top. I don't know the way, just have an idea of direction and a call in my head to go there. After an hour of walking, I came to a place that looked like a courtyard of time gone by. A magnificent building with minarets and dome. I gave up counting, I saw a few beyond my current view when I craned my neck.

Would you credit it! I was in the house (complex) of the grand admiral of Ottoman navy, Kilic All Pasa. He build the complex, designed by the architect Sinai, in 1580.

The complex consist of a grand mosque, a tomb, a sabil, and a madrasah. And of course - Turkish bath. Pasa has to wash in style you see.

Then I heard Ajan. I did my Oju. Entered the mosque, took my shoe off and neatly placed on the rack. Joined other Namaji at the third row. Amazed at the height of the centre dome and architect's cleverness of design to catch maximum sunlight. The mosque is of the style of beautiful mosque Sofia. Inner wall and just below windows there are writings in Arabic in gold - suras from Holy Quran. A ray of light that reflected from colorful glass window shown on me all the time. It didn't bother me, I felt quite nice. Ha ha, don't read anything into it.

I prayed. I prayed to my heart content and thanked most kind Allah to give me chance to pray in the mosque that Kilic build 500+ years ago. Did I pray for you? I hear you ask. Hmn, uh, of course I did ORCA.

I came out as elated as I have ever been. I took the steps of the caravan, I can hear whispers of merchants from Asia in the behind and in front me, no tiredness in their face, just happiness to reach the almost end of the Silk Road. All willing European merchants will welcome them with open arms because they will save them in the winter months ahead.

Lost in Beijing

You see, I have to make this journey to Mudanjiang City, China, on business purpose last week. I was on a high note after presenting a paper on Aseptic Processing, at International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineers (ISPE) Annual Conference, Beijing, the day before. It went well if the measure of satisfaction with the speaker

is: a few hand shake, pat on the back and "may I have your business card please, I am from Pfizer, China."

It was Tuesday, I got up early morning to catch the plane. Everything seems to be fine. Sun also got up with me around 4:30 am, indicating a sunny spring morning to come. The plane was Boeing 737 with its long sleek body adorning Hunan Airlines logo, something looked like a bird (or dragon I couldn't tell) in China red, started moving towards runaway around 6:30 am. I settled in the comfy seat by the window surrounded by Chinese speaking fellow passengers, who completely ignored Pilot's request to shut all electronic devices. I started going over the agenda in my mind and preparing for the meeting ahead in the afternoon with some American consultant who flew in to meet us.



My colleagues left on Monday from Shijiazhuang office and will meet me at the client's office. That is the plan.

Fifteen minutes passed by. Our plane piloted by a man of authority with unusually heavy voice, who was quite talkative earlier and hadn't made a sound for a while. I started flicking thru Hunan Airlines' magazine in the sky. Nothing interesting that caught my eye. Another 10 minutes or so, we are still rolling, no sign of runway, on the ground. I looked thru the window; we passed by many planes loading or unloading cargo/ passengers, and shiny glass windows of terminals 1 then 2 for domestic & international flights. That alarmed me a bit.

Has the Pilot got lost? Where is the man in Control Tower? Is he having a nap? Can he not see us bleeping desperately on his radar?

Or, is our Pilot playing "catch me if you can" with them, ducking and diving under the overhead bridges or trying to blend in with other Hunan planes? Where is the damn runway? Another 10 minutes gone by and we are still moving at a majestic pace weaving thru parked plane, loading carts, and man with lollipop sign guiding multi-million dollar plane with all the latest gadgets to navigate, but now totally useless, on this maze of concrete carpeted Beijing Airport.

Isn't that alarming I asked you, when you see the same building on your way to runway and then back again and still not in the air! It was now 30 minutes or more has passed, I tell you no lies. Most of the passengers are deep in sleep. Early morning plane has that effect on passengers, don't you think? Once it start rolling, occupants just leaves everything to the Pilot and whoosh, comes the deep sleep. But I shifted myself to have a good look thru the window to find out - what's going on.

The plane has come to a complete stop by the runway apron repair work with a big sign that says something like: 'Beware, Men at Work'. I saw some workers having an early morning break, sitting on 12" high folding seat, gathered around a makeshift table that has brick slabs for feet, drinking noodle soup and playing Chinese popular card game "Catch the landlord". I saw some 'Yuan' exchanging hands under the table, I guess, to make the game exciting they are betting. A 'supervisor' looking man who is standing not far away from them - yawning and saying hurry up and get back to work - with no conviction at all. Then I saw a worker stood up, turned around to the cockpit of the plane and said something at top of his voice at the

same time pointing afar with his right hand. Oh my God! I don't believe this!

Is the man giving direction to the Pilot to the runway? What was the use of all those directional lights, red/yellow/green, and big 'H' and 'U' signs in black with yellow background in very turn of the apron – the meanings of which only the Pilot supposed to know.

I know funny things happen in one's life and it becomes unbelievable to others. Is it going to be one of those tales when I tell, listeners will holler - 'what did you drink before you went to sleep?' Let me assure you, before you ask, nothing stronger than a glass of goat's milk passed my lips last night.

The plane started to move again. It found the runway and left it at very high speed after more than 35 minutes from the start. Up and away it flew as free as a bird. I relaxed at last. And then a tricky thought came to my mind. All is well now; we are in the air, supposedly on the way to Mudanjiang, what if? What if the Pilot gets lost on his way again? There is neither marking in the sky nor any milestone that says "Mudanjiang 2500 Km", and the arrow pointing the right way. And forget about asking a person in a vast space where nobody will hear him scream. What will he do? Will he ask his co-pilot, Miss Liu Ting Ting: "hey, get this weathercock out, open the window a bit, yah hold it tight, there's a button at the bottom, press it light, yeah, just lightly, yeah, now read the wind speed and direction, then calculate our bearing."

I have been to Mudanjiang airport before. It is not like the modern airports that are sprouting like mushrooms all over China lately.

This airport is an abandoned army airstrip with couple of army strong buildings for check-in and arrival. Once cramped with



latest bomber planes ready and willing to be flown by dashing looking Chinese air force pilot to bomb the 'bloody' out of

'Vladivostocks' which is only a few hundred kilometers away in Russian territory, now left empty with 100s of miles of air strip with no military activity in sight. If you see any plane on it from a top, you would not be blamed for thinking they are a few summer flies resting in the sun after licking mango juice drips from a messy eating boy's hand.

All the high tech military gears gone, the replacement civilian communication gizmo yet to come. I won't be surprised if one or two waiting-for-retirement military air controllers giving the direction to our Civil Aviation Pilot and Miss Liu Ting Ting: "Papa, Lima of Hotel Alfa Zero, do you read me? You are off course by 2 deg. SE."

Now hold that thought, I am feeling air sick. We are going north of China...

Good news lost in translation

I would like to share an experience I had this morning regarding an International Project involving three nationals. 10 days ago I had sent a team of 3 highly educated and experienced Chinese engineers to Florence, Italy, to accept 4 machines on behalf of an American project in China. It was their first time ever a trip outside China. I am the Austar sponsor Director for the project.

As I walked thru the door I saw sad and gloomy faces in the office. My anxious secretary followed me to the office. My colleague Peter Ma, an early office comer, is worried. He feels his doubt about our engineer's ability to communicate in English has been confirmed by the customer project consultant John Lyons' email, written to me and copied to him. Peter also feels sad, although mistakenly as proved later, that I have been let down by engineers he employed years ago.

What a thoughtful man!

John flew from America to be with our team in Florence. I started reading his



email in my secretary's presence. She always frets when she is anxious - "Peter called me to his office, he was not happy at all, Anwar is it that bad? Are we going to lose the contract? What the email say?" I told her to calm down and shut up. I was elated after reading the email. What a complete opposite reaction to the same email. I asked her to follow me to Peter's office.

I told Peter not to worry; on the contrary, it has been a highly appreciative email of our engineers input (see email below). John faced challenges of language barrier in total not just with our engineers:

Our engineers spoke little English but no Italian.

Factory personnel in remote location of Florence spoke little to no English (I was



there a few years ago, I know).

John, an American, neither spoke Chinese nor Italian. And he was the Leader of the pack!

I knew from another experience how John felt and what he meant by challenges of language barrier. Not long ago I was in a Project kick-off meeting with tripartite partners: Russian, American and Chinese. I spoke in English, my translator Jefferson translated it in Chinese & another translator, Vitaly, did it in Russian and finally a Russian/Chinese speaking translator, Taniya, did it in Chinese when a Russian man spoke and Jefferson translated it for me in English. I think our UN man Reza would have been very happy in that situation but I was totally confused!

Peter's face was a picture to behold. He gave toothy and hearty laugh the way only a relieved Chinese man can give. He nodded his head, asked for a coffee which astounded us both as he never touches that stuff; he says he can't sleep if he drinks it. But it was an occasion for him to celebrate and the

night was far away from a man who saw the future is bright.

You see ORCA, how often we get wrong end of the stick when we don't weigh up total situation, even between people coming from same background and speaking the same language we are at each other's throat or feel sad and betrayed just because a little part was misunderstood. Exhibit, the email below:

"Hi Anwarul,

I didn't expect any less after the IMA Lyo FAT, however I wanted to express my appreciation for Cady, Damon and Loree's efforts during this past week's FAT. It was a very intense 5 days to which the team really stepped up. The language barrier as expected was a challenge, but not once a barrier. The team both followed direction clearly and were proactive in executing the plan - a combination skills that doesn't always come together."

A New Year's celebration

Since you liked the part I so much I thought you deserved to be punished by the second part. read on to discard:

"When Ma Chow and Cady, Cady is my PS & Ma is her husband, invited me to take a trip



to their village 4 days ago, I couldn't refuse. It was to be far north of Shijiazhuang. I thought, couple of night in a traditional & quite Chinese village would help me to recoup sleepless nights I had due to nonstop fireworks going off for the new year celebration at the front and back of my apartment.

We set off Monday morning. The day was clear and the highway was open with 10% of the normal traffic. Only the day before, it was closed due to heavy fog. The journey was 560 km long and took us good 6 hours

driving 130 km/h by car, stopping only twice to relieve Mary of car sickness. Once we were on minor roads my GPS was of no use. So Ma has to call Cady's nephew to escort us rest of the way.

Cady's village is non descriptive only a large stone that was hauled at the road side to announce the name - Tan Shang Xi - as we entered it via the broken concrete road. The place looked quite enough compared to live war like noise that we had left behind. But I was wrong in assessing the atmosphere so quick. It may be the tail end of the celebration week, but for the villagers and throngs of returning home Chinese it was just beginning. Now that's what I call jumping from frying pan into the fire.

The night closed in soon. No street lights but every house has electricity and running water that is so cold if it didn't run, it would freeze before you called out for deity for the shock you got when you first touched it.

We had sumptuous home cooked Chinese that would beat any fancy Chef's cooking. The helpings were generous and the varieties of dish number I stopped counting when it reached 18. About 15 family members joined

us, and were in festive mood. As usual peanuts with other nuts came as appetizer. Where in places in Bangladesh we struggle to grow more than two core peanuts, here I saw 5 as normal. How do they do it I ask myself. Moutai, some says late Chairman Mao's favorite tippie, and the local brew drank in large amount toasting loudly in 'cumbai'.

Cady's relatives were happy to see us to say the least. They were tickled pink knowing I don't speak their language; don't understand it but communicating essentials somehow.



Cady, Ma and their daughter Mary helped me in turn to answer their tricky questions, like; how old am I, is England cold, what do an Englishman eat, do they grow rice over there, and etc.

The next morning we went for a walk. It was cold but the air was crispy and razor sharp. If I didn't have triple layers of clothing I would have looked totally bitten by sharp whip and blood dripping every pore and all nasty and obvious nose bleed.

The village is surrounded by iron mines. The mines have totally polluted water & land so badly that it would take 100 years or more to clean the land naturally for farming. I am sure nature would be so confused now, if a farmer sow wheat it would produce corn with iron spike resembling Chinese spears. Hold that thought for a moment.

The walk to the pig, sheep and the goat farm was enlightening, particularly the frozen lake by it. I thought a frozen lake by the mountain would give different dazzle in a sunny morning like this, instead the sun rays seemed to get lost in the grey surface and never returned. If you look up carefully you would see strange transformation of the mountains. It had lost peaks where intense surface mining has been carried out. So the change is not good for progress in all walks. Nature will take revenge one



day, mark my word. But for the moment a day in life of a Chinese village is an unique experience for me. The people are good hearted and very family oriented. I saw the expression of love and affection on Cady's elderly sister's face which only the kindest person on this land can hold.

The night came and I was looking forward to a good night sleep on a hard bed called 'Kang'. The heat and smoke from an open stove is diverted under the bed in pipe then up the chimney. What a noble technique to reuse waste energy from cooking. You sleep toasty when the weather outside is quite a few notches below zero.

After a couple of days of good food and rest we were on our way back. I was wondering how many foreigners get to see the traditional Chinese village life at close quarter. This life may not stay the same. Cady tells me the Govt. has decided in principle - the farming land would be given to a few large farming companies and force the villagers move to town. Alas, the numbers are up for the quaint Chinese villages where once the river flowed, fresh water lake dazzled in the moonlit night and the fishermen fished from it with birds at the break of dawn and the Chinese women sang around the fire in a cold night for their long gone men to come home to. I am glad I saw a version of it before even that totally vanishes from our very eyes! "

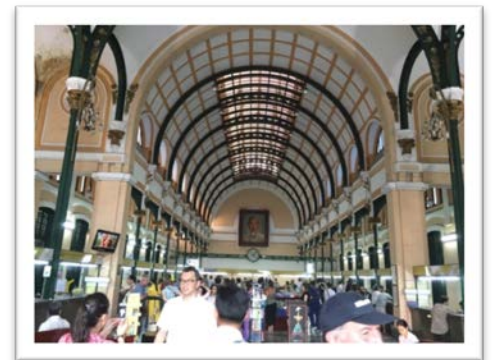
The story of Xi Hu

There's a tower at the mouth of the lake. The legend has it, two snakes used to live in that lake. One green, one white. One day the white snake became a beautiful woman (many say the very best) and asked to borrow an umbrella from a handsome man on a rainy day. The man was mere mortal and she was immortal. They both fell in love with each other from the very first sight over a bridge where they met and got married. Alas, their happiness didn't last long. A Buddhist monk who lived nearby did not like the idea of a human being marrying a snake so he imprisoned her in the tower. After a few months the woman gave

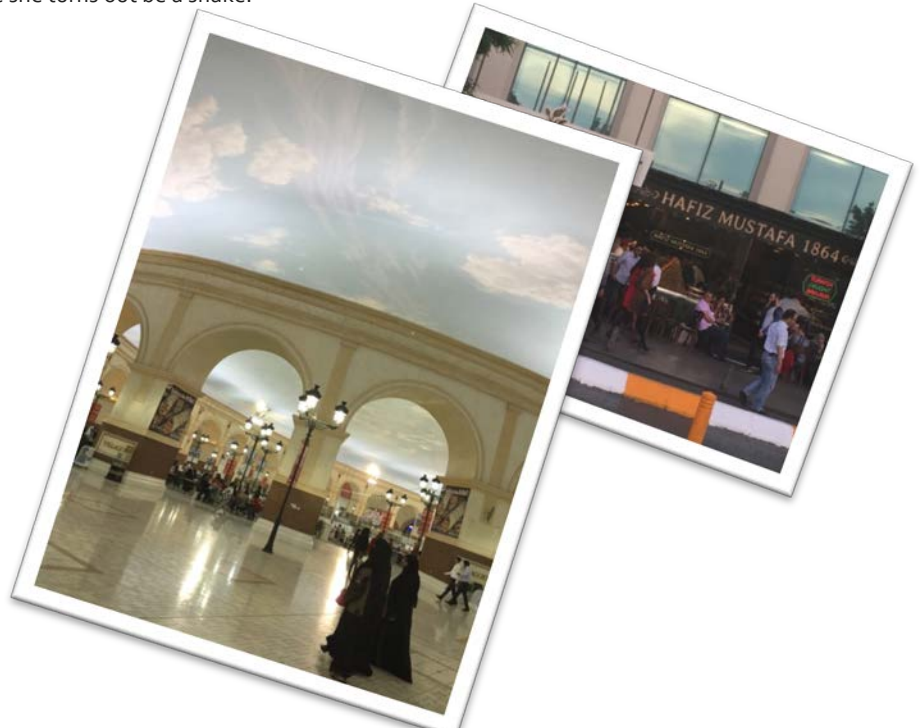


birth to a son. The son grew up. He rescued her from misery. Now she was hopping mad. She came out summoning all her friends in the water and with the help of the green snake drawn the Buddhist temple.

Now the lake and the temple is one of the most popular visitor attractions in China.



I took very many pictures of the lake and the temple. I had a joyful day on the lake and on the way back I cautioned myself never to lend an umbrella to a beautiful woman... Just in case she turns out be a snake.



Chunnu Mia's view of the world

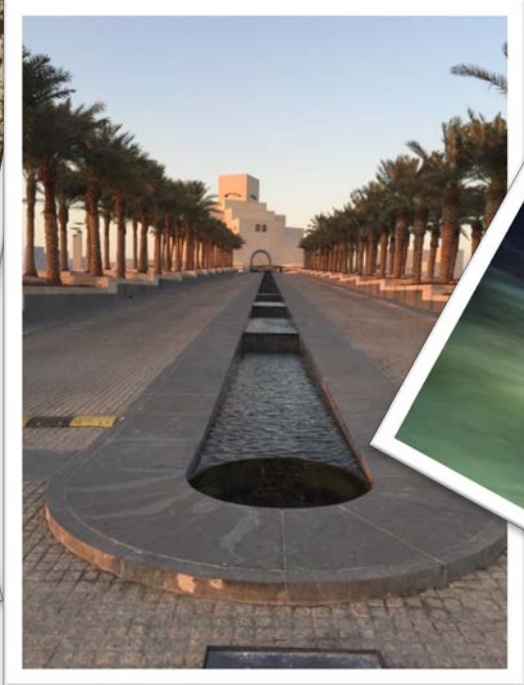
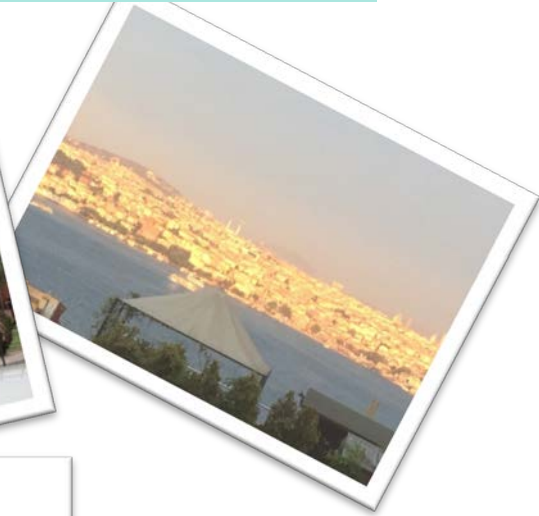
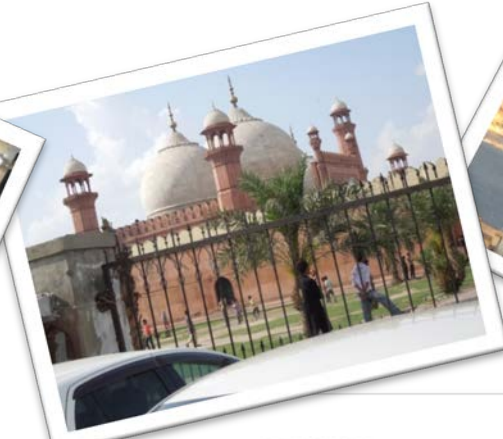
ENGINEER

TARIO HOUSE

TWO

55

ANWARUL HAQUE (CHUNNU)



A soldier's story

ARMY OFFICER

KHALID HOUSE

FIFTEEN

845

AFM JAHANGIR ALAM

I am from a humble family of a vibrant village name Bhatpeary of Sirajgonj district form erstwhile Pakistan, the dreamland now called Bangladesh. My life's journey in the dimension of time had many turns, right and left. As I write the tale today, it seems it did not take backward or downward turn so far but it was of low profile, slow and steady.

Earliest event I remember of my life with adequate clarity is the day when my grandmother died. Let me tell something about my father first. He was alone in this world. Had four more brothers, but none could cross the age 10 before which they died. My grandfather was a religious preacher in the Assam and West Bengal area and remained away for about 6 to 8 months in a year from home. When my father was born, grandpa was in one of such mission in Assam area. At the age of 3, my father lost his bohemian father. The onus of raising a boy alone, my grandmother had an impossible task. Having had very handsome property and my father being the only heir, he was poisoned at the age of 4 by the neighbours, reasons well understood. He survived after a week of intense fight with death but the ordeal left a permanent scar on his speaking ability, he developed stammering. That was the time when WWII was nearing to end. Time was not at all in favour of a lone, timid, piously conservative and shy lady to protect huge land property and protect her only wealth - her son. She succeeded but never let anybody know the agonies she endured. Being near to illiterate herself, she managed everything she could singlehandedly and saw that my father become a graduate and managed a suitable bride for him. My mother held from a second generation zamindar family and having her mother lost when she was only two years old, much like my father's age when he lost his father. These, I was told by my father time to time after the death of my grandmother.

My grandma was bed ridden about four months before her death. She chose to be self-confined in a separate house and hardly see anyone other than close family members. My father used to visit her routinely before every salaah of the day. It was probably mid-August of 1970. That day I accompanied my father during Mughrib prayer to her house. My father asked her

how she was feeling. She smiled and said she was feeling very good and satisfied. She asked my father to turn her face towards qiblah so that she can perform mughrib. That day my father had very lengthy supplication after his mughrib prayer. Once he visited my grandma again after his prayer was over, he found that her face was in the same position where he set. He called her several times but there was no response. He then touched her forehead and found that she was no more. She died a peaceful death while in prayer. Losing his only shed over him in this world, my father slowly retreated to our house holding my hand, and with calmest possible voice informed my mother "maa ar nei" - mother is no more. I screamed; don't know why. This incident till today is very vivid in my mind. It appears to me like a part scene of a life drama.

I waited seven long years to born. This was very agonizing time for my parents. However, on 04 September 1965 all smiled as I cried and as I am told, much louder than usual. As first child, I was much cared about, loved and reared. My Schooling started in the village primary school where my father used to teach. Bitter memories are there, but I was adored, loved and received affections from my father's colleagues. The ever energetic headmaster, Mr. Maqbul, shortest among the teachers often engaged me in hand writing completion with him to improve my chaotic writing style. Till today when I write some note, it reminds me of his relentless effort to improve my hand writings (it is awful today though). The contribution and legacy he left in me had profound impact on my upbringing and shaping of my future. I remember him with solemn respect in my heart. I left that school when I was in class IV as my father was transferred to a distant one. The new school was co-located with a renowned high school of that area. I continued there till 1978 when I joined RCC.

I had no idea about Cadet College system education in vogue in the country. It was my father who knew about it, had the audacious hope to send me there, started telling me about it, inspired me and took personal care about study. He was probably more inspired when his cousin Moqaddem (Q13/713) got chance. I was truly inspired seeing the College prospectus sent to us with the admit

card which contained pictures of holy looking academic building and snap shots of parade of smartly turned out cadets. My father intentionally chose RCC as the written examination center. One fine morning I stepped out from my home of that dreamy village for Rajshahi for the written test at the RCC campus. The sight of the majestically imposing but innocent looking Academic building made me both nervous and elated. I was not sure of my capability to be worthy of



that grandeur structure. However, I succeeded and got the yes card to Rajshahi Circuit House for viva. I don't remember the date exactly, but the day before my viva, my father arranged my trip and got me a train ticket for Rajshahi. He gave me some money and a chit containing a hand sketched map showing the location of the house of his uncle (father of cadet Moqaddem) in relation to the Rajshahi railway station and left me inside a Rajshahi bound train at the Sirajgonj railway station. I don't know why I was left alone. Everything went fine and I reached the house following the map. Next morning, Md. Abdur Razzaque, uncle of my father (we used call him dadamia) and a saintly character, on his way to office dropped me at the Circuit House. He made some supplications for my success and advised me to remember Allah whenever I feel despair. Everything was unknown to me - the place, the crowd and the environment. Every candidate was accompanied by their parents except me. Did I feel bad? Don't remember really. Seeing the preparation, gesture, body language of other candidates, I thought it

was a futile effort for me. As the time passed, I grew very hungry and thirsty. I had money but nothing was there at the premises to buy. I did not dare to go out fearing if I miss the call or even if I miss the circuit house itself?? I was strolling on the corridor of the Circuit House and unintentionally entered a room and saw food and filled water glasses laid on a table – come on Jahangir, surely it is not for you!! Seeing a fatherly figure, I told him that I want to have a glass of water. With all my utter disbelief, he showed me the way to the basin. So, I had to quench my thirst from basin water, believe me, it tasted wonderful. Later, I found that gentleman to be one of my respected teachers. At about mid-day I was called in. I was not asked much on which I took extensive preparation but the panel headed by Wing Commander Mahtab gave me a math to solve. Once I did it, the man with uniform told me to explain it in English. This seemed to me the end of everything - an impossible job to be expected from a boy from a remote village school. Within seconds, I remember the advice of dadamia, practiced it within and started explaining the way I solved the math. I don't know why, they all smiled.

Like others, I was left at the college on 25th June 1978. My father was with me and they were offered lunch in the Cadet's mess. He was very satisfied to see the standard of food. He still savours and speaks of the vegetable which was made of puishak and chola daal. After the lunch, we were taken to the barber shop to bring our outlook as a cadet. Once back after about an hour, I did not find my father where I left him. I searched him in different places, he was nowhere. It was time for them to leave, so he left without saying anything to me. For the first time, I felt totally dejected as I was left in a place and amongst people totally unknown to me – I wept. Nothing extraordinary happened with me at the very first day. After the daylong first day chores, I went to the bed which was done by senior brothers. It was a stormy night. Strong wind made whizzing sound being obstructed by a half-opened window of a room. I truly thought Tanks are moving around the fields. One of my classmates, at the corner bed of the room, could neither overcome the pressure nor could accumulate enough courage to go out to the toilet block - defecated beside his bed. Seeing the shaky movement of his silhouette, I slowly went near to him and helped him clean the mess. This was what I could remember about the first day of my journey.

I enjoyed love, affection, care and adequate mentoring from all my teachers at the college. There is not much of heartburning from brothers as well. Rather, being a sportsman, I have enjoyed little extra privilege. With the friends, took part in all the "out of bound" challenges as taken by everyone else. List of those challenges may vary from batch to batch, but the pleasure of breaking the rules is universal. Participation in the Inter Cadet College Sports Meet (ICCSM) in 1982 in Hockey and athletics when we were SSC candidate was a memorable event for me. Later, when I was College games Prefect, one of the teachers asked me my aim in life. "To be a Sportsman" was my answer (I truly wanted to be a sportsman). He just told that you will be a good husband. Probably he meant I will be good at enduring the hardship of a husband!! I had been all along a mediocre in educational and extracurricular activities. But I ventured to join music club with a hope to explore if I had some tacit talent on music and to relax during games time. But I had to leave it soon when Mr. Dutta (now an acclaimed Tagore singer in TV) announced for a test. I memorized the lyric he taught (projapoti, projapoti, kothaye pele vai emon o rongin pakha) but it would not come out as song from my tongue. It was somehow humiliating and laughable way I sung!!! From the next day I did not have to go there!

I was hardly visited by my parents during parent's day. In six years, I don't remember whether it will be more than six times. And I don't remember whether I felt any bad for that also. However, I felt the absence of care, love and anxiety of my mother after regaining from a three days unconscious state due to high fever. College authority prepared to call my parents thinking I might not survive. I survived.

When in class XII, we got Captain (later Major) TIMA Malek as our Adjutant. He used to motivate us for joining Army whenever he got scope. During one evening prep time he came to our class and asked "who would like to join in Army"? Everybody raised hand except me. He was infuriated for not getting cent percent response. He started rebuking me and at one stage he termed me as "coward". That probably turned me on. I told him "sir, please arrange application form for me". I took the challenge to disprove him that I was not a coward which made him happy. On 30th May 1984 we were bade final farewell from the college. College bus dropped us up to in front of Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital. We took final farewell from each other- fifty friends, pals, peers,

buddy who for the last six years- the most critical time of one's life had been in same womb. We embraced each other, hugged, wept and made promises of not forgetting.

The very next day I had to report to Inter Services Selection Board (ISSB) at Dhaka. So, without meeting my parents at Sirajgonj, I had to go to Dhaka and reported to ISSB on 31st May 1984. ISSB is another place where they put too much burden on your self-confidence. They designed the test in a way so that it pushes someone to avalanche break down on self-confidence. Moreover there are problem solving using the information which need to be obtained by sieving important from unimportant one, the process they call IQ. And most importantly, you are in a constant race for "time". It has been almost impossible to guess whether you are doing right or going wrong. However, at the end, maximum of that batch could make through but the one who we thought will surely go, was screened out. The candidates of newly raised cadet Colleges faced unwanted psychological pressure from over witting cadets of the oldies. Many of us took ISSB as fun and had no intention to join Army. It was probably the chief psychologist who during our interview with him, took control of our mind, stirred our ego and made necessary changes required to turn our way towards Bhatiary-Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA).

BMA: We were to join BMA on 25th July, but due to flood which severed the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway; our joining was deferred for one week. After necessary formalities at the entry gate a senior Gentleman Cadet (GC) came to receive me. What a surprise!! He was the one whom I practiced drill in our house TV room before annual drill competition as his hands used to follow the same leg during quick march. He commanded me to follow him taking the luggage on my head and keep circling him. I did not believe what I was doing. With utter surprise, at times I momentarily stopped and looked at his face. Sensing the psychological condition, he told "Jahangir, forget it, this is BMA". It was BMA. Later I knew he did it as it was the way it supposed to be done and to some extent to save me from the greater wrath of non-CC GCs. My physical robustness helped me withstand many formal and informal demand of the Academy. Rigor of the training and the "teaching" of the seniors demanded very tough mental tenacity and physical structure. I could endorse myself in the good book of both Drill and PT instructor thereby could avert the extra practices at the cost of rest time.

My physical and mental robustness though could help overcome many odds but it could not compensate the arena where being introvert put you in back seat. I realized there is intrinsic value for beating your own drum. Observed with despair, how cadets with lesser prospect elbowed me back and back and back. However, end was not as bad as I thought to be. I was within ten out of more than hundred cadet of my course. And on the insistence of one of the platoon commander, I was given Infantry Corps against my choice of Armoured. Who knows, that forced choice that day brought me here today? On 26th June 1986, President's parade took place and from next day my journey took a new turn. The timid and shy boy of a village is now a commissioned officer of Bangladesh Army. After couple of days leave, I joined 11 East Bengal Regiment (Durnibar Egaro being the nom de gure), at Comilla Cantonment.

Military: On the very first day, during my maiden interview with him, the seasoned Commanding Officer of the Battalion, instructed the Adjutant, another RCC alumnus, to issue football boot for me and included me in the Battalion Football team. There existed wonderful professional and social environment in the Battalion. The Unit was raised during the War of Liberation and actively participated in the conventional battles. There were many freedom fighters in the Unit. My knowledge on the minor operations of war sharpened from hearing stories of different engagement from them. This helped me significantly when I was deployed in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). After about one a half year, the Battalion moved to CHT, in the Bandarban area.

CHT Deployment: After serving couple of months in the Battalion HQ at Bandarban, I was sent to a remote Counter Insurgency Camp. I savored the real Test and Taste of military leadership being in that seemingly end-of-the-world place. While keeping the area free from insurgents, I got to keep soldiers fit for the operation in all aspects - physically, mentally and logistically. Balancing between adventurism and professional teaching, fighting against elusive but ubiquitous insurgents, fighting against deadly Malaria and above all fighting against loneliness was the main challenges I had to face and overcome. Keeping the spirit and morale of the troops you are commanding is no less important for a military leader of any stage. Under extreme physical and mental condition, you would be surprise to see how a most obedient and discipline soldier become most erratic and

insolent. Being in the same condition yourself, as a leader your job is to calm the situation down and accomplish your mission.

I served in CHT for four times in all the ranks from a Lieutenant to a Lieutenant Colonel. Challenges had been same but the scale of the magnitude and torque on leadership was different. In one occasion when I led a raid on Insurgent hideout, I have seen both cowardice behavior and bravery in soldiers. Most fascinating aspects I came across were; even the senior soldiers having decades of experience and twice the age of mine were obsessively looking at me for my decision when situation went critical. I still treasure the feeling of forgetting death flying all around, bullets from the insurgents and some from a misplaced own weapons were falling just inches away from me. Defying all these I had to say "let's move forward". Soldiers obeyed. Having had no loss we had a big catch of the insurgents. I was congratulated by General Officer Commanding from Chittagong over wireless while I was still on the spot. My Brigade Commander flown to the spot to see the achievement of one of his junior officer. Many, including the UNO of the local Upozila were sure that I will be given gallantry awards for the achievement. People got that even achieving much less than what I have done. I did not get any. It was sheer Districtism (manufactured the word form Nationalism) and sheer absence of lobby, I missed any awards - that was told to me by that UNO who later became Cantonment Executive Officer(CEO) of Chittagong Cantonment and seen many award giving ceremony. I felt bad, but transformed it as my strength.

Service other than CHT: As a routine, I did all the mandatory and couple of utility Training Courses in different training institute of the country. Got selected for Airborne Course in the USA when I was Lieutenant (I had to compete for that), but for some unknown reason it was cancelled. I was selected for UN Peace keeping Mission in Mozambique when I was a Captain and in Darfur when a Lieutenant Colonel. I was fortunate to serve as weapon training instructor twice (as Captain and Lieutenant Colonel) in the School of Infantry and Tactics. I was appointed to every post of each rank in the Regimental, Extra Regimental, Staff, Instructor and Command level from 2nd Lieutenant to Brigadier General. Undergone Staff Course at the Defense Services Command and Staff College when a Major through a tight competitive examination. I was very fortunate to be selected for

National Defense Course after I served as Commander of an Infantry Brigade. Had the opportunity to serve in Rapid Action Battalion as its Additional Director General, the second top position of the organization.

Army has given me enough. Besides adding value to myself, it has provided me a decent, honorable and honest life. My present job particularly provided me with invaluable experience of running a large, multidimensional and technology based industry. I visited nineteen countries, maximum of which was due to professional reason. I got married when I was a Captain. The Army provided all possible support socially and logistically for which I am indebted. But for professional advancement, it was me alone to pursue. That was probably the reason my father left me alone at the Sirajgonj railway station in 1978. In a way he probably wanted to give the message "it is your own battle my boy". Till today, I am fighting it alone, it continues. I think I fought well and got satisfactory outcome.

I have one son and one daughter. Both are cadets. My son Rafee was in Pabna Cadet College and now a graduate student of Journalism. My daughter is in standard XI in Feni Girls' Cadet College. As I wanted to be a Sportsman, I still want to be one. Age is the main culprit and single most obstacle which none can defy. However, whatever scopes the age permit, I resorted to that- I play golf. It's my passion. Reading books and angling also gives me much pleasure.

Last words: When I make a tour to the past, many snapshots comes shining in my way. I can vividly see every minor details of the death incident of my grandma. The hand writing competitions with headmaster Mr. Maqbul still inspire me to develop myself bit by bit. The angelic face and disposition of my dadamia, Md. Abdur Razzaque always bring me to the honest path and live in simplicity. And above all, my father's vision and his audacious dream probably armed me with enough strength to face the odds out there. I have no heartburning against anybody whatsoever. I fondly endorse everyone's contribution candidly in shaping my life with respect. Even the gentleman who made me to drink basin water, in a way forged me to sharpen my outlook, sensitized me about the existence of the harsh world and taught me to brave it alone.

Global warming to poverty alleviation

ACTIVIST

TARIQ HOUSE

TEN

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A H M SHAMSUL UKTADIR (KISHORE)



An always an optimist person, I was the CEO of Chittagong Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CMCCI) in 2010 before migrating to Canada in 2011 in quest of a second career. Chittagong is the second largest city of Bangladesh. I began studying as an undergraduate student at Humber College in Toronto and got elected to the student government-HSF. Ever since, I'm involved in a number of voluntary and charitable organizations like Bangladesh Policy Institute, Ontario Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Bangladesh Forum of Canada and the Liberal Party of Canada.

I received my Master's degree in International Relations from University of Dhaka in 1986 and worked for the South Korean Embassy in Bangladesh for several years as a political/economic analyst. I was a Political Advisor to the Canadian High Commission in Dhaka in 2006-7 years. I was awarded the prestigious Keizo Obuchi research fellowship by UNESCO in 2002 for staying 9 months in Pakistan as an international researcher in the field of peaceful conflict resolution between Bangladesh and Pakistan. I delivered a presentation on "Canada's investment in Afghanistan: Social Perspectives" at the

Royal Military College of Canada in October 2012.

I'm passionate about humanism and human rights. I believe these values must be upheld on a global scale in a sustainable manner. While especially interested in philanthropic and non-profit actions in the Arctic and indigenous areas I intend to work for the alleviation of global poverty by 2035.



Returning home

FINANCIER

KHALID HOUSE

FOURTEEN

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MOHAMMAD MAMDUDUR RASHID (MAMDUD)



I was born in 1965 in a modest family to an honest and humble father and a dedicated home maker mother; fourth among five siblings of a single sister to four brothers. Elementary schooling was at Bogra Mission Primary School followed by a short but memorable stint at Bogra Zilla School before landing in the great alma mater called RCC with which I have a remarkable relationship. I believe, my personal gains are too big though they came at a rather high personal cost also, i.e. away from family (missed so many family events of birth/marriage/death), family was conscious not to share unpleasant realities to safeguard me from any agony and not being able to come to the family's direct assistance in cases of urgency & crisis and so on. Academically, excelled as I travelled further through time, securing 11th and 3rd positions in the combined merit list in SSC (1981) and HSC (1983) respectively, becoming Gold Medalist at both Marine Academy (1985) and IBA, DU (1990). Securing Fulbright scholarship for completing MA in International Economics and Finance at Brandeis University, MA, USA (1995). I had a great opportunity to break my studies with work (not always by choice though) that I value immensely from hindsight. I started my professional life with that of a mariner in 1985 which I left quite early. After doing my MBA from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University (DU), I worked in a business conglomerate and a financial institution before joining the IBA to teach. Finally, joined Citibank N.A. in 1995 where I worked at various senior positions for 15 years, to stamp myself as a banker, with working opportunities in Bangladesh, India and lastly in Australia. Then returned to Bangladesh in

Dec 2009 to join Brac Bank Limited as Deputy CEO (still continuing).

Got married in 1993 with our first child (daughter) born in August 1997. Our family size has grown to four in February 2003 with my second daughter and finally, became five with my son coming in August 2004. My wife left her formal job only after a year when she conceived for the second time and took 'home making' as her full time responsibility that, though very challenging, she manages so well. At the cost of her personal comfort, she makes everyone very comfortable.

When I reflect back to my RCC days, I was rather an introvert, not very confident, shy and somewhat a bookworm with lack of initiatives. The only thing I could brag about myself, if I could be that bold, was my academic results. Grown-up in a humble conservative family, I took 'good academic results' to be my only way to ensure a decent living to support self and the immediate family. Supporting 'others' was not even in my distant dream then. As I advanced through my journey, I realized that lot of other things are equally important in life. But the most influential and important element for my transformation from being a moth within a cocoon to become a small butterfly to enjoy the charms of the surroundings was my father's unique way of inspiration. Let me give a few examples: when I went to RCC, he inspired me to write to him in English. He used to respond on the back of my letter after correcting my letter with red ink. Initially, reading his response was difficult because of the enormous amount of protruding red ink from the other side representing my errors. I stopped writing him in English when I received a response from my father on the back of my letter which didn't have any red mark. On the first parent's day after my promotion to class IX, my father inspired me (only once) to aim for a 'place' within the top 20 in SSC. He didn't have to remind me again for HSC. I secured 11th position in the combined merit list in SSC and 3rd position in the combined merit list in HSC. When I joined Marine Academy, he inspired me again to try to become the Gold Medalist and his dream (and mine as well) came true. But to achieve that, I had to do, and gladly did, everything that I used to consider only supplementary (e.g. extra-curricular activities including sports, cultural

events, speeches, leadership and so on) during my days in RCC.

I now realize that he could somehow sense the potential and inspired me accordingly. Marine Academy was the last place where I received the inspirational advices from him and then I was left alone to steer through the rough seas of life,



There were plenty of challenges. First, finding a way to change my profession from that of a Mariner to something else as I came to a realization on my very first voyage, after all the hard works of Marine Academy, that the life of a Mariner is not something I would like to pursue for the rest of my life. Completing my MBA at IBA, DU was that way out but a lot of research was needed to find that way and a lot of courage had to be exercised as it was a lonely travel through the path of transition.





Financial resources was another real challenge I faced while I was trying to fulfil my goals of higher education from a reputed overseas university. Many of my friends with inferior academic results were able to pursue an overseas education much earlier than I, due to their family financial strength. I realized that financial strength is also a 'qualification' that I (or my family) lacked and pursued the path of obtaining a scholarship to overcome that challenge. As a result, Fulbright scholarship was the rescue in crisis.

Convincing my family to relocate to Bangladesh after spending five years in Australia was another challenge in life. But it was achieved with persistent regular family discussion for almost a year about the objectives and benefits of doing so. The main purpose was to acquaint the children to the greater family as well as implant in them the values and the sense of appreciation of the culture that I value most. When I see that the children are eager to visit their grandparents and relatives during school holidays and others breaks, I feel that my objectives are fulfilled to a great extent.

At workplace, the bigger challenge was to adapt to the different work culture and environment of different countries and continents as I had the opportunity to work in USA (part-time), Bangladesh, India and Australia. Many of my professional well-wishers were apprehensive whether I would be able to successfully manage a team in India and in Australia as I went to both places with senior roles. Setting objective goals and appraising the team against them professionally (being objective, transparent and fair) and being able to guide them at the time of crisis (using both knowledge and experience) was the key to command professional respect from colleagues.



I aspire to be of assistance to the creations of the Creator, primarily human being but also to nature. I hope that Bangladesh will be a place of opportunity to make a decent living by its citizens as well as foreigners!

Life is not without disappointments and I have had my share. Time and again, the wings of growth are trimmed by our political leaders in Bangladesh. Human made disasters are much more than those caused by mighty natural calamities!

My disappointment extends to our cultural malaise. I'm still disappointed for not being able to continue the self-initiated inspirational sessions "Jeeboner Swapno O Golpo (জীবনের স্বপ্ন ও গল্প)" for the students at Bogra Zilla School as there was no personal gains for the Head Master through the program or through me. The benefits were all for the students only.

Though I have profound disappointments, I truly do not have any regrets for what I have done. My only regrets are for things that could have been done with extra efforts but still undone due to lack of my personal initiative!



Professionally, I would like to build and lead a bank that can meet all the stakeholders' interest while maintaining ethical standards and values. To create an environment where each one can unleash their full potential.

Personally, I would like to be of assistance to help make positive changes to the lives of others, both near and far!

I believe that people who are successful in their own lives and in making a positive change to the lives of others are the ones who made lots of efforts. Not all who made efforts are successful though. I like to be in the group of those who makes efforts (irrespective of the results!).

I am passionate about inspiring and guiding others. I like to achieve and help others achieve. I hope my children become good human beings and have physical and financial liberty to explore their true desires in life!

Sometimes, in order to achieve anything in life, our struggle takes us far and wide. Australia became my second home, but it came around as a byproduct. I relocated to Australia with a job transfer while working with Citibank N.A. under the 457 (employment) visa. Initially I was not willing to apply for a permanent residency (PR). Subsequently, rather reluctantly, I applied for PR under the Employer Sponsored migration program at the advice of one of my team members who was a migrant from Sri Lanka. He asked me a simple question--what have I to lose by applying? And, I didn't have a convincing reply. From hindsight, he inspired and helped me in making a right decision.

I'm passionate about the future of ORCA. With my very limited capacity, I tried to make my contribution in the past:

In 1993, 'Span – ORCA Endowment Fund Issue (May 1993)' was conceptualized and written by me, which became the basis for raising the endowment fund. The concept itself was floated by Dipok bhai of 6th batch. This was also the foundation for floating the LTS (Life Time Subscriber) program later.

The same year, Zanvir Educational Endowment Fund was created with a donation from Dipok bhai and I was instrumental in operationalizing the fund. I was serving ORCA then as the Assistant Secretary General.

During the period 1994-95 while I was studying at Brandeis University, I prepared, under the guidance of Hamid bhai, the list of

ORCA members residing in USA and Canada with their contact details. I used to circulate by mail periodic members' update with financial/other assistance from members living in/around Boston.

I assisted in several fund raising initiatives of ORCA while living in Bangladesh/Australia and served in ORCA Executive Committee as Assistant Secretary General and Vice President in two separate terms. I know we all can contribute in small and big ways. I hope that more members will take an active interest in furthering our mission.

I have had a few interesting failures along my way. A couple are still fresh in my mind.

I failed in the oral exams during time first time attempt for a driving license test. Being over confident of knowing traffic rules, I didn't care to read the booklet that was provided for study and as a natural consequence could not answer a few question. Still remember one of them. When asked, what distance should one maintain during the rain from the 'vehicle in front' to avoid collision in case of emergency stoppage? My response, without knowing the correct one, was - 'safe distance'.

Both my wife and I appeared together in the Citizenship exam as a prerequisite for Australian citizenship. There were 20 questions with 20 marks and passing requirement was 60% including answering 3 mandatory questions (later it was made 75%). On my first attempt I failed scoring 19 out of 20, the only incorrect answer being from the mandatory category (was through in the second attempt). Given an opportunity, my wife still teases me as she was through with 17 in the first attempt.

Life is nothing but interesting to say the least. Failures and successes are just the highlights that make it so.



To live responsibly

ENTREPRENEUR

TARIQ HOUSE

THREE

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MONZURUL HAQUE



I'm presently the Chairman and Managing Director of Org-Quest Research Ltd. (OrQuest), a joint venture survey research firm in Bangladesh. I received my BA (Hons.) & MA in Economics from the University of Dhaka and MBA from IBA, University of Dhaka. I am also a certified management consultant (CMC), certified by the International Institute of Management Consultants, Australia.

I started my career as a Researcher at International Trade Center (ITC), UNCTAD/GATT and served in various reputed organizations including MIDAS and UNILEVER in senior positions. In 1994 I left my job with UNILEVER and founded survey research firm named Quest Survey Research Limited, which was transformed into a joint venture company in 1997 with ORG-MARG of India and renamed as Org – Marg Quest Limited (OMQ). AC Nielsen acquired OMQ in early 2003. Having sold OMQ to Nielsen, I founded Quest & Aims Consulting Services in 2003, which was transformed into a joint venture survey research firm in collaboration

with ORG India (Pvt.) Limited, and renamed as Org – Quest Research Limited (OrQuest) in 2004.

I'm a Founding Director and currently the Chairman of AIMS of Bangladesh, the first asset (mutual fund) management company in the private sector in Bangladesh.

Membership of professional bodies: European Society of Market and Opinion Research (ESOMAR) and Institute of Management Consultants, Bangladesh (IMCB), and currently the Chairman of the Executive Council of IMCB.

Family: Married, and father of a daughter. Wife (Faizana Haque) owned and managed an outsourcing enterprise named ConQuest from 1994 to 2014. Daughter (Sumaiya Monzur Nokshi) is a BBA from the University of Toronto, Canada and M.Sc. in Innovation Management from the University of Manchester, UK. She is married and currently working as Research Analyst at The Nielsen Company, Canada.

Challenges and regrets: Until I left my job and ventured into entrepreneurship, it was more by default than by choice. Studied Economics and Business Administration as these offered better job opportunities in those days. The challenge was to find a suitable and remunerative job, which I was fortunate enough to have got one, when opportunities were very limited. However, perhaps the biggest challenge of my (our) life was to raise my daughter in the right manner. As she is our only child, unknowingly we may have wanted her to become everything, and in the process overdone many things. That also happens to be my one of the long lasting regrets today.

We raised her under strict rules, and today I (we) feel that we should have been a little more liberal and flexible. The other regret is, I feel, I have not done enough to take care of my parents when they were alive. I definitely could have done more. There are many other regrets of life which are more to do with mistakes in decision making and inappropriate behavior and actions in different situations, no matter how small or less important they may be.

I have nothing more to achieve professionally. Personally I want to live a peaceful life with self-respect and dignity, and die good human being.

My personal philosophy is to live an honest and simple life, and meaning and doing NO harm to anybody, regardless of relationship, good or bad, friends or foes.

Passion: Building the enterprises that I set up was my passion. One of my ex colleagues once termed me as a "workaholic". It's not the same anymore. Other things in life are getting more attention; priorities are changing fast.

What are my hopes for the children? Like my parents did, I tried providing good education to my daughter, both academic and applied including rights and duties, religion, values, right and wrong, good and bad, etc. I only hope that she carries these teachings for the rest of her life, remains herself and lives a life as a good and responsible human being.



Journey to Kabul with Tashakoor

DIPLOMAT

TARIQ HOUSE

THREE

101

REZAUL HASAN



I was born to a humble middle class family in then East Pakistan in Dhaka, capital of modern Bangladesh. My parents were in India and after partition of 1947 returned to East Pakistan along with the larger clan of their relatives. Dad was a mid-level government civil servant and he immediately joined the services and was provided with a government requisitioned two storied house in the old part of Dhaka city



(There was no new Dhaka then). We were four brothers and four sisters, all school and college going students, relying on the income of one individual and earnings from few other sources. Like the three older siblings, I also followed the same path and was admitted to St. Gregory's High School, probably the best school in town run by the Christian Missionaries until 1971.

In 1966 I joined then Ayub Cadet College in class 7 (3rd batch) along with two other senior batches. Together we were 144 cadets and became part of the institutional history where we began our journey in the sleeping hollow of Mukhtarpur village. Since coming out of the Cadet college and getting

admitted into University of DHAKA in the 1974-75 sessions in the public administration department was a great disappointment for my father who himself being a civil servant in the government of East Pakistan, always wanted me to join the BCS and therefore become a civil servant like him in the newly independent Bangladesh. But I had my reasoning which was not convincing to him. He passed away in 1977 suddenly but before that my results in the classes and looking at the level of corruption in the country and in particular in the government services, convinced him that I made the right choice. Friends, nothing personal but I never had any wish or desire to join the armed forces unlike many of my batch mates.

My life-The Post-independence period (1972-81)

Many of you know that 1972-81 was probably the most consequential period in the history of post Bangladesh political and democratic life. This was a period when we witnessed establishment of one party rule in the country, emergence of some left wing parties with agenda following the Marxist Leninist ideology and creating anarchy in the country, this was also the period when some overambitious army officers killed Bangabandhu with his family members. What followed thereafter was political unrest with military coups and counter coups that culminated in the killing of another national leader President Ziaur Rahman. Just think of us the fresh graduates from the cadet college, imbibed with nation building dreams caught in the quagmire of uncertainty. This was a period when common people felt a great sense of loss and bewilderment. I was no exception. Educated and fresh graduates from the university like me were at a loss and not sure where the jobs will come from. Fortunately, soon after my Master's exam, I took a temporary job with World Bank on a research project. The perks and the salary were good but I was looking for a long term job with an NGO, preferably International. I always had my mind set to work for the people. During the entire period of my academic life in the university, I had ample scope to travel around the country to deliver humanitarian assistance as a member of the Rotary/Rotaract Club member. I am also witness to the worst of human sufferings in 1974 manga hit areas in the North Bengal and flood affected people in the low lying

districts. I have also seen the blatant corruption of food items being stolen from the ration shops by the ruling party goons. Soon salt was selling at 32 take per kilo in Dhaka. This was a very difficult time for me, tormented from inside and looking for an opportunity to get a well-paid NGO job to fulfill my ambition to serve the people. This was also the period amidst the chaos and political tension prevailing in the country, some visionary ex-cadets from RCC formed the association of cadets later came to be known as ORCA. Thanks to the leadership of Hamid Bhai, brothers from 2nd batch ,brothers from 3rd batch and few junior batch cadets who toiled hard day and night to give it an organizational shape. Soon ORCA constitutional committee led by Mirza Hossain Haider and Abu Wahiduzzaman from 3rd batch was formed. The rest is history.



1982-2015 Professional Career, Marriage, Higher Education in the USA and Overseas Assignments

Very soon with the help of a friend I landed a prestigious job as Marketing Manager of an international North American NGO in July 1981. Since then my career never looked back and my professional life landed me good jobs in senior positions with CARE USA, SAVE the Children USA, Corporate Director of ACTION AID, Program Director USAID , Country Director of a Dutch NGO and finally with UN. This was a long period that saw me being posted overseas in Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Philippines, Canada, USA and Afghanistan. With the exception of Afghanistan, my family was with me throughout. In 1984, I found my life partner

after nearly two years of courtship and got married to her with some guarded opposition from both the families. We were blessed with our only son born in July 1986. I was lucky enough to raise my son in international environment and give him the best possible school with international curriculum. Personally, I received a two years Scholarship (1996-98) to study and complete Master's Degree in Public Policy in Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University which to me was a real game changer professionally. My wife, the pillar of our family was steadfast in her support both to me and my son in the pursuit of our dreams. She sacrificed everything else for our wellbeing and for her family. I am ever grateful to Allah Almighty for the wonderful 31 years that he gave me to spend with her in such peace and full of bliss and happiness. We are a very happy family.

Amidst the chaos and troubles -my social life

The violent period between 1972-81 was also a period of great social movements in Dhaka. This was also a period of political polarization we witnessed and witnessed introduction of gun violence in politics in Bangladesh. This was also the period when I met love of life, my future wife. It was a game changer for me. Prior to meeting her, I was part of a group of 8 strong buddy group who were known for our social outings and gate crashing parties in the Gulshan and Banani areas. But my favorite places was DHANMONDI. Other free time was spent mostly in attending classes in the University, playing cricket for the department team and in 1st division league irregularly for Azad boys club and later Victoria Sporting club. Became heavily involved with humanitarian works from our Rotaract/ Rotary clubs, got involved with alternative pop culture and music with "UCCHARON Silpi goshti- the group led by great Azam khan. This was freedom at its best, no responsibilities to the family, led sort of a bohemian life. At that time I had little contact with cadets college buddies as there were not many from 3rd batch living in Dhaka except Tazeem Hassan (my class friend in PA department), Abu , Afzal and Belal. Best time to spend was on road # 5 at "snack junction" fast food store-owned by FF AKKU listening to music and meeting new friends some of whom later became friends for life. This was also the time when I met Nasima my future wife which had a profound effect on my bohemian life. I was in love with her and

began to move away from usual social parties and get together and spend more time with her. Please bear in mind that this was a period when there was no Facebook or Twitter. Cell phone was beginning to show up with big antennas.

My wife became the pillar of our home

I met Nasima (pinkie) in 1983 which eventually led to more serious decisions and eventually we got married in 1984 in the month of November. By then I have joined CARE USA. When we got married, she was a graduate student then in Dhaka University. Unfortunately she had to give up her education when our only Child Rasheed was born in July 1986. My social life and freedom of after office activities had to take a back seat. I became more and more a domestic parent taking care of the boy and my wife.

My professional life from 1984 to 2004 took me to different countries around the world from Bangladesh to Soviet Union (later Russia), to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Philippines, to USA, Canada and finally to Afghanistan when I decided to accept an assignment with the United Nations. I had to leave behind my wife and young son in the USA for the first time in our life. I was a very difficult choice but I had the support from my wife and other members of the extended family.

2005-2015- Life in Afghanistan with UN

I was assigned as an international civil servant of UN and posted to the capital of the Taliban's Kandahar province in the southern part of Afghanistan bordering Quetta in Pakistan. In three years' time there, I travelled extensively to all the five provinces, covering the entire south western region which I always called "wild wild land". This was a life time experience of unknown, dealing with a situation that I thought many times was insane. As Governance Officer and team leader, I was tasked among other things to bring intuitional reform in the government, improve their capacity and help implement development projects. This had to be done in the middle of a determined enemy involved on a daily basis with terrorism – killing innocent civilians and destroying civil order in the country. They had a safe sanctuary across the border. Finally in 2007, I was transferred and deployed to Kabul in the central region and later in the Headquarters as a Civil Affairs Officer with higher responsibilities. In between had opportunity to be transferred

to East Timor and to Liberia but declined both the offers on personal reasons.

It is now 2015 and the year when I say good bye to my professional career with UN and good bye to Afghanistan. I was never a professionally trained diplomat like our seasoned diplomats Towhid and Sufiur. I have received special orientation and training in UN Staff College in Turin, Italy and many in house trainings. Diplomacy is rarely about optimal outcomes; it is about muddling along in the dark, dodging bullets, struggling to defer war and catastrophe for the time being, nurturing opportunities for a better tomorrow. By that standard, my 11 years of assignment in Afghanistan was a success.

Tashakoor



China's Afghanistan involvement

DIPLOMAT

TARIQ HOUSE

THREE

101

REZAUL HASAN

With the emergence of China as the world's second largest economy, it has become imperative for the communist regime to maintain security and stability of the country. One of their strategy as a global power has been to continue their engine of growth through resource acquisition overseas and maintain a balance through boosting domestic consumption of the fast growing middle class. China's quest /hunt for more natural resources drive them to new frontiers of the world. Many western companies have already exploited resources in the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. Consequently, China has to look elsewhere for securing energy resources, in countries not already tied to western corporations. This article tried to scrutinize /understanding economic and political rational for China's investment in Afghanistan in the context of current and future engagements particularly after 2016.



As a matter of policy, China invests in post-conflict countries to secure natural resources for their energy-hungry economy, such as the formation of China Sonangol in Angola in 2004. Angola is now China's major source of foreign oil, along with Saudi Arabia. While other countries focused on post-conflict aid, China focused on trading resources for infrastructure (RFI). China's trade deal follows a new method for development in post-conflict countries, rather than the traditional foreign direct investment by corporations or bilateral or multilateral foreign aid projects. In other words, Chinese corporations are providing "hard aid," instead of Western "soft aid." Post-conflict countries, in particular, need infrastructure to begin/ initiate the rebuilding process. China has received a lot of international attention for investing in resource-rich countries, particularly those emerging from violent conflicts. These countries, with cash-

strapped, weak governance regimes and low security, face strong challenges to attract foreign direct investment. Natural resource concessions are often incentives to attract capital flowing into a post-conflict country quickly. Such is the investment climate with Afghanistan.

Extent of Mineral Resources and China's lucrative business

Extractive Industries Sector in Afghanistan has attracted lots of attention, and gained criticality and political significance, in the recent past due to its being seen as the potential leading contributor in achieving the self-reliance vision for highly aid-dependent Afghanistan. It can achieve this by generating substantial future revenues, creating critical infrastructure, unleashing growth impulses in linkage and downstream industries, and providing prosperity and jobs. The estimates of mineral wealth in Afghanistan from one to three trillion dollars look promising to provide increasing domestic revenues over many decades. This storyline has become even more important today due to the impending exit of the international security forces in 2016.

While the country remains a high security risk, the allure of natural resource exploitation provides a strong incentive to attract foreign investment as quickly as possible. China, which needs access to natural resources, looked to Afghanistan. Part of the allure of Chinese foreign direct investment is that it helps wean Afghanistan off foreign aid. Chinese companies have already shown an ability to operate profitably in hostile environments."



In September 2011, the Afghan Ministry of Mines awarded a contract for petroleum development, the first since the U.S. invasion

in 2001, to state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC). The contract for the three blocks, part of the Amu Darya. The three blocks are speculated to hold approximately 80 billion barrels of oil. As China becomes a larger energy player, their corporations will very likely continue to win contracts over Western-based corporations. This has become the new extractive industries reality. Overall China's growing number of operations in Afghanistan, totaling to nearly 40 projects worth \$500 million. The Extractive Industries Sector is highly complicated. It is capital, technology and skills intensive, high risk-reward and conflict-sensitive sector. China understands that and their reward do not come without risks. They understand that investing in Afghanistan poses great security risks, but the Chinese will not be deterred.

Afghanistan Transition and the role of China in Afghanistan

The withdrawal of the NATO/ISAF forces and the significant drawdown on the supply side of the foreign aid has provided an important avenue for China to increase their engagements with the Afghan government and in securing more favorable trade and commercial deals. A Bloomberg article indicated that CNPC (China National Petroleum Corporation) recent bid for a mining filed had also included plans to build a refinery within Afghanistan. Increasing domestic refining capacity in Afghanistan, which currently has just one small-scale oil refinery near the Afghanistan-Uzbekistan border, is considered a priority for the Afghan government and private sector. At present, the country's land-locked position makes it dependent on periodically-interrupted supplies via Pakistan and Iran and expensive fuel supplies via Central Asian republics to its North. This is not a sustainable arrangement for Afghanistan. China's proposal gives them the upper hand to get the contract.

Afghanistan's natural resources have been of particular interest to China and have been the site of significant inward investment. However, as the experts cited above find, the majority of the financial and employment benefits of natural resource exploitation will not be realized until both security and infrastructure are more fully established. Various reports, studies and analysis on

Chinese investments and investment in Afghanistan finds repeated corroboration that China is indeed set to become both a central and a long-term political and economic force in Afghanistan. In the short term, however, its contributions will be limited. With the beginning of 2016 after the withdrawal of US troops, the long term investment benefits for China will begin to reflect their growing influence in this poor but mineral rich country.

Chinese Engagement & Foreign Policy

Although this article has primarily focused upon development and resource-related issues, it is possible to place these within a broader framework of Chinese foreign policy and economic strategy. It is important to view and recognize how China approaches its international affairs globally and within the South and Central Asian regions in order to understand Chinese engagement in Afghanistan. It appears that China's primary concern within the region remains Pakistan, where it has provided large-scale investment and developed strong relations. In addition, China has long provided Pakistan with major military, technical, and economic assistance,

The society and politics are quite fractured on the ethnic, economic inequality, and violent lines. The issues related to control of future revenues in the sector, disturbances created at social, environmental and cultural levels due to large scale mining operations, and unmet expectations of the people from the sector especially with respect to jobs, livelihoods and resettlements may become causes of conflict in future. For China they need to take initiatives to manage and control these likely causes of conflict especially avoiding the resource-curse.

While it is true that the U.S advisors amongst others helped write the mining laws in Afghanistan, but China seems to be reaping the economic benefits. As long as the contract bidding process remains transparent and competitive, Chinese companies seem to have the upper hand, a continuing trend from other parts of the world. What will be interesting going forward, when the contents of the contract will be disclosed, is whether this deal includes safeguards and provision that will benefit the Afghan people for the long-term in respect to economic, governance, environmental, and social aspects. The approvals of the Mining Law by the Cabinet, and the law's subsequent approval by the Parliament, have created the legal framework necessary to initiate extraction from other large mines in the country. Proper extraction and distribution of the wealth can be seen as a potential driver of poverty reduction, fiscal independence and sustained economic growth, or can be fuel for further conflict. Chinese government and Chinese industrial conglomerates operating in Afghanistan must take into cognizance the above imperatives and should form part of their future foreign policy documents of engagements in the country post 2016.



including nuclear technology. Mining ventures, roads, railways, ports and energy facilities in Pakistan have received generous Chinese financing. China wishes to ensure that Afghanistan remains stable in order to prevent it from being used as a launching pad for attacks against Pakistan. In addition, with periodic instability in western China, officials in Beijing have reportedly raised concerns about Chinese or Afghan extremists using Afghanistan as a training or operational base from which to attack the Chinese government.

Afghanistan has been suffering from war and conflict for more than last three decades.



Man proposes but God disposes

ENGINEER

TARIQ HOUSE

TWENTY SEVEN

1469

MD. SHAHABUL ALAM (SHAHAB)

Everyone around me (specifically my relatives) started to say, "He won't be able to do anything in his life" when I missed out from the merit list in our SSC exam. However, the Almighty disposes what others thought about me and bestowed me with something more in my HSC exam that nobody (except my beloved RCC) ever thought off. My life after RCC was not smooth at all. I was not among the ex-cadets who came out of ISSB with a green card and big smile. Rather my board at ISSB found potentiality in me of being something else in life and everyone around me (specifically my relatives) started to say the same words again. Alas! I was not in the well protected RCC compound this time. I outside world opened all its hostility towards me, although I decided to fight back. Once again he Almighty bestowed His countless mercy on me and I was able to find a place in BUET. It was something that helped me to survive against the hostile world and support my family simultaneously. After my graduation from BUET, I had the opportunity to work with Robi Axiata (the then Aktel) and North South University before I finally decided to join BWDB. After few years at BWDB, I was awarded VLIR-UOS scholarship in 2008 to study MSc in Water Resources Engineering in Belgium at Katholieke University of Leuven. It was a scholarship not only to stay and study in Belgium but also a visa to visit almost 17 European countries, although I couldn't finish my quota. In the meantime, the result of my BCS exam was published and I discovered my roll number in Police cadre. Everyone including my father urged me wholeheartedly to accept the opportunity that was missed out when I failed to join Armed Forces. However, I decided to retain my profession as a civil engineer rather than something else. Now my father also started to repeat the same words like others and stopped expecting anything good from me. I returned from Belgium and resume my job at BWDB in 2010 thinking that I will utilize my civil/water resources engineering knowledge to serve the nation in a different way that I could do as a police officer. I decided to pursue my PhD to enhance my knowledge, although I didn't know where to go. In a midnight, I received an e-mail from an unknown university located in an unknown province in Canada, i.e., University of Saskatchewan. Saskatoon, SK. That was the first time I realized that the Saskatchewan

Province is located at the center of the Canadian map, although I never noticed this name before. This is how the Almighty brought me to a place that I never thought off let alone others (specifically my relatives). This snowy city of Saskatoon has already become my second home because of its so many unique features (I can mention those some other time if I get a chance). During the ups and downs in my life, every time I realized that the prayer I made during the dark nights got the attention of my creator and got answered in due time.)

My wife sacrificed her MD in Pediatrics in Bangladesh to accompany me during my PhD at the University of Saskatchewan. Now, she is also a graduate student at the same university as she is taking MSc in Community Health and Epidemiology. I like visiting new places and watching games on television no matter what.



Greetings from Motor City, Michigan

COMPUTER SCIENTIST

QASIM HOUSE

TWENTY

1075

GOLUM SAKLAYEN



Memories of an auditorium

PHYSICIAN/SCIENTIST

TARIQ HOUSE

ELEVEN

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MOHAMMAD ASHRAF HOSSAIN (BIDYUT)



On September 1, 1974, I was one of the sixty-three young boys who arrived at the bank of the river Padma and started their journey as RCC 11th Batch Cadets. As most of the readers may relate it to their personal experiences- I had a mixed feeling; excitement of being received as a Cadet, reporting and getting house-, room- and table numbers assigned, and sadness of separation from the familiar environment and the family for the first time, lots of unknowns and the anxiety of disciplinary actions for failure to follow the rules. I came from Rajshahi city. I was saddened to realize that I lost the freedom of going to the river bank or swimming in the Padma but as a cadet I could just see the same river from a distance.

RCC campus looked huge to me. I was introduced to the Academic Block, the Houses, the Dining Hall, the Masjid and the Playgrounds. But the most exciting thing that happened the first day was a 'Reception' in the afternoon. There was a cultural program in the Auditorium- Saiful Islam (10/576) presented songs followed by a presentation by guest performers from Rajshahi University. While enjoying the program, I looked around- saw the stage in front, the balcony and the pigeon holes for projection at the back. But I was amazed at the fantastic artwork/decoration of the walls, a great contribution of Mr. Souja Haider, our art teacher.

I was not among the brightest, multi-talented star cadets, rather a small-sized, not-so-sporty one. My only strength was academics but (... I knew that at least half of my class-mates were top students from around the country) that was not a big help. I did not have real talent but a big fascination for some literary, art or cultural activities. I thought- whatever it is, I must try to survive, do my best and make my parents proud.

With time, I realized that the RCC auditorium wing of the Academic Block was an interesting place; indeed the Center for multi-purpose activities. I loved it, and thirty-five years since I left RCC- I still remember many colorful events that fill my heart with pleasure. I would like to tell you how the auditorium-centered activities shaped up my life. It will include some facts and mention of people but (I regret that these are limited to some musical, dramas and movies) with my fading memories it is likely that I may misquote and drop some important names or events. Also many were multi-talented star cadets. If there is an opportunity, I promise to make appropriate corrections in the future.

In our time, the major activities that took place in the Auditorium were morning assembly, movie shows, extra-curricular activities (including cultural programs and competitions) and Exams; the facility was also a resource of recreation (TV or movies, for example) and occasionally a venue for

indoor-games, Gym etc. At the morning assembly, we used to fall in, the teachers would stand on the stage facing the cadets, and the Principal make short but important announcements; for example, mention of the best performers at the parade, academics or art competition as well as few disciplinary actions. The assembly also included recitation from the Qur'an with translation, and the national anthem. Maulana Azad Farooqi used to hand over the verses and translations to the cadets. In our early days, Ismail Hossain (6/282), a great flute player, used to lead the national anthem. Years later, Bangla teacher Swapan Datta taught us how to sing it with correct tune and rhythm.

I was wondering if the new generation orca-members or present cadets would appreciate the difference between entertainment of today and that of decades back. In the mid-seventies, RCC did not have any color TV. On some 'slow' weekend- evenings before the dinner, some senior brothers would practically spend hours to adjust the antenna or a channel on an old, heavy B&W TV in the Auditorium, with or without luck. Therefore, when Natore TV (sub)-station was opened experimentally, that was considered as a 'great blessing;' we thought- the pictures were so good!

We were excited when we had a 'movie show', shown every month or so (Please do not forget, in those days there was no Video tapes or CDs, and no cable-TV etc., and no internet, of course). The noisy projector would run for about 20 minutes, and then stop (often burned the film from heating??). So, we used to get ~10 breaks over the 4-5 hr time to run the movie. Before and during the intervals music was played using a 'loud' mike, and there were only few record-discs with very limited number of songs.

I wondered if some of those songs (for example, mausum-hey-ashiqana, unhi-logone, o-projapoti-projapoti, aek-chorhete-thanda etc.) had set records for playing too many times.

The first movie that we watched at RCC was titled 'Head Constable' that we enjoyed a lot, for two special reasons: (1) There was no gallery but a little slope. We (the 7th-graders) were fortunate to get a chair in the front row and could see the movie with little difficulty.

(2) A little girl sang " Meri achchhi nana..", and the word 'nana' that we used to call some dining hall waiters, was amusing! On a Sunday night, while the operator was setting the film, ran 'a movie-clip' that kept burning each time. Some cadets expressed their frustrations verbally. That was considered 'misconduct', therefore, the movie was stopped, and all cadets had physical punishment at the flag-post area. It was already midnight, and all got exhausted. The Adjutant, (then) Major Rezzaqul Haider reminded everyone that there would be PT at 6:00 am.

Needless to say that extra-curricular activities were very interesting to all (performers or admirers alike) at RCC. The musical talents were too many, but Sanwar Dito (7/359), Saiful Islam (10/576), Maqbul Morshed (10/549), Shamsul Islam (10/564; Deceased), Gauharuzzaman (10/521; Deceased), Mahmudun Nabi (11/620), Itrat Ahmed (13/708), Shah Rashid (15/851), Hasan Mahbub (16/907), and many others were extremely promising. Abu Sufian (11/632) was unparalleled in recitation of the Qur'an.

There were many successful drama productions. I still remember many actors, namely, Abdul Hafiz (6/304), Abul Barkat (6/306), Zahir Uddin (6/312), Yawer Sayeed (7/334), Anwarul Sabir (7/367), Shahidul Haq (9/458; Deceased), Bayezid Hossain (10/539), Akhter Chowdhury (10/548), Sharif Sabbir (10/557) (and many more) who walked on the stage with so much confidence. Alamgir Hossain (8/419) and Manzur Morshed (13/697) were very successful in playing roles in 'Cross Road-e Cross Fire.' Once Towfiq Islam (8/432) staged his own drama.

I wonder if there are any changes in practice, but during our time, female characters were played by cadets with appropriate make-up and attire, on several occasions; for example, 'Subachan Nirbashane', 'Bhe'pute Behaag', 'Daak-Ghar', 'Chor-Chor' etc. There was an exception; in a drama (by Yawer Sayeed 7/334) titled 'Jiban-o-shambhabya-prashnottar' the Adjutant's wife played the role of 'nayika' and that was a big surprise. Abdus Samad (12/682; Deceased) played that role of the little boy 'Loitta' and proved his talent. 'Sampatti samarpan' was a great production from QH in which

Obaidul Azam (10/529), Kamal (13/717), Masud Kabir (14/765) showed their great acting talents. Our batch missed the staging of 'Raja Howao Soja Noy' that was a big hit!

I would like to tell you about a special assembly. Then Principal Col. Abu Khaled

(Deceased) learned that cadets were growing a bad habit of reading some kind of literature that is not well respected. One afternoon, he was in the Auditorium with his Staff. He asked a question: What is 'ananda?' Nobody answered. The next minute he explained that whatever pleases us is 'ananda', but we should always look for 'nirmal (dirt-free) ananda.' He was calm; he did not issue a mass extra-drill, but asked all to be honest and look for 'nirmal ananda' and made special doah for all.

Once again, RCC Auditorium was not only a place to display the talents or a place of recreation and entertainment; that was very close to our heart. RCC Auditorium saw a large number of talents in many other aspects of cultural and/or extracurricular activities; poem recitation, debate, extempore speech, general knowledge and current affairs competition; writing, mock news presentation, joke/story-telling etc.

I hope to elaborate on these in the future.



Dedication to ORCA reunions

EDUCATOR

EAST/WEST

ONE

1

ABDUL HAMID

WE GATHER HERE

We gather here
Once a year
To remember
And be reminded—
Of a common bond
And bondage
To an institution
And a way of life
Long past
But ever present
In our lives
In our thoughts
In our minds;
A way of life
That shapes
And defines
Who we are
And what we
Ought to be.

We gather here
Once a year
To remember
And be reminded
That we may not come
From the womb
Of the same mother
But we do come
From the womb
Of the same mother
Institution.

We gather here
Once a year
To travel down
The memory lane
To walk down
The beaten path
The stretched
Concrete road
That runs by
The mighty river
On one side
And a sleepy
Hollow village
On the other side—
And as you travel
For a mile

Suddenly you see
Spread before thee
A vast panorama
Of a sprawling campus
As if carved
Out of nowhere
Barbed wire
All around
A never, never land.

We gather here
Once a year
To be beaconed
To the future
By the splendid
Domed building
Running east and west
The east is our past
The west our present
And our future—;
The dome glowering
On the east
At sunrise
Showed our promise
When we were there
The dome
Fully sparkling
At mid-day
Displayed the prime
Of our life;
The dome
With a crimson
Fading hue
Towards sunset
Reflecting
Our fading life.

As we look back
We see frozen forever
In our memory
The dorms
That housed
Our rooms
That sheltered us
For six long years
From biting cold
And scorching heat
From drizzling rain
And lashing wind;
We see frozen

In our mind
The classrooms
That we occupied
In subsequent years
As we graduated
Each academic year—
We see the teachers
That enriched us
And prepared us
For future years.

We see projected
On the screen
Of our mind
The wistful scene
Of morning P.T.
Running in formation
Around the circular road
And exercising
Enmasse in unison
On the grounds
In front of houses;
We see us
On the parade ground
One of three hundred
Smartly turned out cadets
Standing ram-rod straight
Displaying dazzling moves
Left turn
And right turn
And about turn
And slow march
And quick march
Tak, tak, tak
In perfect sync;
And in case
Of disharmony
The roaring
Unfailing command—
"As you were".

We gather here
Once a year
To remember
And be reminded
That once upon a time
We could play
The whole day
Untiringly, unfailingly
Competitively, zestfully;

The sun did not soften us
 The rain did not dampen us;
 Be it cricket—
 Batting, bowling, fielding
 In net practice
 Or in competition
 The sun would tire
 And retire,
 We would be unfazed;
 Or be it football
 Or hockey—
 Dribbling and passing
 Outsmarting the opponent
 Kicking or shooting
 At the goal post
 Exultant at a success
 Disappointed at a failure;
 Be it basketball
 Or volleyball
 Table tennis
 Or lawn tennis
 Carrom board
 Or badminton
 Gymnastics
 Or athletics—
 We were provided
 Many ways
 To strengthen
 Our brawns
 To nurture
 Stamina and strength
 We were to be
 The future leaders.

We gather here
 Once a year
 To remember
 And be reminded
 Of the grand entry
 Into the grand hall
 The Dining Hall
 Five times a day
 Three hundred
 Smartly turned out
 Tired, hungry cadets
 It was sumptuous meals
 In a Hall
 Better than what
 The vast majority
 Could even imagine;
 The country took
 Good care of us—
 We were to be
 The future leaders.

We gather here
 Once a year
 To remember
 And be reminded
 Of the Presentation Nights
 That afforded us
 Opportunity
 To sharpen our skills
 In various fields
 Oration and elocution
 Debating and speaking
 Singing and dancing
 Dramatics and skits
 Playing instruments—
 We have seen it all
 We have done it all
 We have lived it all
 Three hundred
 And sixty degrees—
 We were to be
 The future leaders.

Some reported sick
 To avoid P.T.;
 Some hid in closet
 To avoid Maghrib;
 After lights out
 Some read books
 Inside blanket;
 In the darkness of night
 Some dared to climb
 Coconut trees
 Behind Tariq House;
 Some plucked bananas
 From the orchard behind;
 Some dared to cross
 The barbed fence
 To venture to the city
 To see a favorite movie;
 Some played pranks
 On an unpopular teacher
 Or an appointment holder
 Or an impudent batchmate.

We gather here
 Once a year
 To remember
 And be reminded
 Of our teachers
 And our adjutants
 Our vice principals
 And our principals,
 And all the staff—
 Who gave so much
 Of themselves

So we be
 Well trained
 Well rounded
 Well groomed
 Well grounded;
 We gather
 To remember
 All our friends
 Scattered all over
 Remember the practices
 And their pranks
 Their idiosyncrasies
 And their oddities
 Their foolishness
 And their naughtiness
 Their intelligence
 And their innocence.

And remember
 And pray
 For the ones
 Who departed
 This transient world
 Ninety-two of them--
 To date—
 A reminder
 That sooner or later
 We will surely
 Follow them.

Wave after wave
 Of batches
 Of cadets
 Have passed out
 After being trained
 Groomed and processed
 At a factory
 Called RCC
 At immense cost
 To the country
 The question I ask:
 Did it get the benefit
 From us
 Commensurate with
 The cost it lavished
 On us?
 Did we live up
 To the expectations
 Of the Nation?
 Isn't it time
 To answer?

I was one of your family

FINANCIER

KHALID HOUSE

FOURTEEN

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MOHAMMAD MAMDUDUR RASHID (MAMDUD)



ওনাকে খুঁজে পেতে কতই বা আর কষ্ট হবে ?

"ওনাকে খুঁজে পেতে কতই বা আর কষ্ট হবে ?" ভেবেছিলাম মনে মনে ! রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে অর্থনীতিতে স্নাতক ও মাস্টার্স পর্ব গুলো শেষ করে সেখানেই শিক্ষকতা শুরু করেছিলেন তিনি । পরে অস্ট্রেলিয়ার পার্থ-এ গিয়েছিলেন ডক্টরেট ডিগ্রী নিতে, সেখান থেকে ফিরে এসে আবারও সেই রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েই শিক্ষকতা । শেষ দেখা হয়েছিল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ক্যাম্পাসেই '৮৮ সালের কোন এক সময়ে । ২০১৩ সালের শুরুতে যখন আবার তাঁকে খোঁজা শুরু করলাম ততদিনে যোগাযোগ বিচ্ছিন্নতার রজতজয়ন্তী উদযাপনের সময় হয়ে গেছে । ইতিমধ্যেই আমার এক বন্ধু রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েই প্রভাষক থেকে অধ্যাপক হয়ে গেছে । তাই ভাবছিলাম কতই বা আর বেগ পেতে হবে তাঁকে খুঁজতে । বন্ধুকে ধরেই তো পেয়ে যেতে পারি তাঁর খোঁজ ! কিন্তু তখনও অনেক কিছুই অজানা ছিল আমার ।

হতাশার শুরু হলো বন্ধু যখন বললো যে তাঁর সঙ্গে ওর শেষ দেখা হয়েছে প্রায় বছর পনের আগে । বুঝলাম, ঘটনাটা সহজ হবে না, বেগ পেতে হবে ! তাতে কি ? মনে পড়ে গেল সেই অমোঘ বাণী, " কাঁটা হেরি ফ্যান্স কেন কমল তুলিতে, দুঃখ বিনা সুখ লাভ হয় কি মহীতে? " ভাবলাম, এত সহজে হাল ছাড়লে হবে কি করে ? কষ্টেই তো কষ্ট মেলে ! শুরু করলাম হাতের কাছেই মিলে যাওয়া ইন্টারনেট দিয়ে। ঢুকলাম রাজশাহী

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েব সাইটে । অর্থনীতি বিভাগের শিক্ষকদের তালিকা দেখতে গিয়ে তাঁর নাম পেলাম প্রাক্তন শিক্ষকদের তালিকায়। এও জানলাম, তিনি বিভাগীয় চেয়ারম্যান হবার পর ১৯৯৭ সালে রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের পর্ব শেষ করেছেন । তারপর ? আমি একেবারে ঘোর অন্ধকারে !

তাতেই বা কি আসে যায় ? অন্ধকার থেকে আলায় তো বের হতে হবে ! ভাবলাম, "আর কি করা যায় ?" শিক্ষকদের তালিকা থেকে আটজন অধ্যাপকবৃন্দের নাম আর মোবাইল ফোন নম্বর যোগাড় হয়ে গেল সহজেই । স্ক্রীন আশা ছিল, এঁদের কেউ কেউ তাঁর সমসাময়িক হবেন এবং তাঁর অবস্থান সম্পর্কে ধারণা দিতে পারবেন । যেই ভাবা সেই কাজ ! ক্ষুদ্রে বার্তা চলে গেল সেই আটজন অধ্যাপকবৃন্দের কাছে । দু'জনের কাছ থেকে সাড়া পেয়ে উৎসাহ বাড়লো কিছুটা । একজন বলতে পারলেন যে তিনি রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ছেড়ে মধ্যপ্রাচ্যের একটি দেশের কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংকে অর্থনীতিবিদ হিসেবে যোগ দিয়েছেন এবং সেখানেই থাকেন । একটা সূত্র অন্ততঃ পাওয়া গেল ! অন্যজন জানালেন, নিজের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ না থাকলেও এক পরিচিত অধ্যাপকের সাথে তাঁর ইমেইল-এ যোগাযোগ আছে । তিনি খোঁজ নিয়ে জানাবেন । আশা বাড়লো কিছুটা ; ঠিক পথেই এগুচ্ছি তাহলে ! পরে তিনি জানালেন, শেষ যোগাযোগ হয়েছিল ছয় মাস আগে, তবে সেই ইমেইল এখন আর খুঁজে পাওয়া সম্ভব হবে না ! আশার গুড়ে আবারও বালি ! সেই সঙ্গে অন্ধকারটাও যেন ঘনীভূত হলো আর একটু !

সূত্র কিন্তু একটা রয়ে গেল; আর সেটা হলো মধ্যপ্রাচ্যের সেই দেশের কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংক । সেই কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইটে গিয়ে অনুসন্ধান বিভাগের ইমেইল খুঁজে বের করতে কোন অসুবিধা হল না; এমনকি একটা অনুসন্ধান বার্তাও চলে গেল সেখানে । আশা ছিল, তারা জবাব দিলেই যোগাযোগটা স্থাপিত হবে । কিন্তু মানুষ ভাবে এক, আর হয় আর এক । এক্ষেত্রেও তাই হল, অনুসন্ধান বিভাগ আমার বার্তার কোন জবাবই দিল না । ততদিনে আশার আর উদ্দীপনারই শুধু নয়, আমি আমার ধৈর্যসীমারও প্রায় শেষ প্রান্তে পৌঁছে গেছি ।

"আরা স্টোর, দোরাটানা, যশোহর," ঠিকানাটা মনে পড়ল অন্ধকারের শেষ আলোকরশ্মির মত, তাঁকে খুঁজে পাবার আশা যখন ছেড়েই দিয়েছি প্রায় । একবারই মাত্র গিয়েছিলাম তাঁদের সেই বাড়িতে ১৯৮১ সালে, মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা শেষের অবসরে । মফস্বল শহরের মূল সড়কের পাশেই ছিল বাসাটা । সড়ক সংলগ্ন অংশে ছিল দোকানঘর--আরা স্টোর । আর ভিতরের অংশে ছিল মূল আংগিনা সহ বসবাসের ঘর সমূহ । যে কোন মফস্বল শহরের সাধারণ মধ্যবিত্ত পরিবারের অতি পরিচিত বাড়ির কাঠামো । তবে স্টোরটি কিন্তু মোটেও সাধারণ ছিল না । এটা না ছিল কোনো মনোহারী সামগ্রীর দোকান, না ছিল হার্ডওয়্যার অথবা পরিধেয় কাপড়ের দোকান; একেবারেই ভিন্নধর্মী পণ্য বিকাতো সেখানে ।

ইদানিংকালের শিক্ষার্থী বা সদ্য পাশ করা কোনো চাকুরীপ্রার্থীর পক্ষে এই পণ্য সামগ্রীর কথা চিন্তা করাও প্রায় অসম্ভব, কিন্তু সেকালে এটি ছিল প্রায় দুঃস্প্রাপ্য, অথচ অতি প্রয়োজনীয় একটি পণ্য । তখন কম্পিউটারের কথা বাংলাদেশের ছাত্রছাত্রীরা সচরাচর শুনত না, অথবা শুনলেও তা নিয়ে ভাবত না । কেননা, বস্তুটি সম্পর্কে বাস্তব কোনো ধারণা কারো ছিলনা বললেই চলে । আর কম্পিউটার বিহীন সমাজে তথ্য সংগ্রহ বরাবরই ছিল এক বিশাল চ্যালেঞ্জ । কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তির ফর্ম, অথবা চাকুরী সংক্রান্ত দলিলাদি সংগ্রহ করতে হত সরাসরি সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে । সেই সময়ে 'আরা স্টোর' ছিল একটি তথ্য কেন্দ্র । চাকুরী সংক্রান্ত বিভিন্ন ফর্ম, কলেজ-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভর্তির ফর্ম থেকে শুরু করে অন্যান্য প্রয়োজনীয় দলীল দস্তাবেজ সেখানে মিলতো অনায়াসেই । এ ছাড়াও ছিল টাইপ রাইটিং আর সাইক্লোস্টাইল (সে যুগের প্রতিলিপি করার যন্ত্র) এর সুবিধা । ফলে আরা স্টোরটি তখন ছিল বেশ পরিচিত একটি নাম । কিন্তু এখনকার খবর কে বলতে পারে ? তদুপরি সমস্যা হল, নিজে তো সেখানে যেতে পারছি না ।

সমস্যা থাকলে তার সমাধানও আছে । এক্ষেত্রেও মিলে গেল । যশোহরে আমার এক সহকর্মীকে আমার

সমস্যার কথা জানাতেই তিনি সানন্দে রাজী হলেন সরেজমিনে তদন্ত করে আসতে। নিরাশার মাঝে আবারও জাগলো আশার আলো। আমার এই খোঁজাখুঁজির প্রকল্পের বাতিটার 'স্বলা আর নেতা' যেন চলছে জোনাকি পোকার মতই। এই জ্বলে তো ওই নেভে। আশা এই পাই, তো পরক্ষণেই হারাই। এবারও ব্যতিক্রম হল না। আমার সহকর্মীটি সরেজমিনে তদন্তের প্রতিবেদন যখন পেশ করলেন তখন জানা গেল, আরা স্টোরের সেই বাড়িটি এখন পরিত্যক্ত প্রায়। বাড়ির দুজন মুরুব্বীই ইন্তেকাল করেছেন বেশ কিছুদিন হল। মুরুব্বী বলতে তাঁর বাবা এবং মা। তাঁদের জীবদ্দশায় ওনার বর্তমান পরিবার (স্ত্রী ও কন্যা) প্রতিবছর দেশে এসে দোরাতানার সেই বাড়িতে বেড়াতে যেতেন। স্বভাবত:ই, তাদের সেই আসা যাওয়া বন্ধ হয়েছে মুরুব্বী দুজনের মৃত্যুর পর। আবারও অমানিশার অঙ্ককার!

তবে জোনাকির মতই আবারও আলো জ্বললো পরক্ষণেই, যখন জানা গেল যশোহর শহরেই তাঁর এক খালাতো ভাই থাকেন (বাবা মার একমাত্র সন্তান বলেই তাঁর কোন সহোদর ছিল না)। আমার সহকর্মী এবার ছুটলেন সেই খালাতো ভাইয়ের কাছে। ততদিনে আমার তাগিদটা আমার সহকর্মীর মধ্যেও সংক্রামিত হয়েছে অনেকটাই এবং এই অভিযানের ব্যাপারে তিনিও বেশ উৎসাহিত হয়ে উঠেছেন। জানা গেল, পাঁচ/ছ' মাসে সেই খালাতো ভাইয়ের সংগে তাঁর একবার কথা হয়, তবে যোগাযোগটা এক পাঙ্কিক এবং সেটা তাঁর দিক থেকে। পরের বার কথা হলে তাঁর ফোন নম্বর বা ইমেইল ঠিকানা যোগাড় করে রাখবেন বলে কথা দিলেন সেই ভদ্রলোক। শেষমেশ তার মাধ্যমে ইমেইল ঠিকানা যোগাড় করে সেই কাঙ্ক্ষিত যোগাযোগ স্থাপন করা গেল। সময়টা ছিল ২০১৪ সালের ফেব্রুয়ারী।

এখানেই শেষ করা যেত এবং তাতে শিরোনামের প্রতি কোন অবিচার হত বলেও মনে হয় না। কিন্তু পরের অংশটা না বললে তো গল্পের বেশিটাই না বলা থেকে যাবে

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যাকে এত খোঁজাখুঁজি, তার পরিচয়টা এখনো দেখা হয় নি। তিনি আমার খালু। আমার ছোট খালার সাথে তাঁর বিয়ে হয়েছিল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের পর্ব শেষ করার সাথে সাথেই। এক সাথে একই বিষয়ে পড়তেন তাঁরা।

পরিচয় থেকে প্রণয়, আর তা থেকেই পরিণয়। কিন্তু তাঁদের দাম্পত্য জীবন ছিল খুবই স্বল্প পরিসরের। প্রথম বিভাগে প্রথম হবার কারণে বিলম্ব ছাড়াই খালু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে প্রভাষক হিসেবে নিযুক্ত হন এবং স্বল্পকালের মধ্যেই বৃত্তি নিয়ে উচ্চশিক্ষার্থে অস্ট্রেলিয়ার পার্থে গমন করেন। খালা কিছুদিন পরে তাঁর সঙ্গে যোগ দেন। ছোট খালার হৃদরোগের সমস্যা ছিল বাল্যকাল থেকেই; আর তারই জটিলতার ফলশ্রুতিতে পার্থে থাকাকালীন সময়ে অকালেই খালা ইহকাল ত্যাগ করেন। তখন আমি সবমাত্র উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষা শেষ করেছি। স্বল্প দাম্পত্যকালীন জীবনে তাঁদের কোন সন্তানাদি না থাকায় আমাদের পরিবারের সংগে দ্রুতই খালুর সম্পর্ক দূর থেকে দূরবর্তী হতে থাকে এবং এক সময় তা পুরোপুরি বিচ্ছিন্ন হয়ে যায়। বুঝতে কষ্ট হয় না, কাম্য না হলেও সেটাই ছিল অনেকটা স্বাভাবিক পরিণতি।

দাম্পতিক কাজের চাপে মাসখানেকের মধ্যে তাঁর বার্তার জবাব দেয়া হয় নাই। তিনি যে উদগ্রীব হয়ে ছিলেন, তা বুঝলাম তাঁর একই বার্তা মাসখানেকের ব্যবধানে দ্বিতীয়বার পাঠানোতে। "I was one of your family. That I ceased to be so, was not in any way due to anything I had done, or left undone!" লিখেছিলেন তিনি। কথাটার সংগে যেন এক ধরণের দীর্ঘশ্বাস জড়িয়ে আছে। কথাটা নিয়ে আমি ভেবেছিও কয়েকদিন। সত্যি বটে, খালার প্রস্থান-যা হয়ত তিনি আমাদের পরিবারের সদস্যপদ হারানোর কারণ হিসেবে ভাবছেন--কোনভাবেই তাঁর কোন কিছু করা বা না করার সঙ্গে সম্পর্কযুক্ত নয়। শুনেছি, হৃদরোগ খালার সংগে সখ্যতা গড়েছিল তাঁর শৈশব থেকেই। এই সখ্যতা ভাঙ্গতে আমার নানাভাই সেসুগেও চেষ্টার কোন ক্রটি রাখেন নাই। এমনকি, কোথায় যেন তিনি শুনেছিলেন, অর্জুন গাছের বাকলের রস হৃদরোগ নিরাময়ের জন্য উপকারী। শুনে সেই গাছও লাগিয়েছিলেন গ্রামের বাড়িতে। ছোটবেলায় দেখেছিও, গ্রামের উঠতি বয়সের ছেলেরা এই গাছ লাগানোর কারণ জানতে পেলে সে পথে আসতে যেতে অর্জুন গাছের বাকল তুলে চিবুতে চিবুতে হাঁটতো। আমিও স্বাদ গ্রহণ করেছি দু' এক বার, তবে তা সুস্বাদু ছিল না মোটেও; অন্তত: সখ করে চিবানোর মত দ্রব্য বলে তা মনে হয় নি আমার! যাহোক, ফিরতি বার্তায় খালুকে লিখেছিলাম যে পরিবারের সদস্যপদ তাঁর মোটেও বাতিল হয় নি, বরং তিনি সংযোগহীন সদস্যে পরিণত হয়েছিলেন; তাঁকে আবার খুঁজে পাওয়ায়

যোগাযোগটা শুধু পুন:স্থাপিত হল, এই যা। এই উত্তরে তিনি বেশ খুশীই হয়েছিলেন বলে মনে হয়েছিল। প্রপ্নটা আমার মাথাতেও ঘুরেছে অনেকবার। তাঁকে খুঁজে বের করতে এতটা উদগ্রীব হয়েছিলাম কেন? খালার বিয়ের সময়ে আমি ক্যাডেট কলেজে অধ্যায়নরত এক কিশোর। আর, খালার বিয়েতে আমি উপস্থিত হতেও পারিনি ক্যাডেট কলেজের নিয়ম কানূনের বেড়াজালে জড়িয়ে (সে দু:খ রয়ে গেছে আমার আজও)! উপরন্তু, আমি সেখান থেকে বেড়িয়ে আসার আগেই খালা অস্ট্রেলিয়ায় পাড়ি জমান খালুর সংগে যোগ দিতে এবং তিনি ইন্তেকাল করেন আমি সেই পর্ব শেষ করার সাথে সাথেই। সুতরাং খালুর সাথে আমার দেখা হয়েছিল সর্ব সাকুল্যে হাতে গোণা কয়েকবার; ছুটির সময়। অন্তরঙ্গতা তৈরী হবার যে সুযোগ হয় নি, তা তো বলাই বাহুল্য। তবে খালুর একটি উপহার তাঁর সাথে আমার একটা যোগসূত্র ধরে রেখেছিল এতদিন ধরে। আর তা হল, একটি বই--'গ্রহাণ্টরের আগন্তুক'। রাশিয়ান ভাষা থেকে বাংলায় অনূদিত বৈজ্ঞানিক কল্পকাহিনী ভিত্তিক একটি গ্রন্থ। খালু উপহার দিয়েছিলেন আমি মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হবার পরে--১৯৮১ সালে। পাঁচটি কল্প কাহিনীর প্রতিটিই আমার মনে ধরেছিল সেই বয়সে। আর সে জনাই বোধ হয় বইটিতে পুনরায় চোখ বোলালো হত কখনও কখনও। গত চৌত্রিশ বছরেও বইটি আমার হাত ছাড়া হয় নি। তাই পাঁচিশ বছর পর যোগাযোগ পুন:স্থাপনের সূত্র হিসেবে ব্যবহার করেছিলাম বইটির প্রচ্ছদ আর ভিতরের পাতায় দেয়া তাঁর স্বাক্ষর সম্বলিত চৌত্রিশ বছর আগের শুভেচ্ছা বাণীর ছবিগুলো। সহজেই অনুমেয় যে, বইয়ের কথাটা তাঁর স্মৃতি থেকে সম্পূর্ণ মুছে গিয়েছিল। ছবিগুলো শুধু তাঁর সেই স্মৃতিই ফিরিয়ে আনে নি, এতদিনেও বইটি আমার কাছে সংরক্ষিত আছে দেখে তিনি যার পর নাই বিস্মিতও হয়েছিলেন।

যোগাযোগ পুন:স্থাপনের পর তাঁর সেই বিস্ময়ের ফলাফল ভোগ (নাকি উপভোগ বললে সঠিক হবে!) করতে হচ্ছে এখন আমাদের। প্রথম যেবার তাঁর স্ত্রী ও কন্যা দেশে আসলেন, সেবারই যোগাযোগ করে বাসায় এসে দেখা করলেন আমাদের সঙ্গে। অত্যন্ত সদালাপী আর মিশুক একটি মেয়ে ও তার মা'র সঙ্গে পরিচিত হলাম আমরা। অবস্থাটা এমন ছিল যে, আমার এক চাচাতো ভাই কিছুক্ষন পর বাসায় ঢুকে বুঝতেই পারেনি যে সেটাই ছিল আমাদের প্রথম সাক্ষাৎ। আলাপ-

চারিতার এক পর্যায়ে উপহার সামগ্রী বেরোতে থাকলো। উপহারের বহর দেখে খালুকে লেখা পরের বার্তায় সৈয়দ মুজতবা আলীর 'দেশে বিদেশে' বইটি থেকে একটা উদ্ধৃতি না দিয়ে পারিনি। "একজনের রান্না না করে কেউ যদি তিনজনের রান্না করে, তবে তাকে ধমক দেওয়া যায়, কিন্তু সে যদি ছ'জনের রান্না পরিবেশন করে বলে রান্নাঘরে আরো আছে তখন আর কি করার থাকে? অল্প শোকে কাতর, অধিক শোকে পাথর।" কাবুলে পদার্পনের প্রথম রাতেই ভূত্য আন্দুর রহমানের নৈশভোজ পরিবেশনের বাহার দেখে এভাবেই সৈয়দ মুজতবা আলী তাঁর মনোভাব ব্যক্ত করেছিলেন। আমাদের অবস্থা তার চেয়ে খুব আলাদা ছিল না। বাসায় নিয়ে আসা প্রথম দফার উপহার সামগ্রী দেখে বিস্ময়ের ঘোর কাটার আগেই তাঁদেরকে পৌঁছানোর জন্য প্রেরিত ড্রাইভারের মাধ্যমে পাঠানো দ্বিতীয় দফা উপহারের বহর দেখে আমাদের আক্কেল গুড়ুম না হয়ে আর পারে নি-সত্যিই, অল্প শোকে কাতর, অধিক শোকে পাথর! তাঁর উপহারের কষাঘাত এখনও চলছে। এ পর্যন্ত কয়েকবার তাঁর স্ত্রী ও কন্যা দেশে এসেছে এবং প্রতিবারের উপহারের ভারে আমরা আর নির্ভর থাকতে পারছি না। হয়ত, গত পঁচিশ বছরের না দিতে পারা উপহার তিনি পঁচিশ মাসেই দিয়ে ফেলবেন বলে পণ করেছেন। দেখে শুনে মনে হচ্ছে, ইমোশনাল রিটার্নের পাশাপাশি ইকনোমিক রিটার্নটাও আত্মীয়তার সম্পর্ক পুনঃস্থাপনে অনেকের উৎসাহিত হবার কারণ হতে পারে!

যা বলছিলাম, তাঁকে খুঁজে বের করার স্পৃহাটা তৈরী হয়েছিল অনেকটা সে কারণেই, যে কারণে আমি অস্ট্রেলিয়ায় পাঁচ বছর থাকার পর সেখান থেকে সপরিবারে চলে এসেছিলাম বাংলাদেশে! সেটা খুব বড় কিছু ছিল না; বৃহত্তর পরিবারের সঙ্গে ছেলেমেয়েদের পরিচয় করানো এবং তাদের সঙ্গে অন্তরঙ্গতা বাড়ানো ছিল মুখ্য, বাকি যা ছিল সব গৌণ। অস্ট্রেলিয়াতে যাবার সময়ে আমার বড় মেয়ের বয়স ছিল সাত বছর, বাকি দুজন ছিল বিশ মাস এবং পাঁচ মাস বয়সের। সঙ্গত: কারণেই বৃহত্তর পরিবারের সঙ্গে তাদের ঘনিষ্ঠ হবার সুযোগ হয় নি, যদিও প্রায় প্রতি বছরেই আমরা ছুটিতে দেশে আসতাম। ইদানীং যখন দেখি প্রতি সপ্তাহান্তে নানুর বাড়ি আর স্কুল ছুটিতে দাদুর বাড়ি না গেলে তাদের অস্থিরতা বাড়ে, তখন উপলব্ধি করি আসাটা সার্থক হয়েছে। যা'হোক, পরিবারের সঙ্গে সংযোগ হারানো একজন সদস্যকে খুঁজে বের করাটা ছিল সেই 'পরিচয় করানো আর অন্তরঙ্গতা বাড়ানো' প্রক্রিয়ার একটা অংশ। এর নীচে চাপা পরা ছিল

নিজের ভাল লাগার ব্যাপারটা। খালুও নিশ্চয়ই অত্যন্ত খুশী হয়েছিলেন। "Thank you once again for finding me. There was no reason for you to remember me, still you did. I am grateful for that"--লিখেছিলেন তিনি। মজার ব্যাপার হল, ইদানীং আমার এ-লেভেলের দ্বিতীয় বর্ষে পড়ুয়া বড় মেয়ের সঙ্গে তাঁর ভাব হয়েছে বেশ। তাঁর সম্পর্কে অনেক কিছুই জানছি আমার মেয়ের সঙ্গে তাঁর বার্তা বিনিময় থেকে। সেই সঙ্গে ইদানীং যোগ হয়েছে উচ্চশিক্ষার ব্যাপারে আমার মেয়েকে প্রয়োজনীয় পরামর্শ প্রদান। তাঁর সময় হয়ত কাটছে ভাল, তবে আমারও দায়িত্ব লাঘব হচ্ছে অনেকাংশেই... ভাবছি বসে, মন্দ কি?

জীবনের স্বপ্ন ও গল্প : উদীয়মান তারুণ্যের পাথেয় ও প্রেরণা

শুনছি সেই ছোটবেলা থেকেই--মানুষ বড় হয় তার স্বপ্নের সমান! স্বভাবত:ই, যাঁর স্বপ্ন থাকে যত বড়, তাঁর বড় হওয়ার সম্ভাবনাও থাকে তত বেশী; আবার যিনি যত বড় হয়েছেন, তাঁর স্বপ্নগুলোও নিশ্চয়ই ছিল ততটাই বড়। কিন্তু স্বপ্ন ছাড়া কি সম্ভব নয় সাফল্য অর্জন? 'সৌভাগ্য'র কল্যাণে সেই সম্ভাবনাকে তো একদম উড়িয়ে দেয়া যায় না। কিন্তু দুর্ভাগ্যজনক বাস্তবতা হলো, সেই 'সৌভাগ্য' নিয়ে আবার সবাই জন্মগ্রহণ করে না। আর সেই বিরল পয়মন্তদের সারিতে না থাকলে, স্বপ্ন দর্শন আর বাস্তবায়ন ছাড়া সাফল্য অধরই থেকে যায়।

কিন্তু কোন সে স্বপ্ন যা সাফল্যের পূর্বশর্ত? অত্যন্ত চমৎকার করেই ব্যাখ্যাটা দিয়ে গেছেন সদ্য প্রয়াত ভারতের সাবেক রাষ্ট্রপতি, খ্যাতিমান পরমানু বিজ্ঞানী এবং সর্বজন শ্রদ্ধেয় শিক্ষক এ. পি. জে. আব্দুল কালাম, "যা তুমি ঘুমিয়ে দেখো তা স্বপ্ন নয়, যা তোমাকে ঘুমাতে দেয় না, সেটাই স্বপ্ন!" হ্যাঁ, প্রাপ্তির যে আকৃতি নিদ্রাহীনতায় ভোগায়, সেটাই সেই স্বপ্ন, যা সাফল্যের পূর্বশর্ত।

আপাতত: দুর্ভাগ্য স্বপ্নগুলোকে অনেকেই আবার 'অবাস্তব কল্পনা' বলে মনে করেন। কিন্তু সুউচ্চ অর্জনের সব কিছুই তো শুরুতে ছিল অবাস্তব কল্পনা। মানুষের চাঁদে পদার্পনের কথাই ধরা যাক। সেই ১৯৬২ সালের ১২ই সেপ্টেম্বর জন এফ. কেনেডী রাইস ইউনিভার্সিটিতে বক্তৃতা দেবার সময় যখন বলেছিলেন, "আমরা চাঁদে যাবার সংকল্প করছি, এই দশকের মধ্যেই... এবং তা

এজন্য নয় যে এটি হবে অল্যন্ত সহজ, বরং এজন্যই যে তা হবে বেশ দুঃসাধ্য... এবং এটা এমন একটি চ্যালেঞ্জ যেটা আমরা মোকাবিলা করতে চাই, যেটা আমরা মূলতবি করতে নারাজ এবং যেটা আমরা জয় করতে সংকল্পবদ্ধ," তখন অনেকের কাছেই তা নিশ্চয়ই অলীক কল্পনা বলেই মনে হয়েছিল! কিন্তু বাস্তবে কি ঘটেছিল? মানুষ প্রথম চাঁদে পদার্পণ করেছিল সেই দশক শেষ হবার আগেই, ১৯৬৯ সালের ২০শে জুলাই। কি অসাধারণই না ছিল সেই স্বপ্ন, আর কি লক্ষণীয়ই না ছিল সেই সাফল্য!

ইদানিং যারা ব্যবস্থাপনা অথবা ব্যবসায় প্রসাশন জাতীয় বিষয় নিয়ে পড়াশুনা করছেন বা করেছেন, তারা নিশ্চয়ই SMART লক্ষ্য স্থির করার পরামর্শ পেয়েছেন। SMART বলতে বুঝায় Specific (নির্দিষ্ট), Measurable (পরিমেষ্য), Achievable (সাধনযোগ্য), Realistic (বাস্তবানুগ বা বস্তনিষ্ঠ) এবং Time Bound (সময়বদ্ধ)। কেনেডী রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান নিয়ে পড়াশুনা করেছেন হার্ভার্ড বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে এবং হতেই পারে, তিনি SMART লক্ষ্য স্থির করারও পরামর্শ পেয়েছেন, তবে বাস্তবে তার এমন চমৎকার প্রয়োগ খুব কমই দৃশ্যমান হয়! স্বপ্ন দেখার সময় সাধনযোগ্যতার সঙ্গে আপোষ করাটা অনাকাঙ্ক্ষিত নয়, কেননা আজকে যা মনে হতে পারে অসম্ভব, আগামীতে সেটাই হয়ে যাবে সুসম্ভব। জুলভার্ন যে সময়ে ডুবোজাহাজ অথবা উড়োজাহাজ-এর কথা কল্পনা করেছিলেন, তখন তা ছিল নিতান্তই কল্পকাহিনী, যা আজ নিরেট বাস্তব। কেনেডী বা জুলভার্ন একা অথবা নিজে যদিও তাঁদের সেই স্বপ্নগুলো বাস্তবায়িত করেন নি, কিন্তু হয় তাঁরা তাঁদের স্বপ্ন বাস্তবায়নে নেতৃত্ব দিয়েছেন নতুবা সম্ভাবনার দ্বার উন্মুক্ত করেছেন। তবে অনেক উদাহরণই দেখা সম্ভব যেখানে স্বপ্ন দর্শনকারী নিজেই ছিলেন তাঁর স্বপ্নের বাস্তবায়ক। সকল সফল ব্যক্তিত্বই তার উজ্জ্বল দৃষ্টান্ত।

ব্যক্তির স্বপ্ন দেখার প্রবণতা আর ব্যাপকতা অনেকাংশেই নির্ভরশীল তার অভিজ্ঞতা এবং উন্মোচনের (এক্সপেরিয়েন্স এবং এক্সপোজারের) উপর। স্বভাবত:ই প্রশ্ন জাগতে পারে, যাদের অভিজ্ঞতা এবং উন্মোচন সীমিত তাদের পক্ষে কিভাবে লক্ষ্যের ব্যাপকতা বাড়ানো সম্ভব? এখানেই অগ্রজদের জীবনের স্বপ্ন ও গল্পগুলো বিশাল ভূমিকা রাখতে পারে। অভিজ্ঞতার পথে সরাসরি নিজেদের পদচারণা যখনও হয়ে ওঠে নি, তখন অন্যের অভিজ্ঞতাই আলোক বর্তিকা হতে পারে। অন্যের অভিজ্ঞতা আর উন্মোচন

থেকে পাওয়া যেতে পারে পথ আর পাথের দিক নির্দেশনা।

যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের ব্রানডাইজ ইউনিভার্সিটিতে শিক্ষাকালীন সময়ে দেখেছিলাম, প্রায় সপ্তাহান্তেই একজন প্রাক্তন শিক্ষার্থী অথবা সফল ব্যক্তিত্বকে আনা হত অতিথী বক্তা হিসেবে; শনিবার সকালের অনাড়ম্বরিক কফির আসড়ে আমাদের সঙ্গে তাঁদের অভিজ্ঞতা শেয়ার করার জন্য। তাঁদের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে জানা যেত কতদূর যাওয়ার স্বপ্ন দেখা সম্ভব, কি লক্ষ্য নিজেদের জন্য স্থির করা যায়, অভিজ্ঞ লক্ষ্যে পৌঁছানোর পথে কি ধরনের বাঁধা আসতে পারে, কিভাবেই বা সেই বাঁধাসমূহ অতিক্রম করা যায়, এরকম আরও অনেক কিছু। তাঁদের জীবনের অভিজ্ঞতা অনেকের জন্য ছিল চলার পথের পাথর। তাঁদের স্বপ্ন ও গল্পগুলো অনেকের জন্যই হয়েছে ব্যাপক প্রেরণার উৎস।

শিশুরা যখন ক্রমান্বয়ে শৈশব পেরিয়ে কৈশোর, কৈশোর পেরিয়ে তরুণ্য এবং তরুণ্য পেরিয়ে যৌবনের পথে ধাবিত হয়, তখন একদিকে যেমন তারা নিজেরা অভিজ্ঞতা সঞ্চয় করে, অন্যদিকে একই সাথে পারিবারিক, সামাজিক ও শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রে অন্যের অভিজ্ঞতাতে তার উল্লাস ঘটে। অন্যের অভিজ্ঞতা যত বেশী তারা আশ্বস্ত করতে পারে তত বেশী বাড়ে তাদের উপলব্ধি, আর তত বেশী তারা পারে নিজেদের প্রস্তুত করতে জীবনের ঘাত-প্রতিঘাত গুলোকে মোকাবিলা করতে। আর সেজন্যই, প্রস্তুতিকালে অগ্রজদের, বিশেষত: অনুকরণে মনীষীদের, জীবনের স্বপ্ন ও গল্পগুলো হয়ে ওঠে পরিকল্পনা প্রনয়ণের অনিবার্য ও অবিচ্ছেদ্য উপাদান। বোধকরি সেজন্যই 'জীবন সঙ্গীত' নামে তাঁর একটি কবিতায় হেমচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় রচেন, 'মহাজ্ঞানী মহাজন, যে পথে করে গমন, হয়েছেন প্রাতঃস্মরণীয়; সে পথ লক্ষ্য করে, স্বীয় কীর্তি-ধ্বজা ধরে, আমরাও হব বরণীয়।' কি সূচিন্তিত্ত অভিব্যক্তি!

বাস্তবায়নের অনিশ্চয়তার কারণে অবজ্ঞা ও ভাঙ্ছিল্য করে নবীনের উচ্ছাস ভরা স্বপ্নগুলোকে দিবা-স্বপ্ন আখ্যায়িত করার যৌক্তিকতা নেই। কেননা, প্রতিটি আবিষ্কার, উদ্ভাবন বা সাফল্যের পেছনে শুধু অপরিমিত অধ্যবসায়ই থাকে না, শুরুতেই থাকে অভাবিত একটি সুউচ্চ স্বপ্ন; থাকে ভিন্নভাবে চিন্তা করার স্পৃহা, থাকে উদ্ভাবনের সংকল্প, থাকে অপরিচিত পথে চলার সাহস, থাকে অসম্ভব জিনিস আবিষ্কারের নেশা এবং থাকে সমস্যাকে জয় করে সফল

হবার দৃঢ়তা। দৃষ্টান্তমূলক সফলতা এবং অবদানের জন্য এ সকল মহানুভবের দ্বারা নবীনদের চালিত হতে হয় সবসময়।

লক্ষণীয় যে, উন্নত দেশের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাফল্যের এবং অবদানের হার অনুন্নত বা স্বল্পোন্নত দেশের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাফল্যের এবং অবদানের হার থেকে বেশী। একই ভাবে, কোন একটি দেশের উন্নত এলাকার শিক্ষার্থীদের এসব হার অনুন্নত বা স্বল্পোন্নত এলাকার শিক্ষার্থীদের হার থেকে বেশী। এ শুধুই শিক্ষার মানের পার্থক্যের জন্য নয়, বরং তথ্য প্রাপ্তির সহজলভ্যতা এর একটি অন্যতম কারণ। আর জীবনের গল্পগুলো তো তথ্যের একটি অন্যতম উৎস। সাফল্যের যত বেশী গল্প শোনানো যাবে তরুণ প্রজন্মকে, তত বেশী তাদের উদ্বুদ্ধ করা যাবে সাফল্যের চেতনায়। এই বিষয়ে অবদান রাখতে পারেন বয়জের্গারই; হতে পারেন তারা অভিভাবক, শিক্ষক অথবা অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি বা ব্যক্তিবর্গ এবং সামষ্টিকভাবে এই দ্বায়িত্ব থেকে যায় তাঁদেরই উপর। শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলোও এ ব্যাপারে অগ্রণী ভূমিকা পালন করতে পারে।

একটা প্রশ্ন এখনও থেকেই গেল, আর তা হলো, জীবনের স্বপ্ন ও গল্পগুলো কি হবে শুধুই সাফল্যের গল্প? নিঃসন্দেহে সাফল্য সকলকে অনুপ্রাণিত করে, কিন্তু ব্যর্থতার গল্পগুলো কি একেবারেই ভূমিকাহীন, অপ্রয়োজনীয়? নাকি সেগুলো ঋণাত্মক ভূমিকা পালন করে? একেবারেই তা নয়! ব্যর্থতার গল্পের মাঝেও আছে প্রেরণার উৎস। এ গল্পগুলো শেখায় এড়িয়ে চলার বিষয়গুলো। কি এড়িয়ে চললে ব্যর্থতা এড়িয়ে চলা সম্ভব, তা জানাতো সাফল্যের পথেই আরও এক ধাপ এগিয়ে চলা। এ. পি. জে. আব্দুল কালামের উদ্ধৃতি দিয়ে শুরু করেছিলাম, তাঁর উদ্ধৃতি দিয়েই শেষ করতে চাই। তিনি এও বলেছিলেন, "... ব্যর্থতার গল্পগুলোও পড়ো, তাতে সাফল্য অর্জনের জন্য কিছু পাথর পেয়ে যাবে!"

2015 Reunion in New York City



Silk roads

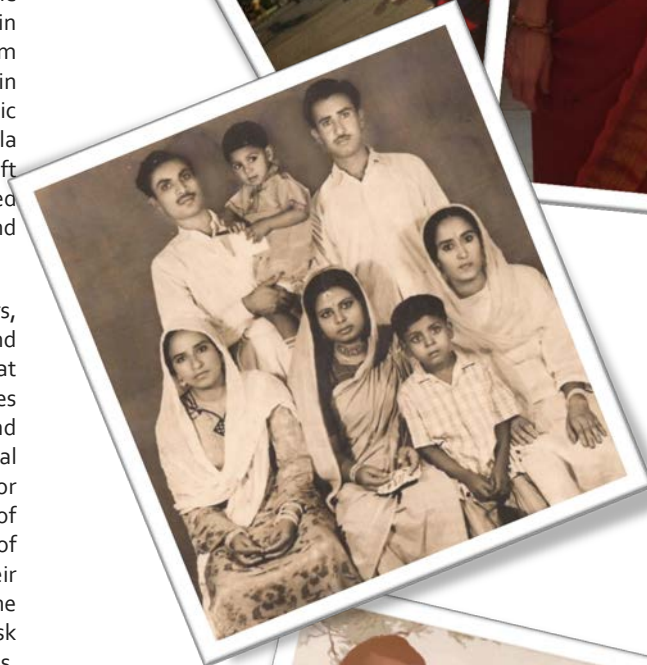
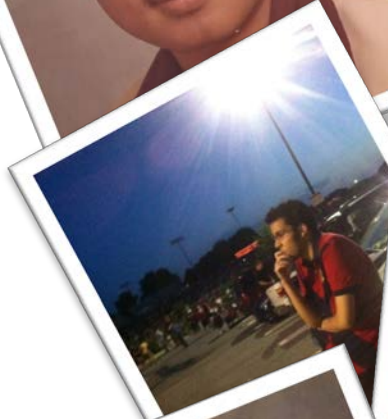
ENTREPRENEUR

KHALID HOUSE

EIGHT

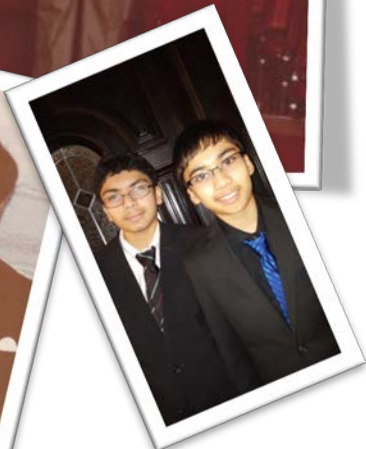
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ATAUL M. AHMED (RAJA)



I was hoping for a dozen, but I received three times that in submissions. One of the pleasures of an editor is to read and understand his authors through their work. You must agree that what a collective journey it has been with each and every one who gave us an opportunity to shed a light in their circuitous and wondrous routes from the pastoral setting of a boarding school in an unknown part of the world to such exotic locations as the university campus in Kuala Lumpur, the white desert in Halifax, the swift flowing river in Saskatoon, the consecrated land of Lincoln's Gettysburg and the Grand Courtyard of Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

We have students, doctors, engineers, generals, diplomats, entrepreneurs and adventurers in our list. I sincerely hope that each and every one who spent a few minutes browsing through this edition will find inspiration, humor, hope and practical advices that are certainly neither free nor cheap. It has taken the authors a lifetime of struggle and immeasurable number of painstaking steps. Although some at their start and others nearly at the end of the marathon, nonetheless it is not an easy task to compile the brief snapshots of their lives. We are indeed fortunate to be able to learn from them.



Parting Shot

EDITOR

KHALID HOUSE

EIGHT

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ATAUL M. AHMED (RAJA)

It has been fifty years, since the gates opened to those fresh young cadets to be minted into shiny metals worthy of the nation. The edifices on the river bank have seen hopes and aspirations, disciplines and resolve and despair and profound sadness. It has weathered storms and seen the fires of a liberation war. It has sacrificed its brightest and best and wore emblems of a warrior with bullet ridden walls.

During this half century, it produced the nation's best. It fulfilled its legacy, its obligations and more. And it looks to the next fifty years with maturity and grace.

We don't know, what it has in its future. Judging from the past, we can be certain that we will not be disappointed. The best is still ahead of us.

This year, we will gather for a celebration to mark our friendship, our achievements and losses. We will laugh and cry with tears down our cheeks. We will remember those who are with us and more those who are not. This year we will look back only to mark the beginning. Won't you join us in this festivity.

orcaUSA
old friends

