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Note from the Editor

The political upheaval that swept over the country at the end of the last year took its toll on us as well. With much of the country's literary life closed down for weeks together academic pursuits suffered. Political turmoil and constant tension in the air forced everyone to pass days on an ad hoc basis. With a stalemate forced on the political situation by the declaration of emergency, things have settled down somewhat but with civil rights curtailed and uncertainties over the future course of politics everyone is still on the edge.

Yet, life must go on and so must our e-Journal. Although a little late we are coming out with a whole new group of authors, including fresh graduates. We are proud to promote these fresh minds and hope their contributions will enrich our stock of knowledge as they will build on the resource base of sociology, particularly of the sociology of Bangladesh.

Shahid M. Shahidullah opens up a whole new front for us introducing a "new science" that not only acknowledges the subjective but goes on to accommodate uncertainties. Focusing on the practices of modern medicine and psychiatry he shows how science merges with religious beliefs and not so scientific cures for the healing of the body and the mind.

Mahmuda Khatun delves deep into the learning process of the children. With a sophisticated set of statistical tools and a large data base she looks at the learning curves of the children of different racial and family types in the US. She concludes that race and family based policy is much needed to increase reading IRT score of children. While Bunmi Omolayo and A.B. Owolabi try to shed light on the age old controversy regarding the use of monetary rewards as predictor of employees' commitment. Using medium scale organizations in Nigeria, they argue that monetary reward affects the commitment level of employees irrespective of their gender, work tenure and educational level.

The other two studies are on Bangladesh. Farhana Zaman looks at the process of political empowerment of the women in Bangladesh. With a sample of female "ward commissioners" from Dhaka City Corporation and Narayanganj Municipality she argues that though women ward commissioners come to power through proper political participation and commitment, they cannot demonstrate their commitment to the public primarily because of the patriarchal nature of politics as well as the mind set of their male-counterparts. She also argues that constitutional assurance is unable to ensure the effective participation of women or their political equality. Zeenat Huda Wahid traces the circumstances that led to the opening up of the sky to satellite television in Bangladesh. She argues that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government had to allow satellite television to operate in the country due to demands from middle and upper classes within the country as well as forces from the outside like the CNN. The government, thus, in spite of an anti-Indianization stance, unwittingly, paved the way for cultural domination by India.

This issue is rounded off by reviews of two very important publications. The first book is on the *Political Economy of Land Litigation in Bangladesh* which introduces the reader to the staggering number of litigations that take place each year and the consequential losses to the land owners of thousands of millions of Taka, impoverishing many in the process. S. Aminul Islam while

reviewing the book notes a few flaws like the lack of a theoretical model and weak methodology but impresses upon the reader the tremendous importance of the data presented in the book.

The other book, *Election under a Caretaker Government*, is on the electoral participation process in Bangladesh focusing on the 2001 general election. The book seeks to explain the 2001 elections in terms of the factors that influenced losses and gains in the parliamentary seats for the two major political parties, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Awami League. S. Aminul Islam brings in his own expertise and experience in dealing with the work and finds in the book a very rare and extremely necessary examination of the democratization process going on in the country.

We hope that with these provoking essays Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology will continue to maintain the standard it has set for itself and claim its rightful place in the academic world.

Nazrul Islam