



17TH ANNIVERSARY

SABCA

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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BANGLA

1428

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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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Editor



Md. Azmul Hoq Pappu
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Mahbub Siraz Tuhin
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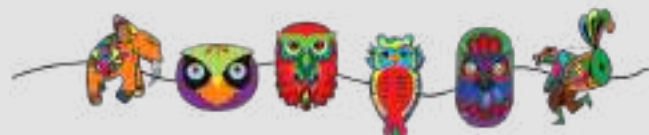


Zeenat Jahan

Lead Designer



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"Prayers and fond memories are what we have to remember our dearly departed. Our most heartfelt condolences."

শুভ নববর্ষ ১৪২৮

Happy Bangla New Year 1428



Message From Chief Editor

Showvonick Datta

I am honoured and privileged to be appointed chief editor for Bengali New Year 1428 Magazine, an annual publication that presents SABCA's yearly activities. This year's magazine is more significant being the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh Independence.

I am thankful to all writers for their contributions, which include poetry, an article giving career advice, to help and inspire people in post Covid job market, and an inspirational account on female education regarding Begum Rokeya. This magazine also includes an extensive pictorial report showing how community members celebrating cultural and traditional activities organized by SABCA. My thanks go to all sponsors who make this publication possible and for the encouraging

messages from dignitaries and community leaders. Thanks also to the editorial board, the graphic design team, and all photographers. Last but not least, a very special thanks to SABCA Chairperson, Md. Asaduzzaman for his relentless efforts that have been indispensable for this magazine.

Happy Bengali New year 1428. Shuva Nababarsha 1428. April 2021



Message From Chairperson

Md. Asaduzzaman

The South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) has been working to help and support Bangladeshi Community in Adelaide since its inception in 2004. The SABCA has operated for 17 years with over 300 registered members and hundreds of volunteers. It is currently the biggest community organization among the Bangladeshi community in South Australia and more than a culturally-based organization. The SABCA is involved in many other community-focused activities such as, fund raising to support noble cause, creating awareness against domestic violence, organizing career workshop, funeral assistance, job support and many more.

The SABCA was established to develop awareness of the Bangladeshi culture, language, tradition and lifestyle among our Australian friends as well as neighbours and to build a harmonious multicultural Australian society. The organization also assists newcomers in South Australia by providing information and through other means. The SABCA is the only community association that currently operates two

branches of the Bangladeshi Community School (BCS) - the first campus located in Goodwood and the second campus at Elizabeth to educate children of Bangladeshi origin and others who are interested in Bangladeshi culture and language.

During the time of COVID-19 pandemic, the SABCA stood by the community and ran many community support projects such as, providing food voucher to the people in need, supplied food boxes with essential supplies, provided mental and career support and so on.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh (Golden Jubilee). We are indebted to the freedom fighters who valiantly fought for our freedom and sovereign nation. To celebrate this significant milestone, the SABCA organized to light up all the iconic architectures around the River Torrens in the colour of Bangladesh National flag, i.e. red and green. It was a historic moment for the Bangladeshi community in South Australia when 6 iconic buildings lit up in red and green to honour the 50th anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh. Special thanks to Department of Premier & Cabinet, Department of Transport & Infrastructure, Adelaide City Council and all other relevant authorities; without their support our dream would not become true.

We gratefully acknowledge all of our predecessors for their sacrifice and contributions. Without them, we would neither be who we are today nor be able to teach the next generation about our splendid culture and heritage. This is the fifth Annual Magazine and I offer my special thanks to the editorial board members- Chief Editor Showvonick Datta and special guest editor Mahub Siraz Tuhin for their tireless efforts. My special thanks to Reshan, the creative person for graphics designing of the Annual Magazine. I extend my gratitude to honourable Message Givers, photographers and article writers. My distinctive thanks and gratitude to Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal, BCS and Mohammad Azmul Hoq Pappu, Vice Principal, BCS, teachers, school committee members, parents and students.

We gratefully acknowledge Hon. Steven Marshall MP, Premier of South Australia and Hon. Jing Lee, MLC Assistant Minister to the Primer for their support and grants to the SABCA Bengali New Year Celebration 2021. Special thanks to our proud title sponsor Mayland Homes. I am grateful to all sponsors, advertisers and personal donors for their kind contributions. Without their kind support any event would not happen. Our heartiest thanks go to the volunteers for sacrificing their personal and professional life for SABCA. Many thanks to the Bangladeshi Community Members in Adelaide for their love and continuous support to SABCA - "Shuvo Nababorsho 1428"



Message From His Excellency
The Honourable **Hieu Van Le AC** For The
South Australian Bangladeshi
Community Association



His Excellency the Honourable **Hieu Van Le AC**
Governor of South Australia

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association on reaching its 17th anniversary in 2021. With the cancellation of the 2020 event due to COVID-19, it is fantastic to see a grand celebration planned for this year. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Association for supporting its members through the many difficulties of the past year, posed by the pandemic. From distributing and translating key information, to other activities, the Association rose to the challenge of caring for its community. Since 2004, the Association has made a tremendous positive contribution to our State by sharing Bangladeshi culture, language, traditions and lifestyle with South Australians. I thank the Association, and the South Australian Bangladeshi community, for promoting the values of cultural diversity in our society. I wish every member of the Bangladeshi community all the very best for the future.



A Message From The Premier Of
South Australia The Honourable
Steven Marshall, MP



The Honourable **Steven Marshall**,
MP Premier Of South Australia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Marshall'.

It is with great pleasure on behalf of the Government of South Australia, that I send my best wishes to the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) in welcoming the Bengali New Year.

SABCA has been an integral part of the South Australian Bangladeshi community and has contributed to our diverse multicultural community by sharing and promoting Bangladeshi customs and traditions for the last 17 years.

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on many communities throughout our State. I commend the efforts of SABCA in supporting your members over the height of the COVID 19 pandemic and keeping your community safe and strong.

We are indeed very fortunate to live in a State with such a strong sense of community spirit, particularly during these challenging times. This is particularly evident amongst our multicultural communities, such as SABCA who have shown a great deal of commitment and dedication to members of the Bangladeshi community during these times.

The New Year conjures a sense of hope for new beginnings and new opportunities. With this in mind, I wish SABCA and all members of the South Australian Bangladeshi community a prosperous Bangla New Year!



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A Message of Congratulations
to the South Australian Bangladeshi
Community Association of South Australia



The Honourable **Jing Lee MLC**
Assistant Minister to The Premier
Member of Parliament
in the Legislative Council

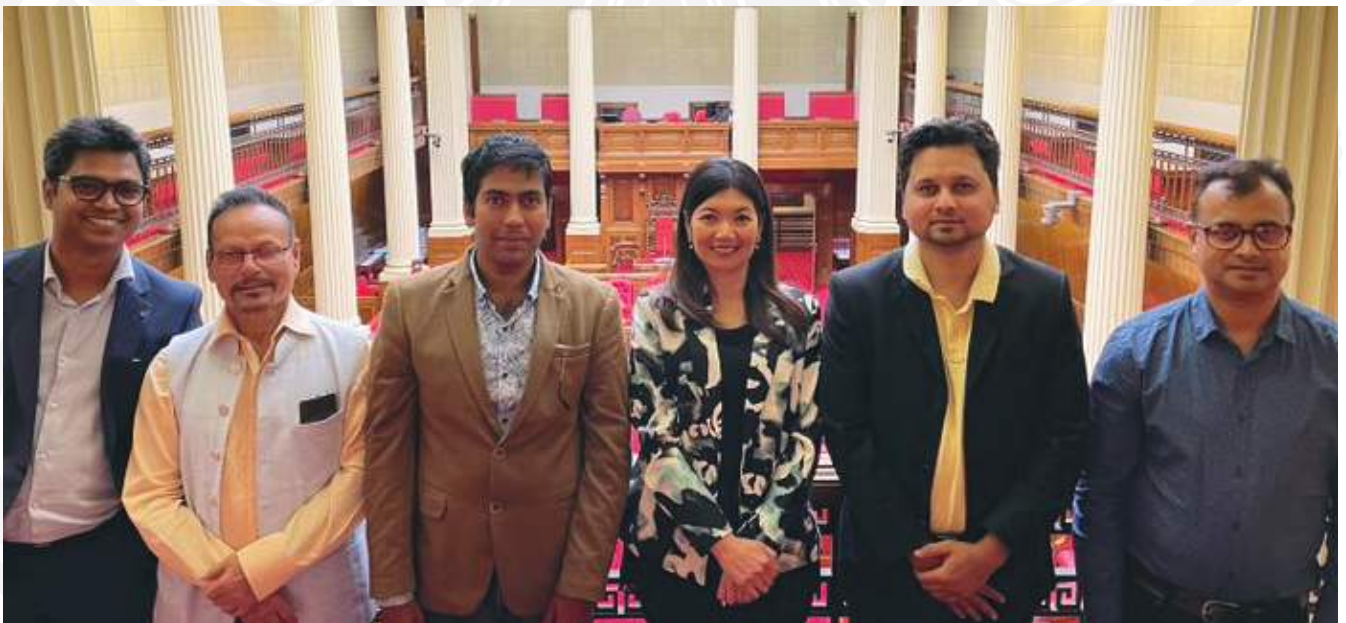
Thank you to the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) for your hard work and dedication serving the Bangladeshi community throughout a very challenging year in 2020.

We are fortunate to have a strong partnership between the South Australian community and our State Government. I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved as a community to keep everyone safe and united during the unprecedented COVID-19 Pandemic.

2021 is looking very promising to be a better year and it's important that we continue to celebrate significant festivals, traditions, and events such as Pohela Baishak. I take this opportunity to acknowledge SABCA for your wonderful contributions and the positive impact you have made to South Australia through the celebration of Bengali culture and language as well as celebrating your unique customs and traditions with the broader South Australian community.

It's my pleasure to join with the Premier, the Hon. Steven Marshall, MP and the Government of South Australia, to wish everyone a very happy and enjoyable Pohela Baishak! May you, your family and the Bangladeshi community enjoy good health and a fresh new beginning as you celebrate a prosperous Bengali New year 1428!

SABCA Executive Council Committee met Honourable Jing Lee, MLC in February 24, 2021



From Left to Right:

Showvonick Datta, Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury Md. Asaduzzaman,
Hon. Jing Lee, MLC, Md. Russel, and Md. Anwar





HIGH COMMISSION FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
CANBERRA



১ এপ্রিল ২০২১

শুভেচ্ছা বাণী

বাংলা নববর্ষ আমাদের সামাজিক জীবনে অন্যতম প্রধান উৎসব হয়ে উঠেছে। সারা পৃথিবীতে যত বাংলা ভাষাভাষী রয়েছে, ধর্ম, বর্ণ, সামাজিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে একই প্রাঙ্গণে সমবেত হয় এ দিবস উদযাপনের জন্য।

বাংলাদেশ প্রাকৃতিক বৈচিত্র্য এবং সাম্প্রদায়িক সম্প্রীতির দেশ। সামাজিক সম্প্রীতি, সরকারের গঠনমূলক ও উচ্চাভিলাষী নীতির মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে সকল আর্থ-সামাজিক খাতে প্রশংসনীয় অগ্রগতি করেছে। ২০৪১ সালের মধ্যে একটি উন্নত দেশের কাতারে এগিয়ে যাওয়ার প্রক্রিয়ায় প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশীদের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করা প্রয়োজন। আমি আশা করব অস্ট্রেলিয়ার বাংলাদেশী কমিউনিটি আমাদের মাতৃভূমির সাথে সংযোগ বজায় রেখে এবং জ্ঞান স্থানান্তরের মাধ্যমে আমাদের উন্নয়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় অবদান রাখবে।

আমরা এ বছর উদযাপন করছি আমাদের মহান স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণ জয়ন্তী। আমি জেনে অত্যন্ত আনন্দিত যে, সাউথ অস্ট্রেলিয়ায় বসবাসরত প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশীদের সর্ব বৃহৎ সংগঠন South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) এবারের নববর্ষকে স্মরণীয় করে রাখার জন্য একটি স্মারক প্রকাশ করতে যাচ্ছে। আমি আশা করি এই প্রকাশনার মাধ্যমে অস্ট্রেলিয়া বসবাসরত আমাদের আগামী প্রজন্ম বাংলা ভাষার সৌন্দর্য ও সংস্কৃতির গভীরতা উপলব্ধি করতে সক্ষম হবে। তারা বাংলায় বলতে, পড়তে ও লিখতে আগ্রহী হবে। এর মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের প্রতি ভালবাসা প্রগাঢ় হবে।

আমি সাউথ অস্ট্রেলিয়া বসবাসরত প্রবাসী সকল বাংলাদেশীদেরকে আমার আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন জ্ঞাপন করছি। আমি এই প্রকাশনার সাথে জড়িত সকলকে ধন্যবাদ জানাচ্ছি এবং এর সফলতা কামনা করছি।

শুভ নববর্ষ।


(মোঃ সুফিউর রহমান)

Message from the
South Australian Labor Leader
Peter Malinauskas MP



Peter Malinauskas MP
South Australian Labor Leader

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Malinauskas'.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association on reaching its 17th anniversary in 2021. With the cancellation of the 2020 event due to COVID-19, it is fantastic to see a grand celebration planned for this year. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Association for supporting its members through the many difficulties of the past year, posed by the pandemic. From distributing and translating key information, to other activities, the Association rose to the challenge of caring for its community. Since 2004, the Association has made a tremendous positive contribution to our State by sharing Bangladeshi culture, language, traditions and lifestyle with South Australians. I thank the Association, and the South Australian Bangladeshi community, for promoting the values of cultural diversity in our society. I wish every member of the Bangladeshi community all the very best for the future.



Michael Coxon
Mayor City of West Torrens



On behalf of the City of West Torrens, I would like to congratulate the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) on their 17th anniversary. May I also express my gratitude for their services to not only our local Bangladeshi Community but also top our wider community in West Torrens. The Charter of SABCA is to assist migrants with establishing their new lives in South Australia and to overcome isolation and stress by providing critical support structures designed to increase social interaction that is specially targeted to the women, children, and elderly population in the Community. In conclusion, may I also wish all in SABCA a wonderful Bangla New Year Celebration and thank you for your 17 years of service in West Torrens.





This year, the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh Independence, the SABCA Executive Council has decided to celebrate the occasion with a number of community events. Like everyone else the SABCA's regular activities had to be adjusted due to the current pandemic. The SABCA Committee of 2019-20 responded to this circumstance by organizing a donation to international students stranded in Australia with few resources. Due to Covid-19 the SABCA had to postpone major events like Pohela Boishakh celebration in 2020, which in the past were also a key fund raising activities. As a result newly elected SABCA EC 2020-21 had to start with a historically low funding base and planning activities still mindful of pandemic restrictions. SABCA is the largest Bangladeshi community organization of people in the State. Its core responsibilities include to promote and celebrate Bangladeshi culture and vents and historic occasions, particularly among younger generations, providing community services and promoting harmony and understanding through a respect for diversity. Numerous activities for the current EC committee were related to the golden jubilee celebrations for 50 years of Bangladesh Independence which we highlight on this page with a view from an article by Dr Fahmida Khatun.

The Independence Day of Bangladesh on 26 March commemorates the country's declaration of independence from Pakistan in 1971. The independence was gained through a nine-month guerilla war against the Pakistan Army which resulted in the death of about 3 million people.

Dr Fahmida Khatun, executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (The Daily Star, March 2021) described Bangladesh's golden jubilee in this way:

"A lot of blood, sweat and tears have gone into Bangladesh's independence and victory. The sacrifice of our freedom fighters can only be meaningful if the tangible change in the lives, particularly of the poorest of common citizens, happens. This requires an inclusive democratic and development process. Participation of the broader section of the population in the economic and political process can make the 50 years of economic progress even more meaningful."

As Bangladeshi living abroad, we take interest in the growth and prosperity of Bangladesh and promoting awareness about the country. As general secretary of SABCA, in the boxed section on this page I summarise the activities and achievements of the SABCA executive committee of 2020 -21 based on our stated goals.

SABCA 2020 -21 activities and achievements

- 1. Celebrating Nationally significant days**
 - a. Victory day celebration 16th December**
 - b. International Mother Language day celebration 21st February**
 - c. Celebrating 26th March**
 - d. Grand celebration of 50th anniversary of independence**
- 2. Organizing traditional Cultural events**
 - a. Annual Picnic**
 - b. Pohela Falgun**
 - c. Pohela Boishakh**
- 3. Community engagement- stronger bonding among Bangladeshi community members**
 - a. Bangladesh High Commission Consular Camp**
 - b. Art competition and exhibition on Bangabondhu**
 - c. Information session about wage earners bonds**
- 4. Supporting and empowering the Bangladeshi community**
 - a. Awareness against domestic violence**
 - b. Funeral fund and donation**
- 5. SABCA continuation:**
 - a. Develop SABCA Website**
 - b. Dedicated email for SABCA EC**

Five key activities in SABCA's 20-21 program

1. Celebrating nationally significant days: Activities where we expected big gatherings required significant modifications due to Covid-19 restrictions that required logistical considerations such as holding events at two locations to encourage participation: one for southern suburbs located in the Goodwood Primary School, and the other for northern suburbs at BCS School, Elizabeth.

a. SABCA Bijoy Dibosh (Victory day celebration) for 16th December: On 20th December 2020, SABCA organized Bijoy Dibosh program at Goodwood Primary School. It was a big event considering the Covid-19 restrictions that included a discussion, children's performances and cultural activities.

b. International Mother Language day celebration 21st February: Another great event organized at the Goodwood Primary School with children's performances followed by a cultural program. School students participated in a quiz competition about Bangladesh, judged by distinguished advisers. The program was thoroughly enjoyed by all members.

c. Celebrating Independence day on 26 March: This is the 50th year of Bangladesh independence and SABCA organized a grand celebration at both schools on 28th March 2021 with an art competition and quiz competition.

d. Grand celebration of 50th anniversary of Independence: After long negotiation and lengthy communication, SABCA got permission to light Adelaide's Iconic Riverbank Footbridge in green and red colours on 29 March 2021. It was a great moment for all Bangladeshis living in South Australia to see the iconic bridge and Adelaide Convention Centre illuminated in acknowledgement of Bangladesh Independence for the first time. Adelaide Town Hall was similarly illuminated. More than 200 people got together and sang the National Anthem followed by traditional foods and snacks.

2. Organizing traditional Cultural events: Besides celebrating the nationally significant days, SABCA organized numerous traditional activities followed by Bangladeshi people for ages around the world.

a. Pohela Falgun (Spring Festival): On 14th February, SABCA organized a grand spring festival at BCS Community School, Elizabeth. This year's program was organized on Sunday, which was also Valentine's day. Colours of Bangladeshi Spring along with that of love were harmonious during the celebration. More than 200 people participated at the event which included dinner.

b. Annual Picnic on 13 March 2021: SABCA again organized an annual picnic for Bangladeshi community members to build up and maintain cohesion and harmony. This year at Bonython Park more than 150 people enjoyed a full day of fun that included sports, raffles, games and other activities. Among the participants were journalists and writers supportive of the event and its aims.

c. Pohela Boishakh: With fewer Covid-19 restrictions, SABCA expects the Pohela Baishakh on 10 April at Woodville Community Hall to be the biggest yet given the celebration of 50 years of Bangladesh Independence.



3. Community engagement: SABCA ensured a number of activities despite the Covid-19 restrictions to help local Bangladeshi people using Social Media to communicate these activities.

a) **Bangladesh High Commission Camp:** Similar to previous years, SABCA and Bangladesh High Commission, Australia jointly organised a two-day camp to provide consular support to the Bangladeshi community members. Around 300 people directly benefited from this program that was strategically organized in two different locations; on 7 November 2020 at Beefacres Community Hall at Windsor Garden, and on 8 November 2020 at Trinity Alberton Uniting Church.

b) **Art competition and exhibition:** Bangladeshi community school children participated in an art and quiz competitions. Representative of Bangladesh High Commission presented the crest to students on 8 November 2021 at BCS Community School, Elizabeth. Later during the program, SABCA organized a community meeting with the Bangladesh High Commission Team, that proved informative with a highly interactive question and answer session.

c) **Information session about wage earners bonds:** First Secretary of Bangladesh High Commissioner, Mr Salahuddin presented a seminar about the benefits of Wage Earners Bond among the Bangladeshi people living overseas at Goodwood Primary School on 19 January 2021.

4. Supporting and empowering Bangladeshi Community: SABCA was and is involved in various activities to help and protect the vulnerable community by promoting social awareness program.

a) **Awareness against domestic violence:** SABCA continues to promote awareness against domestic violence and organized a couple of virtual sessions this year against domestic violence.

b) **SABCA Funeral Fund:** This is a great initiative taken by SABCA back in 2018 and contributes to people in need. This year when a 27-year-old student from Bangladesh, was hit by a car in the Sydney suburb of Rockdale in September 2020, SABCA contributed directly to the family.

5. SABCA commitments:

a) **Develop SABCA Website:** SABCA activities were put on hold during the Covid 19 pandemic in early 2020 which hampered the renewal of the SABCA Domain and currently an interactive website is in the process.

b) **Dedicated email:** We have taken the initiative for continuous SABCA activities and used dedicated email for SABCA EC. It is intended that all SABCA EC Member will benefit from the use of email and social media to coordinate and communicate SABCA activities.

My Gratitude

Finally, I would like to thank all my EC colleagues, SABCA members, members of the Bangladeshi Community School (BCS) Management, Committee members and BCS teachers, senior members of our society, members of the Advisory Committee, Magazine Editorial Committee and most importantly sponsors and personal donors for their continuous support. It would have been impossible to carry out so many successful programs without their support and active participation. Thanks to Md Asaduzzman, Chairperson SABCA for organizing and coordinating activities and inspiring every EC Members. A special thanks to Mr Mahbub Shiraz Tuhin for his valuable guidance and support for this magazine. Thanks to our Cultural Affairs Secretary Mrs Rima Saha and her teams for accepting the big responsibilities in organising events. I am also grateful to honourable and distinguished dignitaries for their supportive messages, article writers, and to the editorial board. My heartiest thanks go to volunteers for sacrificing their personal and professional time for SABCA. Congratulations to Bangladeshi Community in South Australia for celebrating the 17th anniversary of SABCA. SABCA is grateful to Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal, BCS, Teachers, School Committee Members, Parents and Students and Mr Azmul Hoq Pappu for providing outstanding logistical support at events. I would feel guilty if I did not mention all the kids who worked so hard throughout the year performing at cultural events. They were and remain a true inspiration for our community.



Bangladesh High Commission Campaign





Our Predecessors



2019-2020

Mr. Mohammad Tarik—Chairperson
 Mr. Md Asaduzzaman - Vice Chairperson
 Mr. Anis Ahmed - General Secretary
 Mr. Mohammad Azmul Hoq - Assistant General Secretary
 AKM Tazammol Hossain - Finance Secretary
 Sahadat Hossain - Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Mohammad Anwar Hossain - Assistant Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Md Ibrahim Imtiaz - Public Relations Secretary
 Anwar Hossen - Community Engagement & Student Affairs Secretary
 Tanzim Samad Choudhury - Executive Member
 Anik Sikder - Executive Member

2018-2019

Mahbub Siraz Tuhin—Chairperson
 Dr. Nasir Uddin Rumon-Vice Chairperson
 Md. Asaduzzama-General Secretary
 Mohammad Ibrahim-Assistant General Secretary
 Mohammad Towhidul Islam-Finance Secretary
 Mohammad Tarik-Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Tamanna Rumi-Assistant Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Tanzim S. Choudhury-Public Relations Secretary
 Mohammad Hannan-Community Engagement & Student Affairs Secretary
 Anik Sikder-Executive Member
 Azmul Hoq Pappu-Executive Member

2017-2018

Abdul Mannan-Chairperson
 Anik Sikder-Vice Chairperson
 Mohammad Tarik-General Secretary
 Nazmus Sadat-Assistant General Secretary
 Mohammad Towhidul Islam-Finance Secretary
 Maherina Z Sayeem-Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Riffat Nazneen-Assistant Cultural Affairs Secretary
 A K M Tazammol Hossain-Public Relations Secretary
 Md.Asaduzzaman-Student Affairs Secretary
 Mahbub Siraz Tuhin-Executive Member
 Dr.Nasir Uddin Rumon-Executive Member

2016-2017

Kh.Khayrul Hoque - Chairperson(Jul,16-March,17)
 Abdul Mannan- Chairperson(March,17-June,17)
 Anik Sikder-Vice Chairperson
 Mohammad Tarik-General Secretary
 Dr.Al Nahian Riyadh-Finance Secretary
 Abu Touhid Alam-Cultural Secretary
 Riffat Nazneen- Assistant Cultural Secretary
 Md.Asaduzzaman-Public Relations Secretary
 Munira Hossain Rakhi-Student Affairs Secretary
 A.K.M.Tazammol Hossain-Executive Members
 Kazi Tanzeeb Shahid- Executive Members

2015-2016

Dr N M Nizamul Islam-Chairperson
 Mahbub Siraz Tuhin-Vice Chairperson
 Mostofa M Sayeem-General Secretary
 Shafiqul Islam Shumon-Assistant General Secretary
 Salima Akhter-Finance Secretary
 Md Shahadat Hossain Liton-Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Nawshaba Hussain-Assistant Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Dr Nasir Uddin Rumon-Public Relations Secretary
 Mohammad Ferdous Mehbub-Student Affairs Secretary
 Syed Diderul Alam-Executive Member
 Anik Sikder-Executive Member

2013-2014

DrNMNizamul Islam—Chairperson
 EngrKamalAhamed—ViceChairperson
 Md. Abdul Mannan—General Secretary
 MostofaMonowarSayeem—AssistantGeneral Secretary
 AbuTouhidAlam—Finance Secretary
 Nusrat Jahan Smrity—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 DrTuhinSultana—Assistant CulturalAffairs Secretary
 AhasanulHoqueDipu—Public Relations Secretary
 ShahdatHossain—StudentAffairsSecretary
 DrAlauddinTalukder—ExecutiveMembe
 AaturRahman—ExecutiveMember

2014-2015

Dr Abu Siddique Miah—Chairperson
 Md Abdul Mannan-Vice Chairperson
 Dr Md Mahmudur Rahman-General Secretary
 Shafiqul Islam Sumon-Assistant General Secretary
 Nazia Zerim Hossain-Finance Secretary
 Abu Touhid Alam (Jun '14 Sep '14) -Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Farhana Mahmud-Assistant Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Maherina Z Sayeem-Public Relations Secretary
 Mohammad Ferdous Mahbub-Student Affairs Secretary
 Wasim Saeed-Executive Member
 Aatur Rohman-Executive Member

2012-2013

DrMahfuzAziz—Chairperson
 DrNMNizamul Islam—ViceChairperson
 MasumMithu—GeneralSecretary
 SakhwatRashed—AssistantGeneral Secretary
 Md Abdul Mannan—FinanceSecretary
 KhurshidaShabnam—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 Nusrat Jahan Smrity—AssistantCulturalAffairsSecretary
 AhasanulHoqueDipu—Public Relations Secretary
 AbuTahidAlam—StudentAffairsSecretary
 FaizaSahabuddin—ExecutiveMember
 Mostofa M Sayeem—ExecutiveMember

2011-2012

Dr. Naquibul Islam-Chairperson
 Dr. Mohammad Ahmedullah-Vice Chairperson
 Engr. Kamal Ahamed-General Secretary
 Abdul Mannan-Finance Secretary
 Mrs. Khurshida Shabnam-Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Ziaul Khan (Jewel) -Public Relations Secretary
 Iffat Ara-Student Affairs Secretary
 SKazi Roni-Assistant General Secretary
 Mahabub Alam-Executive Member
 Iffat Jarin Khan-Executive Member
 Nusrat Jahan Smrity-Assistant Cultural Secretary

2010-2011

Md. Rashidul Haque-Chairperson
 Dr Naquibul Islam-Vice Chairperson
 Dr Mahamudur Hassan-General Secretary
 Alamgir Hussain-Finance Secretary
 Sayeeda Sultana Shathi-Cultural Affairs Secretary
 Imtiaz Bahar Choudhury-Public Relations Secretary
 Md Masudur Rahman-Student Affairs Secretary

2009-2010

KaziSakhawatHossain—Chairperson
 DrMahfuzAziz—ViceChairperson
 M.M.NaushedAmeen—General Secretary
 AlamgirHussain—FinanceSecretary
 AhsanHabib—PublicRelations Secretary
 HabiburRahaman—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 MasudurRahman—StudentAffairsSecretary
 Md MasudurRahman—Student Affairs Secretary

2008-2009

MdRashidulHaque—Chairperson
 KaziSakhawatHossain—ViceChairperson
 MaushadAmeen—GeneralSecretary
 Shamim Joarder—FinanceSecretary
 AnisAhmed—Public RelationsSecretary
 Sayeeda SultanaShathi—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 MMHossain—Student AffairsSecretary

2007-2008

Md.RashidulHaque—Chairperson
 KabirAhmed—ViceChairperson
 NayamatUllah—General Secretary
 KaziShakawatHossain—FinanceSecretary
 Dr.ArifurRahmanMajumder—Public RelationsSecretary
 Sayeeda SultanaShathi—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 AngshuRahman—StudentAffairsSecretary

2006-2007

Dr Abul Hossain—Chairperson
 KabirAhmed—ViceChairperson
 AlamgirHossain—GeneralSecretary
 Shamin Joarder—FinanceSecretary
 AziMiahBradbury—Public Relations Secretary
 SabbirGaffar—CulturalAffairsSecretary
 NayamotUllah—Student Affairs Secretary

2005-2006

DrAbulHossain—Chairperson
 DrMahfuzAziz—ViceChairperson
 KhandakerAzad—GeneralSecretary
 RanjitKumarDas—Finance Secretary
 Azi MiahBradbury—Public Relations Secretary
 NaushadAmeen—CulturalAffairs Secretary
 Shamim Joarder—Student Affairs Secretary

2004-2005

Dr Abul Hossain—Chairperson
 Dr MahfuzAziz—Vice Chairperson
 Khandaker Azad—GeneralSecretary
 DrIrfekhar Ahmed—Finance Secretary
 M AGaffar—FinanceSecretary
 Kazi Sakhwat Hossain—Public Relations Secretary
 Marufa Hossneara Gaffar—Cultural Affairs Secretary



SABCA

Chairperson

2004-2019



Dr Abul Hossain



Md Rashidul
Haque



Kazi Sakhawat
Hossain



Dr. Naquibul
Islam



Dr. Mahfuz Aziz



Dr N M Nizamul
Islam



Dr. Abu Siddique
Miah



Kh. Khayrul
Hoque



Abdul Mannan



Mahbub Siraz Tuhin



Mohammad Tarik



Message from Principal, BCS Bangladeshi Community School(BCS)

I offer my heartiest congratulations to the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) on its 17th anniversary. I would like to extend my congratulations to Bangladesh and all Bangladeshi people around the world on the country's 50th year of independence. The SABCA has two branches of Bangladesh Community Schools (BCS) in Adelaide; operating at Goodwood Primary School to accommodate our students for South, and BCS Community School at Elizabeth to accommodate our students for families living in the northern suburbs. The school is open for children born and raised here as well as for newcomers.

The BCS is governed and run by Non-Government Schools Unit of Department of Education and Child Development and by Ethnic School Association, South Australia. The core objectives of this school are to retain language, tradition, culture, and heritage. The BCS operates with dedicated voluntary teachers, vice principal and principal who are actively involved in teaching language and cultural activities such as music, recitation, drawing, dance to our young generations living here. I am proud to say that all teachers at BCS have required accreditation and training.

Apart from learning the Bangladeshi language, culture, and tradition in an overseas land, our BCS students have participated in number of events this year which were organized by the BCS and the SABCA. They have done a magnificent job with outstanding performance on Bijoy Dibosh, Pohela Falgun, International Mother Language Day, and Independence Day. I am proud of their performance and offer my heartfelt thanks to all parents for their continuous support to the BCS. I am delighted to have such a capable team at BCS and thankful to all teachers and Vice Principal Azmul Hoq Pappu for their continuous support. Last but not least, my heartfelt thanks for SABCA's 17th Anniversary magazine and Shuva Nababarsha 1428.

Kind Regards,
Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury, Principal, Bangladeshi Community School (BCS) March 2021.

FOR ADMISSION

<https://enrolments.esasa.asn.au/?schoolid=e168>



Bangladeshi Community School(BCS)

Principal : Mr. Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury

Vice Principle : Mr. Azmul Hoq Pappu

Name of School Teachers :

North Campus

Tanbira Nur

Jannatul Ferdous

Hasina Rahman

Suprity Das gupta

South Campus

Farhana mahmud

Sakila Benazir

Ayesha Siddika

Rahnuma Hadi



SABCA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2020-21



Md Asaduzzaman
Chairperson



Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury
Vice Chairperson



Showvonick Datta
General Secretary



Mohammad Alam Russell
Assistant General
Secretary



Md Matiur Rahman
Finance Secretary



Md Hannan
Public Relations Secretary



Rima Saha
Cultural Affairs Secretary



Tanushree Karmakar
Assistant Cultural
Affairs Secretary



Anwar Hossen Jibon
Community Engagement
and Student Affairs Secretary



Abdul Aziz Wahid
Executive Member



Iftekhar Ibnul Bashar
Executive Member

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.

শুভ নব বর্ষ

pohela boishakh

*Best Wishes to the Bangladeshi
Community of South Australia*

**Happy Bengali
New Year
Celebration
2021**



Hon. Jing Lee MLC
Assistant Minister to the Premier



Hon. Steven Marshall MP
Premier of South Australia

BHC Meet the Community 2020





HOW TO LAND YOUR DREAM JOB

Mahbub Siraz,

Employment & Career Consultant, Career Partner Australia

Director, Business Development, Evargo

Former Chairperson & current Advisor, SABCA

(Winner Australia Day Award 2021: Community Service, City of West Torrens)

Having long experience working with migrant job seekers, I have observed most migrants go through tremendous exertions in gaining a position in their chosen occupations and reconcile for something less. New migrants have little or no local understanding of employment and application procedure. They certainly lack effective networks and consistently hit proverbial brick wall when applying for jobs sourced from conventional way. It is obvious when you move to Australia you had a dream to secure a suitable job of your profession with your qualifications and experiences. However, reality is different in the Australian job market. Not only it is hard to get dream job, even getting a casual survival job is tough when you are not on right track. This is the reality of many immigrants. Now, the question is how to win the race? First thing to keep in your mind that you should never lose your confidence. If you are ready to move on, consider below tips from my many years of experience.

YOUR RESUME YOUR KEY TO SUCCESS

Automated applicant tracking systems (ATS) do the first reading of many resumes. These robots will not be impressed with all your fancy formatting. Simply skip it and focus on writing. Draft your resume in a word processing program so that you can check your grammar and spelling. Consider adding a career summary on the top of your resume demonstrating the key skills. Use bullet points and keywords with facts and figures rather than long sentence to demonstrate your skills and experiences. Bullet points within each position should be listed in order of importance relative to the job you want next not according to chronology. If your early career is not relevant to the job you are applying, exclude it. Write at least one achievement from your previous employment under the employment history section. Review your resume by anyone working in the same industry from your networks. An ideal resume should be around 2-4 pages.

Start each duty with a power verb and use first person impersonal. For example, **Problem Solving:** Streamlined ordering through the use of computer technology and software, decreasing wait time from 6 to 1 hour. **Supervising:** Developed and supervised the implementation of new payroll system that reduced paper use by 60%. **Planning:** Developed and implemented a training program resulted a 55% increase of productivity of participants.

Cover page and addressing selection criteria

Write a paragraph addressing how your qualifications, experience and soft skills match the advertised position description. Only mention your relevant qualifications and experience in cover letter. Conclude with a paragraph about how you may contribute and add value to the company.

There may be advertisement where employer wants to know more about skill matching with the role. Most of the time, your CV alone will not be enough to get Govt. jobs. Some common examples of selection criteria include:

- Demonstrated capacity to communicate effectively.
- Good organisational and administrative skills.
- Proven ability to work as part of a team.
- Well-developed customer service skills.
- Proven ability to manage projects.

Use **STAR** model to address selection criteria. The STAR model is one way presenting information against selection criteria. For each criterion think about the following and use these points to form sentences:

Situation- Set the context by describing the circumstance where you used the skills or qualities and gained experience.

Task- What was your role?

Actions- What did you do and how did you do it?

Results- What did you achieve? What was the end result and how does it relate to the job you are applying for?

Practising **STAR** model will prepare you for interview too.

Interview techniques

Arrive early. Prepare prior to the interview by studying likely interview questions and developing answers. Possible questions are:

- Tell us about yourself?
- Name three of your strengths?
- What is your weakness?
- Why do you want to work for us?

BEI questions are Behavioural Event Interview Questions such as

- 'Tell us about a time when you had to meet a tight deadline?' Or
- 'Tell us about a time you managed difficult customer'. The best way of answering BEI questions is using STAR framework. Do your own practice before you face the interview. Review the company website and job description prior to the interview.

Video interview techniques

Video interview is starting to normal standard of hiring process. Recruiters have replaced traditional and outdated phone interview with the video interview though you will be asked same standard questions. The difference is that you will not be speaking directly with a person. Instead, you will be reading questions and recording your answers through a video system or over the Zoom or Microsoft Team or similar. Here are eight interviewing tips that will help you advance to the next round.

Test your technology: Do a trial run with family or friend if possible, so you have ample time to adjust if any of your equipment or software is malfunctioning.

Charge it up: Make sure your equipment is full of charge, try to avoid using a smartphone for video interview if possible.

Dress for success: Wear your formal video interview outfit during trial run so you can get feedback from your family and friends.

Set the stage for a distraction-free video interview: Choose a location that's free from the distractions of children, roommates or pets.

Be a well-prepared early bird: Log in five or ten minutes early as you can be calm and cantered when the video interview begins.

Maintain a good eye contact and body language: Maintain 'eye contact' by looking directly into camera instead of screen or at your own photo.

Project and pause: To avoid talking over the interviewer or having your first few words cut out, let the interviewer finish the question and then pause for a few seconds before delivering your answer.

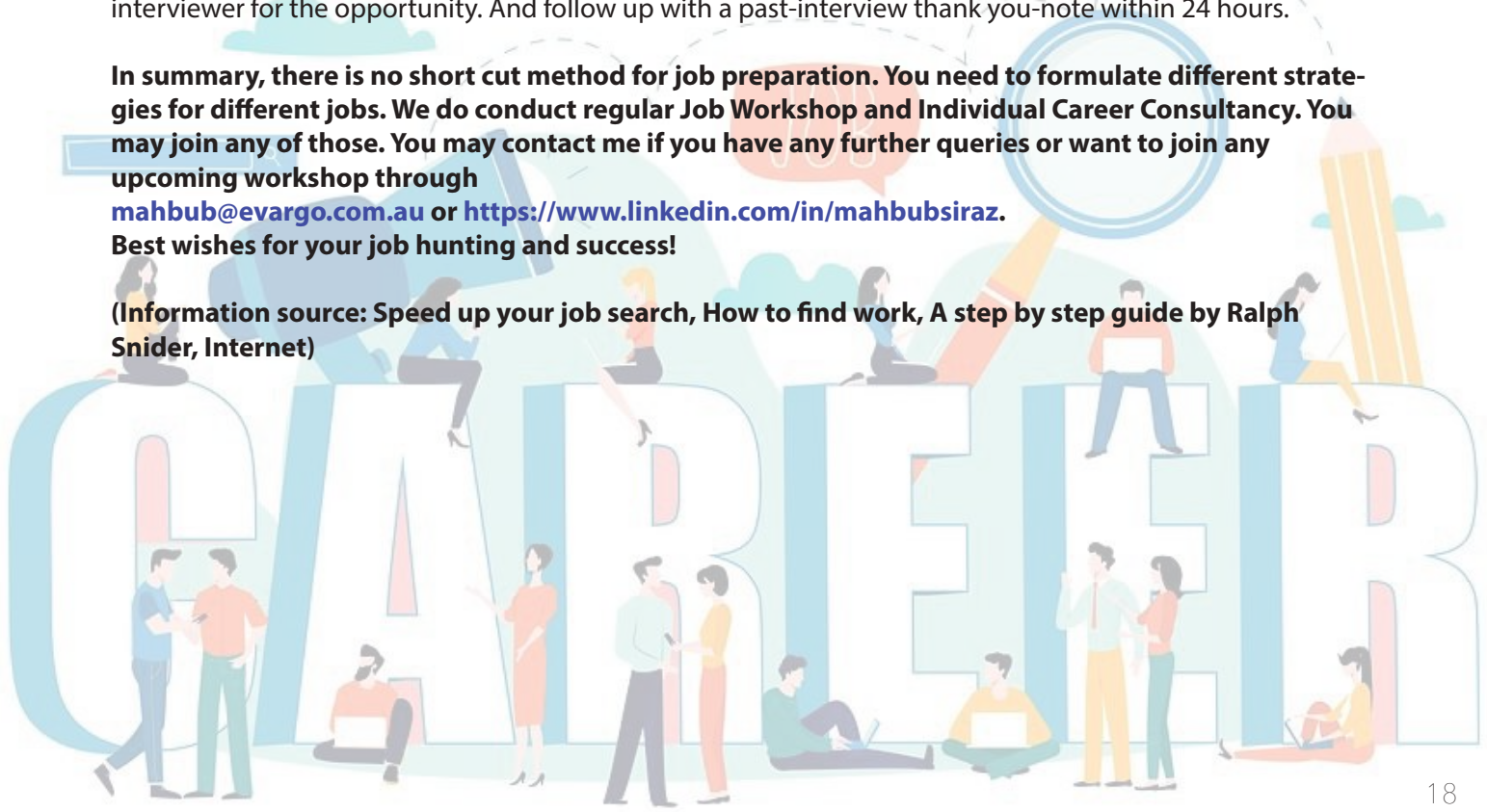
Close the video interview by sharing your appreciation: Just as you would with any interview, thank the interviewer for the opportunity. And follow up with a past-interview thank you-note within 24 hours.

In summary, there is no short cut method for job preparation. You need to formulate different strategies for different jobs. We do conduct regular Job Workshop and Individual Career Consultancy. You may join any of those. You may contact me if you have any further queries or want to join any upcoming workshop through

mahbub@evargo.com.au or <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mahbubsiraz>.

Best wishes for your job hunting and success!

(Information source: Speed up your job search, How to find work, A step by step guide by Ralph Snider, Internet)



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towards your PTE Fees



Mohammad Tarik

SABCA's Covid-19 Response

“COVID-19 COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM” an innovative approach to challenge the pandemic.

SABCA is a voluntary organization involved in community activities for all vulnerable people. Back in 2020 during the pandemic SABCA in conjunction with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australia and Multicultural Communities Council of SA responded whole heartedly and provided support in four major domains:

SABCA provided support who are in need in the four major domains:

- 1. Career Counselling
- 2. Mental Health Support
- 3. Transport Support
- 4. Financial Support

Six volunteers of SABCA EC carried out the program led by the then SABCA Chairperson, Mohammad Tarik. The other members were Dr. Anis Ahmed, Md Toz Hossain, Mahbub Shiraz Tuhin, Md Bodrul Alam and Md Nafis.

Under this project we provided 1:1 Career Counselling for 32 participants. Not only that we also organized a seminar where 20 job seekers attended. This Seminar provided opportunities for participants to directly communicate with industry leaders such as Senior Manager, Minda Inc, Mental Health Nurse SA Health, and Care Coordinator, Resthaven. Seven participants were able to manage paid jobs during the project time. Under the umbrella of Mental Health support, two qualified mental health professionals worked for 45 hrs when they counseled 28 participants. Most of them were new immigrants and international students. We also provided 350 km of transport support for the elderly and job seeks. We also provided \$50 food vouchers for 50 participants and also supported 40 families with a 25 kgs dry food box.

Media coverage that SABCA received are enclosed:



MESSAGE FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Pôhela Boishakh

শুভ নববর্ষ

On the special occasion of Pôhela Boishakh, the South Australian Labor Party would like to wish the Bangladeshi community a happy and prosperous New Year!

This is a time for reflection on the past year, but also to look forward to the new opportunities this new year will bring.

For over 17 years, the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association (SABCA) has contributed to the establishment and growth of this thriving community and we commend those that have been involved.

On behalf of the Parliamentary Labor Party, we wish the South Australian Bangladeshi community a year of prosperity, peace and progress to you and your families.

Happy Bengali New Year 1428!



Peter Malinauskas MP

Leader of the South Australian Labor Party

Parliament House
North Terrace Adelaide

(08) 8237 9137

laborleader@parliament.sa.gov.au

PMalinauskasMP

Authorised by R. Martin for the Australian Labor Party,
141 Gilles Street, Adelaide SA 5000.





উড়তে পারি - আজগর আজিজ

চাই প্রতিদিন উড়ে যেতে,
কিন্তু আমি নই যে পরী,
পাখির মতো নেই ডানা বা
নই তো আমি পবনতরী।

হয় না, ফড়িং-প্রজাপতির
মতো ওড়া, পাখনা মেলে।
ফুলের পরাগ নই, যে উড়ি,
প্রতিবছর ফাগুন এলে।

মেঘের মতো, নীল আকাশে
সাধ্যও নেই, যাবো ভেসে।
শুকনো পাতা বা তুলা নই,
উড়িয়ে নেবে, বাতাস এসে।

বৈমানিকও হইনি, বা নই
মহাকাশের নভোচারী;
তবুও হলে ইচ্ছে, মনের
কল্পনাতেই, উড়তে পারি।



নতুন করে সাজাও জীবন - আজগর আজিজ

মনে করেছিলে মসৃণ, এই
জীবনের পথ, হাঁটতে গিয়ে
পড়বে না খেয়ে কখনও হোঁচট;

বাঁধা নেই যেতে সামনে এগিয়ে।

দিনকে রাঙাবে সূর্যের আলো;
জোছনা রাখবে, রাতকে ভিজিয়ে।
হতাশার ঝড় এসে ভাঙ্গবে না,
বাঁধা ঘর, যা রেখেছো সাজিয়ে।

কষ্টের স্রোত, হয়ে কালো মেঘ,
পড়বে না ঝরে বৃষ্টির মতো।
ভেবেছো খেলায় হারবে না তুমি।
আঘাতে হবে না ক্ষতবিক্ষত।

যন্ত্রণা ঢেকে, রাখবে নিজেকে,
মিথ্যা সুখের মুখোশে লুকিয়ে;
দুঃখের সাথে করবে সন্ধি,
যতোবারই দিবে, মনেতে উঁকি এ।

কিন্তু এতোটা সহজ তা নয়।
দুঃসময়ের চোরাবালি ফাঁদে
পড়ে, থেমে যায় জীবনের গতি;
রাগে-ক্ষোভে ভাঙ্গা অন্তরও কাঁদে।

ধ্বসে পড়ে যায়, যত্নে গড়া,
নিরাপত্তার সুদৃঢ় দেয়াল।
অন্ধকারে দিতে চায় ডুব,
চাওয়া-পাওয়া ঘেরা সকল খেয়াল।

তারচেয়ে মেনে নিয়ে নিয়তিকে,
ভুলে যাও আগে কিভাবে, কি ছিলো।
নতুন করে সাজাও জীবন,
যোগ দাও নব আশার মিছিলে।





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The Honourable **Hon Scott Morrison MP**
Prime Minister of Australia

Message From
Honourable **Prime Minister**
of Australia



It is with great pleasure that I send my congratulations to the South Australian Bangladeshi Community Association as you celebrate your 15th anniversary and welcome in the Bangla New Year. This is a wonderful moment in the life of your community to reflect on your history and achievements, as well as to pay tribute to the Association's leadership and members, past and present. Australians are an optimistic, passionate and ambitious people, full of aspiration for ourselves, our families, and for our great nation. This is clearly seen in the Association's mission to support the Bangladeshi community and to promote understanding and respect. I thank you for your efforts to ensure our multicultural, multi-faith society remains one of the most happy and harmonious in the world. As Australians, we are indeed blessed to live in a nation of peace and goodwill, where people from around the globe, and from all walks of life, live together in remarkable harmony. The South Australian Bangladeshi

Community Association has every reason to celebrate today and to embrace the New Year with confidence and hope.

"FROM ARCHIVE"

2018 and 2019



2019



2018



PRIME MINISTER

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (SABCA)
BANGLA NEW YEAR 2018

The arrival of Pohela Boishakh is the perfect occasion for members of the SABCA to come together in celebration of shared culture and tradition.

It is also an opportunity to reflect on your achievements since the Association's foundation in 2004.

The ongoing work of SABCA is one of our nation's success stories. For 14 years, it has provided vital services to the community, and nurtured capacity, connection and opportunity.

This is multiculturalism at its very best – people of all ages and all walks of life, working together to make a positive difference.

Together you have accomplished what matters most, and reminded all Australians of what can be achieved with generosity, goodwill, and a commitment to community service.

I offer my congratulations on your 14th anniversary and hope you have a wonderful Bangla New Year.

The Hon **Malcolm Turnbull MP**
Prime Minister of Australia
26 March 2018

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SABCA PICNIC 2021





**SABCA
PICNIC 2021**







Begum Rokeya: A Redoubtable Muslim Feminist and Educationist **MOHAMMAD A. QUAYUM**

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (1880-1932), fondly known as Begum Rokeya, was an autodidact who became a redoubtable champion of women's rights and women's education when women in South Asia, especially Muslim women, were forced to live in subhuman conditions, almost like animals, or even worse than animals (Rokeya's analogies). She grew up in an apathetic environment towards women of all social and cultural backgrounds. Her father, Zahiruddin Muhammad Abu Ali Hyder Saber, was the zamindar of the village of Piraband in the Rangpur district of

present-day Bangladesh. He was wealthy enough to marry four times, including a European woman, and send his eldest son, Ibrahim Saber, to England for study. Yet, he had no interest in sending Rokeya and her elder sister, Karimunnesa, to school. He also prohibited them from learning English and Bengali, which were considered "non-Islamic" languages that could corrupt the mind of young girls, but not so much of the boys as Rokeya's two elder brothers were both brought up in English-medium schools in Calcutta.

However, Ibrahim Saber, Rokeya's eldest brother, was far more supportive of women's education than his father. It was he who taught English and Bengali to Rokeya, often under candlelight at night, after the monocratic, sanctimonious patriarch had gone to bed. Another person who helped in the growth and fructification of Rokeya's mind was her husband, Khan Bahadur Syed Sakhawat Hossain. Like Ibrahim Saber, Sakhawat, who too was educated in England, believed in women's emancipation and empowerment through education and inspired Rokeya, who was childless, to dedicate her life to this cause. This support from her elder brother and her husband was enough to instigate Rokeya to defy all decadent practices of her time and lead the charge of rescuing women from what she calls their "shipwrecked" state.

Rokeya's mission of bolstering the status of South Asian women, especially of her own faith group – by redeeming them from the clutches of an entrenched religious and cultural patriarchy – began with her essay "Strijatir Abanati" (Woman's Downfall), first published in a ladies' magazine, Mahila, in 1903 and then in a Muslim magazine, Nabanur, the following year. This was followed by a slew of publications in several other newspapers and popular magazines, such as Nabaphrabha, Bharat-Mahila, Bangeya Muslim Shahitya Patrika, Saugat, Sadhana, Dhumketu, Indian Ladies' Magazine, The Mussalman, to name a few. In her essays, Rokeya launched repeated attacks on men for robbing women of their inherent rights and for oppressing and exploiting them to the hilt in their daily lives. However, she was equally scornful of women for internalising society's androcentric values and surrendering their dignity and femininity at the feet of men without question. She argues that men have cunningly manipulated women in the guise of love and reduced them to the state of "bonded slaves," "domesticated animals" and "feckless mannequins," and women too have accepted their servitude and sheltered life of ignorance like "opium-addicts." In her essay "Subhasadeq" (The Dawn), urging women to rise from their addictive state of serfdom, she writes: Wake up, mothers, sisters, daughters: rise, leave your bed and march forward.... Say, mother, pounding your chest, we are not animals! Say, sister, we are not property! Say, daughter, we are not items of ornament to be enclosed in an iron safe. Say, all in unison, we are humans! (my translation from Bengali) In her essay "Griha" (Home) Rokeya dissects the general perception that men rule the world and women command the home by showing how South Asian women, irrespective of class, colour, caste or creed, are all essentially homeless, living at the mercy and vagary of men within their domestic sphere. "For those who live in subjugation and do not have the right to consider the house of their 'keeper' as their residence, home is like a prison," she contends. Narrating her experience of visiting a Muslim household, Rokeya elucidates how women are often treated like animals in their homes. "The house belongs to Sharafat, and it has a drove of sheep, flocks of ducks and hens, so also is there a group of women," Rokeya proffers in her characteristic rage.

In addition to her irate and explosive essays, Rokeya wrote many poems and short stories, again, condemning the sexism and arrogance of men. In "Biya-Pagla Buro" (Marriage-crazy Old Men), she lambasts the septuagenarian men for their lustful behaviour of marrying adolescent girls, abusing Islam's approval of polygamy. In "Nurse Nelly" she demonstrates how a woman's ignorance, arising from her lack of educational opportunities, can result in the devastation of an entire family. However, Rokeya's most famous story is "Sultana's Dream," in which a young Muslim girl, Sultana, visits a Ladyland in her dream, where women run the state and men are confined indoors. By turning the table on men, Rokeya shows how society benefits when women are educated and become leaders. It's a utopian story in which there is no violence and corruption, and the only religion is that of love and mutual respect.

Knowing that education was the only way forward for women, Rokeya decided to start a school for girls with the money bequeathed to her by her husband before his death in 1909. She began the school in Bhagalpur, Bihar, Sakhawat's hometown, with only five students. But unable to cope with Sakhawat's daughter by his first marriage (Rokeya was Sakhawat's second wife), she decided to move the school to Calcutta. This time she started with eight students, naming it after her husband as Sakhawat Memorial School for Girls. When Rokeya embarked on her mission of setting up the school, there were only two other schools for Muslim girls in Calcutta; one established in 1897 under the patronage of Begum Ferdous Mahal, the Begum of the Nawab of Murshidabad, and the other in 1909, under the patronage of Khojesta Akhtar Banu, mother of the well-known Bengali Muslim leader, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy (1892-1963). This speaks volumes about how Rokeya, who had never stepped into a school compound in childhood, became a trailblazer in her adult life in the education and modernisation of South Asian Muslim women.



Rokeya struggled throughout her life to run and expand the school. Her biggest challenge came from the religious bigots who were fiercely opposed to the education of Muslim girls, despite the Prophet's injunction in a hadis that education was compulsory for both boys and girls. Unable to break Rokeya's iron will, they started spreading all kinds of rumours against her, accusing her of being a whore whose only intention was to make money by using the school as a façade. They also accused her of being a Christian behind her purdah Muslim disguise, determined to convert the Muslim girls to Christianity. A second problem was getting students, as Muslim girls in those days were not allowed to step out of the house without purdah. To convince the mothers, Rokeya went from house to house and explained how education would enrich their daughters' lives and assured them of using covered transports to protect the girls from the male gaze. She also encountered enormous financial hardships as rich Muslim men would not support her mission of educating girls, which, in their view, violated the norms of Islam. However, notwithstanding such recurring stumbling blocks, Rokeya went ahead with her feminist-cum-educational vision and mission till the very end of her life, for which she is now regarded as one of the most admirable women in South Asian history – deserving of a university and a university hall in Bangladesh and two schools and a library in India to be named after her.





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অজানার পথে

---- হাসান ইমাম (শামীম)



বাদল গাড়ির হর্ণ এর বিকট আওয়াজে চমকে উঠলো। কয়েক সেকেন্ড এর ব্যবধানে এতো দ্রুত তার চোখ বুজে আসে যে মাঝে মাঝে সে নিজের বুঝতে পারে না। অবশ্য না বোঝার কোনো কারণও নেই। অধিমে স্থানীয় জনা প্রতিদিন তাকে কমপক্ষে তিন ঘণ্টা গাড়ির স্টেয়ারিং ধরে রাখতে হয়। এই সমস্যা সে নিজের জগত থেকে না, তির একটা ভাবনায়ে চলে যায়। স্বপ্নের মতো মনে হয় সবগুলো মুহূর্ত। "স্বপ্ন" কথাটা ঠিক হলো না। অনেকটা "ইনসেপশন (Inception)" বলা যেতে পারে। স্বপ্নের ভেতর স্বপ্ন বোনা। এই অবস্থার ভিতর দিয়ে সে যচ্ছে অনেকদিন ধরে। ফলনই কোনো ভাল ব্যক্তির কাছে এসে পড়িটা দু এক মিনিটের জন্য ধমকে দাঁড়ায়, তখনই তার চোখ বন্ধ হয়ে আসে। আর সপ্ন এসে নাড়া দিয়ে যায়।

অজানার হার্ন শব্দ এসে পিছল থেকে। বাদল ব্যাক সিট মিররটা একটু নাড়িয়ে দেখার চেষ্টা করলো হর্ণ টা কে বাজাচ্ছে। এরপর বাদল বাম হাত গিয়ে হ্যান্ড ব্রেকটা মাঝিবে ধিল। ব্রেক থেকে যা সরিয়ে এঞ্জিনেরে আগতো করে যা রাখলো। গাড়ি এগিয়ে যচ্ছে। অশেষপন্থের পেন থেকে ও স্বপ্নের গতিতে গাড়ি চলে যচ্ছে। পিছনের গাড়িটা ডার্লিগের পেন দিয়ে দ্রুত পতিতে বেরিয়ে গেল। স্থানীয় সময় আরো একটা হর্ণ দিয়ে গেল।

হর্ণ দেওয়া ছেপ্টা কেন এতো অস্থির এই ভাবনার পেরে বদলো তাকে। গাড়িতে আরো দুজন আছে বলে মনে হলো। জানালা খুলে উচ্চসরে গান শুনতে শুনতে হৈ টে করতে করতে এগিয়ে বেশ ওরা। কোথায় যচ্ছে ওরা। ফুরতে কিচ্ছই। বাদল বরস টা অলডজ করার চেষ্টা করছে। বিশ থেকে পঁচিশ এর কাছাকাছি হবে সন্ধ্যার। অনেক উদ্যাম এই বরসের। অনেক প্রাণবন্ত জ্বালা একই সাথে অস্থিরতার পূর্ণ থাকে। এই বহুসে সেও কি একটাটা অসবিসু ছিল?

বিশ বছর বয়সে বাদলেরও অজানার ঠাণ্ডা হঠাৎ হঠাৎ বেরিয়ে যাওয়ার অভ্যাস ছিল। একবার ফাতেরার বল এ বাওয়ার জন্য ওরা নয় জন বন্ধু একদিনের মধ্যেই সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়ে রওয়ানা হয়ে গিয়েছিল। "অনেকদিন কোথায় যাওয়া হয় না" -- রফেল অকশন করে বলে ফেললো। "কোথায় যেতে চান, সমুদ্রে না পাহাড়?" -- শুভ সন্দেহময়ী আয়তবিদ্যান এর সাথে বলে ফেললো। "সমুদ্রে, সেন্টমার্টিন বা জলাকোথাও।" বাস সবাই রাজি হয়ে গেল। সেই রাতেই বাসায় কাউকে না বলে রাতের ট্রেনে উঠে পড়লো ওরা।

বাদল শুধু ছোট একটা চিরকুট নিয়ে পেন ছেটোবানের কাছে। "আমরা চট্টগ্রাম এক বন্ধুর বাসায় স্থানীয় বিয়ে খেতে, কয়েকদিন পর ফিরবো। বাসায় ফনাই কে সামলে রাখিগ। আমি ওখানে গিয়ে ফেল দিবো"

সময়টা ১৯৯৭। প্রথমবার মতো মোবাইল ছিলো না। সবার বাসায় আবার ল্যান্ড ফোনও ছিলো না। তারপরও কাউকে না বলে চলে যাওয়ার মতো দুঃসাহস সে দেখিয়েছিল সেই বয়সে। এভাবে একের পর এক জায়গাতে ঘুরে বেড়িয়েছে। কখনও সুন্দরবনের জঙ্গলে, কখনও মৌলভিবাজারের মনোরম পরিবেশে। কখনও রাহামাটী। কখনও উর্দেছে কেওকাড়াডাং এর চুড়ায়। পিনেটের চা বাগান, রাতারগুন, কিতখলা নদী, চাপই এর অমরগাথন, রুমা বাজারের নৈমগিক দুশ, বগা লেক, নিলগীরি, দেবতার পুকুর আরো তার চিত কে আন্দোলিত করে তোলে।

সেবার অধিনের কাজে রাজশাহী শহরে বাদলকে বেতে হয়েছিল। প্রতিটি মাংসবার নিজস্ব কিছু সৌন্দর্য থাকে। ওগুলো উপভোগ করা ওর দেখা। সম্ভ্র্য হলেই রাজশাহী শহরে ছুটোপাথে বসা সব খাবার এর মধ্যে সবচেয়ে ভালো লাগতো ওর সারি সারি সিদ্ধ ডিমের পন্থা। কি চমৎকার ভাবে ডিমগুলো সুতার টানে মিথস্কিত করে ফেলতো। তারপর সরিষার ভেল, পেঁয়াজ কুচি, ধনিয়া অল্প লবনের খিটে গিয়ে বপতো, "একটালে খেয়ে ফেলুন"। বাদলের মনে আছে বেশ কয়েকবার সে প্রায় সাত থেকে অটোটা ডিম খেয়ে ফেলতো। অল্প চাইতে চাইতে কপতো "মাঝা, আরো একটা রেডি করুন"। কি সুন্দর একটা বরস তখন। কোনো ধরনের চবিক্ত ভাবনা নেই। শুধুই উপভোগ।

দেখতে দেখতে পোর্ট ওয়েকফিল্ড এ চলে এসেছে বাদল। গাড়িটা পার্ক করলো পেট্রোল পাম্পের ঘোড়ানে। এখানে ছোট একটা রেস্টুরেন্ট ও আছে। এক কাপ কফি নিয়ে, গাড়ির স্লেটে বেশাল গিরে ভাবতে থাকলো জ্বালা যদি সুখের হতো তাহলে হজো তাজিংডং বেতো। বাংলাদেশ এর দ্বিতীয় সর্বোচ্চ পাহাড়ের চুড়ায় উঠার সৌভাগ্য একবার তার হয়েছিল। কেওকাড়াডাং। চারদিনের এই উচ্চনিচু পাহাড় উঠানামার অসম্ভব সুন্দর রোমাঞ্চকর এই অক্লান্তি প্রথম তাকে মাংশিকভাবে চাসা করে তোলে। আদিবাসীদের কাছ থেকে দেখার বা জঙ্গলের এই সুযোগ ও তাকে মুগ্ন করেছিল তখন। এরপর থেকেই বিভিন্ন আতি যা গোষ্ঠীর আচার অনুষ্ঠান জ্বালা এক প্রবল অয়ম তাকে শেরে বসে। ফুরতে থাকে মারমা, মুন্স, চাকমা, গুন্সই, খৈয়াম বা বোম জাতির বিভিন্ন এলাকায়। কেওকাড়াডাং জ্বালা সময় তাকে অবশ্য বন্ধুরা নিতে চায় নি। এক সাসের এক টা ক্যাম্পিং এর প্রস্ততি নিয়েছিল ওরা। কিভাবে তাঁবু টাঙাতে হবে, সপ্ন তাড়াতে কার্বোলিক এসিড কিভাবে ব্যবহার করতে হবে, সব শিখে নিয়েছিল ওরা। যদিও সেবারা ওরা তাঁবু রাস্তায় ফেলে চলে গিয়েছিল।

কফি প্রায় শেষ। গাড়ি আবার চলছে। ব্যাক গ্রাউন্ডে বাংলা গান বাজছে। গানের তালেদলে সুর মেলানোর চেষ্টাও চলছে। গান সে মোটেও গাইতে পারে না। কিন্তু গানের আড্ডা কখনও সে মিস করতে চায় না। ভ্রমণের মূল মজাটাই থাকে হেরে গলা ছেড়ে গান গাওয়ার মধ্যে। প্রতিটা ভ্রমণেই ওর এমন একজন বা দুজন বন্ধু থাকতো যারা গান গেয়ে মাতিয়ে রাখতো পুরো সময়। ১৯৯৫ এর শেষের দিকে এলাকার শীতকালীন পিকনিকের বাসে একবার উঠে পড়ল বাদল। বাহাল সিটের একটি বাসে প্রায় ষাটজন যাত্রী। পুরো বাসে মাত্র পাচজনকে চিনতো বাদল। তবুও একদিনের এই "ঢাকা টু কুমিল্লা" র পিকনিক টা বন্ধুদের অনুরোধে উপেক্ষা করতে পারেনি।

ফেরার পথে কাচপুরের কাছে এক বিশাল জ্যামে আটকা পড়লো গাড়ি। সারি সারি গাড়ি, বাস, ট্রাক আরো কতো কি। সব স্ববিধা। কোনো ধরনের নাড়াচাড়া নেই প্রায় আধ ঘণ্টার মতো। মুহূর্তের মধ্যেই যদিও ভ্রামমান বিক্রেতা চলে আসলো বিভিন্ন খাবার হাতে। কেউ শশা, কেউ ডিম, কেউ বা মুড়ি চানাচুর নিয়ে হাজির। বাস থেকে অনেকেই নেমে জানার চেষ্টাও করছে কি ঘটেছে। কোনো দৃষ্টিনা নাকি ফেরি বন্ধ। জানা গেল না। তবে অনেকদূর পর্যন্ত এই জ্যাম তা বোঝা যাচ্ছে। ধীরে ধীরে সব বাস বা গাড়ি থেকে যাত্রীরা নেমে যেতে শুরু করলো। বাদলও নেমে গেল।

"চলনা ঘুরে আসি অজানাতে -- যেখানে নদী এসে---" গানের সুমধুর আওয়াজ বাদলের কানে এসে সুডুসুড়ি দিচ্ছিল। বাদলে গানের দিকে এগোতে থাকলো। আন্তে আন্তে স্পষ্ট হতে থাকলো শব্দ গুলো। রাস্তার ধারে এক টং দোকানের পাশে গিটার হাতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের একদল ছাত্র ছাত্রী গানের সুরে সুরে দুলছে। কিছুটা ইতস্তত করে বাদলও বসে পড়লো ওদের সাথে।

"রন্জনা- আমি আর আসবো না, পাড়ায় চুকলে ঠ্যাং খোড়া করে দেবে---" কি উত্তেজনা আর ভালোলাগা নিয়ে গেয়েই চলছে সবাই একসাথে। লোকজন জড়ো হতে থাকলো, আর আওয়াজ ও বাড়তে থাকলো। গান চলতে চলতে কখন যে বাস চলে গেল কার খেয়াল নেই। শুধু গানের দলের ছেলেরা আর বাদল। সে রাতের ঘটনা এখনও তাকে শিহরিত করে।

গান কি এতোটাই কাছে টানে যে কোনো অচেনা মানুষকেও। বাদল ভাবতে থাকে। গাড়িতে তার পছন্দের "সস্ত্রীবের" গান বাজছে। "আমি তোমাকেই বলে দেবো, কি যে একা দীর্ঘ রাত, আমি হেটে গেছি বিরাগ পথে"।

আজ অস্ট্রেলিয়াতে প্রায় পনের বছর পার করলো বাদল। এখনও এই সব গানগুলো তাকে নস্টালজিক করে তোলে। ভ্রমণের নেশা যদিও তার কাটেনি। প্রস্তুতি ছাড়া যে কোনো যাওয়ায় যাওয়ার ব্যাপারে তার জুড়ি নাই। সব সময় সে ঘুরতে থাকে, পরিচিত যাত্রাগাতেও গিয়ে খুজতো নতুন কোনো জায়গা। যেখানে সবাই হয়তো যায় না বা যেতে চায় না। "ভিক্টোর হারবারের" মতো যাত্রাগাতেও সে গিয়ে সারাদিন কাটাতে "দ্যা ব্ল্যাক এর ওয়াকিং ট্রেমেল"।

মনে আছে একবার গিয়েছিল রাতের বাসে করে "কুবারপেডি"। সারারাত বাসে করে। অনেক যাত্রীদের সাথে। এই ভ্রমণ টাও তার অনেক প্রিয় ছিল। পোর্ট অগাস্টা পার হয়ে যাওয়ার পর প্রতিটা মুহূর্ত তার গা ছমছম করতো। ভাগ্যিস রাতে সে একা ডাইভ করে আসেনি। জন মানবহীন একটা জায়গায় সারারাত গাড়ি চালানোর রোমাঞ্চ এখন আর তাকে আগের মতো আকর্ষণ করে না। বয়সের কারণে হয়তো কিছুটা ভীতু হয়ে গেছে। অথবা কোথাও কোনো পিছুটান হয়তো। এতো যাত্রীর মাঝেও নিজেকে তার একা মনে হতো।

"কুবারপেডি" তার পছন্দের একটা যাত্রাগা। এখানেও আদিবাসীর একটা ইতিহাস আছে।

কুবার পেডি অস্ট্রেলিয়ার অ্যাডিলেড থেকে ৮৪৬ কিলোমিটার উত্তর পশ্চিমাঞ্চলের মরুভূমিতে অবস্থিত একটি ছোট শহর। কুবার পেডি (Cooberpedy) শব্দ দুটি এসেছে স্থানীয় নাম "কুপা পিটি" থেকে যার বাংলা অর্থ "সাদা মানুষের গর্ত" (White Man in a Hole)।^[২]

এই শহরকে একসময় উপল পাথরের (Opal Mining) শহর বলা হত। শহরের লোকজন মাটির তলায় বসবাস করে বলে একে ভূগর্ভস্থ নগরীও বলা হয়। এটিই পৃথিবীর একমাত্র ভূগর্ভস্থ নগরী (Underground City)।^[২]

রেস্তোরী, বইয়ের দোকান, গির্জা, বিনোদন কেন্দ্র, ক্লাব, ব্যাংক, আর্ট গ্যালারি, মার্কেট কমপ্লেক্স সব কিছুই মাটির নিচে। এই রকম একটি শহর দেখার লোভ সামলানো মুশকিল।

এর প্রতিটি অলিগলিতে রয়েছে রহস্য। অজানা অনেক কিছু। রাস্তার দুধারে শুধু সতর্ক বানী, যে কোন সময় গর্তে পরে যাওয়া থেকে কিভাবে সাবধানে থাকতে হবে তার বিলবোর্ড চারিদিকে।

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(চলবে)





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SABCA is committed to developing awareness of Bangladeshi culture, language, tradition and lifestyle among our Australian friends and neighbors to build a homogeneous and harmonious multicultural Australian society. At the same time this magazine is designed to pass information to new Bangladeshi migrants, permanent or temporary residents, students and workers in South Australia.

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