



THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER

Publications of Dhaka University

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OF the many ways of knowing a University, one of the most dependable is undoubtedly, its publications. Since its inception, teachers in this University have been, making through their books and articles, their contribution to the educational and intellectual advancement of this country. While these works have been published by local and in some cases by foreign publishers the University has also maintained and enriched flow of its own publication.

When this University was set up in 1921 in a town which was relatively backward, a stir must have been created in Dhaka's cultural life. The town had several printing presses it also published a few periodicals but sophisticated printing must have been difficult to get. What was even more unsatisfactory was the distribution system of reading materials published here. Moreover the University did not have a large body of students, not did it employ many teacher publications, therefore were scarce at the beginning.

There was a periodical called Dacca University Bulletins a predecessor of Dhaka University Studies, the first issue of which was published in 1921. Between that year and 1932 thirteen issues of the Bulletins came out. The first issue of Dhaka University Studies was published in 1935. This was an annual publication, but owing perhaps to the war and communal riots it could not be published regularly. Whereas the Bulletins carried only one essay in each issue the Studies contained a number of articles.

The printing and distribution outside the University used to be handled by a local publishing house.

It was in 1960 that Dhaka University Studies was split into parts A and B—Part A carrying articles on Humanities and B those on the Sciences. In 1977 another improvement took place in as much as each of the two parts of the studies began to come out twice a year instead of

once as used to do before. A third part of the Studies—Part C—began its publications in 1979 it is now being published twice a year, like the other two. In 1984 two more parts of the studies were added to the list, one each from the faculties of Biological Sciences and Social Sciences.

Dhaka Visva Vidyalaya Partika is also published thrice a year. This journal was started in 1973. It carries articles in Bengali written by teachers in all teaching faculties. The department of Bengali has been publishing Shahitya partika since 1957.

Some of the departments have their own journal. Among these are Shamikshan (Philosophy), Orchertra (English); The Nations (International Relations) and Dhaka University Journal of Psychology (Psychology). The institutes have their journal too. Institute of Education and Research Publishes Teachers World Institute of Statistical Research and Training brings out two journals—Journal of Statistical Research and Rural Demography. The journal of Institute of Business Administration is called journal of Management, Business and Economics and that of Institute of Nutrition and Food Science Pushti Barta.

The programme of publication of books began soon after the University was established. The first book to be published was the Early History of Bengal (1925) by Dr. R.C. Majumder. Since then there is also an official organ of the university called Dhaka Visvavidyalaya Barta published quarterly books have been published. Of these 30 were published before the emergence of Bangladesh and 31 after liberation. As a matter of fact the post-liberation books were published between 1977 and 1982.

The books published before 1971 did not, for understandable reasons, cover a very wide area no books were, for example, published on

Economics or politics. Excepting Haramoni none of the books was written in Bengali one in Urdu, one in Persian and formation a contingent at part two were descriptive catalogues of Persian, Urdu and Arabic manuscripts in Dhaka University Library. The most notable of the publications during the period was History of Bengal in two volumes, the first volume, edited by R.C. Majumder, was published in 1943 and second volume edited by Jadunath Sarder in 1948. The post-liberation books are on a wide range of subjects including Economics, Commerce, Public Administration, Police Law, Contemporary History and Local History. Some of these volumes are in Bengali. One of the recent publications is History of Dhaka University written by the late Professor M.A. Rahim.

Dhaka University Central Students Union publishes two irregular periodicals, Chhatra Barta and Dhaka Visvavidyalaya Berashiki 78.

The distribution and sale of the Publications has always been a nagging problem. Five publication ceremonies together with exhibitions were held in 1980-81 and 85. A new organisation called Dhaka University Book Society was set up in January last year. DUBS runs a book shop and has taken up a programme of publication of text and reference books in Bengali of which three books have already been published.

Amibad Sangstha has been functioning since 1977. Its objective is to translate text books into Bengali. The body has begun work on a programme of translating 11 books on different disciplines.

Needless to say that these publication activities are not adequate in relation to our needs but work is controlling in fact work had never stopped despite odds; and it is not at all irrational to expect these activities to widen themselves in the coming years.

University of Dhaka at a glance

(1972 - 1986)

	1972-73	1985-86
Faculty	5+2	6+3
Departments	32	36
Institute	5	7
Bureau, Centre	1	10
Hall	9	14(including 2 under construction)
Constituent College	7	23
Affiliated College	116	171
Teacher	522	1,017(30.6.86)
Student	13,167	16,894(1984-85 session)
Publication	30(1921-72)	78(1921-86)

we have noted earlier, teachers overburdened with their schedule of classes and examinations are not mentally free to devote to serious research assignments. And secondly, but more importantly, department based research programmes would tend to narrow down the fields of investigation and can look at only one part of the body of the proverbial elephant. In fact problems relating to socio-economic development are all of elephantine proportions and call for interdisciplinary group approach rather than non-directed basic approach. What we are suggesting is that we should address ourselves more to applied researches of direct relevance to our developmental needs rather than to non-directed researches, our approach should better be interdisciplinary rather than individual and that these researches be done outside the departments. It is necessary therefore to think of new organizational set-up tuned to our needs and circumstances so as to boost up researches in conformity with national priorities in development.

as much energy as Japan needs to produce the same amount of GNP. What a wastage for the poorest nation on the surface of the globe! In any case the oil-crisis of the seventies awakened us to realise that energy should be among the top priority issues of the country.

No less important is the need for establishing a centre for Microbiological Studies. In a food hungry and protein deficient country like ours there will be no two opinion that microbial studies should get high priority, not to mention their importance in industries, particularly pharmaceuticals and food processing, and in municipal and public health care services. Of special interest is the production of single-cell protein utilizing waste materials, a technology which seems to be within the reach of a developing nation and which can go a long way in solving the problem of food and hunger. However, researches are needed to find out exactly the nature of microbiological solution to various problems in the context of our environment.

University dons should also give their opinion, based on research findings, about any official policy of public interest. A Policy Research Centre may therefore serve a very useful purpose.

Now that we are a sovereign nation we have to have diplomatic, commercial and cultural links with other countries. It is in the fitness of things therefore that we studied other people's geography, history, political system, and economy among others. Such studies may better be organized within the framework of an Area Studies Centre.

Finally we may note that man does not live by bread alone. He has his higher needs also. To satisfy these we need to know about our own tradition, language, history and culture. With proper organizational support, more researches can be undertaken into all aspects of our identity as an independent nation. Such support may come under the banner of Bangladesh Studies.

It should be mentioned that the above list is by no means complete, nor do we claim to have told the final word. What we have discussed above emanates from our belief that Dhaka University at present, more than ever before, can contribute

significantly to research provided suitable institutional support is given to her teachers. In our discussion we have pleaded for applied and interdisciplinary research. We do recognise however that there are

some amongst us who have made original contribution in research. Their efforts should also be encouraged with a view to reducing our dependence on the West for basic science and technology.

In any case, here we have thrown an idea open for debate so that at some stage we arrive at a conclusion about the shape of things to come in the next one decade or so. We hope the present article will be taken in that spirit.