

Rakib Update 7/5/09

This update is a summary of my phone conversations and an email I received from Rakib. Yes, Rakib now has an email address. One of his new friends from his coaching class helped him set up an email account and address at the internet café. In the email I received from Rakib, he asked me to give his email address to *all* of the scouts. I'm reluctant to do that. I feel that Rakib may be overwhelmed with email to read and reply to. I don't want to see him take that much time away from his studies. I feel it would be best to have a small team of scouts collect the scout's thoughts and send them to Rakib by email. I suggested this in the past and I have not had any volunteers yet. Several scouts have expressed an interest in communication and fundraising for Rakib. I feel that the ASPL for service, scout webmaster, and scribe would all be good for the job.

In Rakib's email he asked that our scouts share information about their scouting experiences and their culture with him. I told him our scouts were going to summer camp and the Venture Scouts were going to backpack on the International Appalachian Trail in Canada. He also informed me that while in his hometown of Rayenda, he participated with his Rover Scout group in his country's Victory Day celebration. His Rover Scout group won first prize for a dance they performed at the event. The following photo is of Rakib and his Scout group.



A little history;

In 1970 East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was hit by Cyclone Bhola. This Cyclone killed over one half million people, more than any other cyclone in history. It wiped out entire villages and much of the country's crops. Disease and famine followed.

Pakistan was indifferent to the famine and suffering in East Pakistan. Pakistan was harshly criticized by countries around the world when they interfered with the delivery of relief supplies they donated. Bangladesh declared its independence from the oppressive Pakistan and went to war with the newly formed Bangladesh Liberation Army. Nine months later, on December 16, 1971 East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) won its independence from Pakistan. Somehow the Bangladesh Liberation Army secured the surrender of the Pakistan army. As many as three million people died in the conflict.

During the conflict George Harrison, a former member of the Beatles, organized a benefit concert to raise money to send aid to the suffering people of Bangladesh. On August 1, 1971 the *Concert for Bangladesh* was held at Madison Square Garden in New York City. It featured an all-star supergroup of performers. They included George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan,

Billy Preston, Leon Russell and others. The event was the first benefit concert of this magnitude in world history. 40,000 people attended the concert and it was broadcast on national TV in the US, England and other countries around the world. The goal was to raise \$25,000. They ended up raising almost ten times that amount. \$243,418.51 was given to UNICEF to deliver aid to the people of Bangladesh.

Many of the older scouters from my generation may remember the concert. I remember watching it on TV.

Following are some links to clips from the concert. It should bring back memories to those close to my generation. I know some of the younger scouts also have an appreciation classic rock and folk music. You may enjoy listening to it as you read the rest of this update.

George Harrison performing “Bangla-Desh” at the concert for Bangladesh
http://utube.smashits.com/video/jZZ96J_PVbk/George-Harrison-Bangladesh.html

George Harrison performing, “My Guitar Gently Weeps”. Hey! That’s Eric Clapton on lead guitar and Ringo Starr on Drums.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7qpfGVUd8c>

<http://utube.smashits.com/video/A4nPJ-YYHBc/BOB-DYLAN-Blowing-in-the-wind-Madison-Square-Garden-NY-1971-.html>

Rakib is living in a hostel with many other students. There are three students in his room. Rakib has a friend from his hometown in Dhaka. He is attending coaching class for another field of study.

Rakib attends class four days a week, Sat. Mon. Wed. & Thu. His instructors are three highly qualified doctors. At the end of each class day there is a short test. Rakib placed 3rd, 5th, and 3rd out of fifty students in his class on the first three days. There was a longer weekly test on Thursday. Rakib scored 83 the highest score in the class was 91. He did not get his class placement yet. Rakib said he is doing his level best.

Rakib said most of the students are from wealthy families. He said there are only 2 students from poor families in his class. The wealthy students who are doing better have tutors in addition to coaching class. They also have laptop computers which gives them an advantage. The teachers post additional instruction online. Rakib gets some when he goes to the internet café but he cannot afford to spend much time there. Rakib tries to go to the internet café every Monday. It cost 150 taka per hour (\$2.20) to use the internet. One US dollar is worth about 68 taka. Rakib made a friend at school who has a laptop but he does not have a modem or an internet access account. He cannot afford one. Rakib said the friend would share his laptop with him if Rakib could obtain a modem and an internet account. This might be something we can do for him. A modem costs about 7,000 taka and internet access is 1,000 taka per month. Rakib stated that unfortunately for students without money, education is not for them. He is grateful for our help.

Rakib gave me some information on how he spends the money we sent him. His coaching class costs 10,000 taka per month. He thought he would need two months. He now feels he may need three months. Transportation to class costs 40 taka per day, 10 taka for a rickshaw and 10 taka for a bus each way. His housing and food costs 5,000 taka per month. The coaching school gave Rakib only one book. He was unaware that he needed additional books. He used some of the money we sent him which was reserved for his next months expenses to buy books and use the internet. He

said he will have to buy many more books. His family is trying to earn some money to send to him. His father still does not have his rice shop rebuilt. Rakib will need an additional 16,000 taka if he attends another month of coaching class.

Please let me know if anyone would like to send an email to Rakib. I'll make it happen.

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