

English translation:

I am Osensi Neela. I graduated from Bharateshwari Home, having passed my SSC (grade 10) exams. Now I am in my first year of [junior] college in CODA. And then, I mean, I am going to say something about Bharateshwari. Bharateshwari Home is somewhat different from other educational institutions in Bangladesh. Because this... this [school] was founded by Danobir¹ R. P. Saha [to further the cause of] women's education. He wanted every Bangladeshi woman to be educated, and to work towards further development... of the country.

So, his mother died when he was ... about seven years old. And then, after his mother died, his father remarried. His father, I mean... realized that R. P. Saha would suffer greatly in life.² That is why he... was sent to live with... others... with his grandmother. And so, his grandmother had him educated. After that, having got an education, he left home. After that, he... lived [on his own] with great difficulty... selling newspapers, cleaning cars; he established himself in life... with great difficulty. After establishing himself, he founded an educational institution named after his grandmother. That was called Bharateshwari Home. And this was named after his grandmother.

And then there are several other in... institutions – for instance, there are hospitals – this is the... he named (these) after his mother, as his mother died of an untreated ailment. That is why he named the several hospitals that he, er... established after his mother (Kumudini).

And then... I mean... one of the... chief institutions established by him is Bharateshwari Home. About a thousand girl students study here. And this is a girls' residential school ("hostel"). Here there are different kinds of work... learning programs... [for] girls. And then [there are] different cultural... and then many different things are taught here. Here, our... I mean, students are subjected to a somewhat strict disciplinary regimen... they are required to do things by the clock. Our daily routine was such that... we are³ awakened at about four-thirty in the morning. And then, in about fifteen minutes, we dress and go down to the sports field. On the field, we are made to exercise ("display"), after which we practice marching. We have a special teacher for this activity – a special teacher for display.⁴ He or she works with us. And then, having exercised for about an hour, we get back to the hostel. Having gotten back to the hostel, we dress... change to go to school. After we are done wearing our school uniforms, we are, I mean, given an hour to perform our [specified] duties. Within that hour, we each do the duty assigned to us. After duty-

¹ The title "Danobir" is honorary; it refers to R. P. Saha's many financial contributions to educational institutions in Bangladesh. R. P. Saha was associated with several nation-building causes, including that of education.

² It is not clear from the context whether R. P. Saha's father knew that his son would suffer in life, or in his new household.

³ From here on, the speaker speaks in the present tense (as if she were still subject to the schedule she is speaking of).

⁴ It isn't entirely clear what "display" involves. Most probably, it consists of synchronized exercises that double as a performance (as in a military parade, perhaps) on special days.

hour, the dining-hall bell rings [for breakfast].... We then queue into the dining hall. At the dining hall, we are all together... there are tables assigned to each class in there... everything is assigned. We each go to our assigned tables, sit down, and eat breakfast. After breakfast, the bell rings for school. And then we go to class, and we have classes... until about one, until one... again, after one we go from [unclear] our classes to eat lunch... we queue back into the dining hall. And then, we [eat] within about thirty... we are done eating within thirty minutes, I mean, everything is done by the clock. Then, after eating within thirty minutes, we go back to the hostel. At the hostel... we rest for a bit, and then, [after rest-hour] the bell rings again at around three-thirty. We then [unclear], we then go about our duties again... and then again it is time for drill, for display. We are made to exercise for about an hour. After that, we again... I mean, we are made to do schoolwork in the place where we have classes [during the day]. So, we all queue into our classrooms to study. A teacher does the rounds... rounds over there (making sure no one is slacking off, and helping with work, etc). After that we return to the hostel.

So, there are many things to learn in all this; for instance, the different, I mean... the birthday of our founder R. P. Saha is celebrated through... various cultural [programs]. For example, we make a display for an invited audience, [composed of] intellectuals [unclear]... writers, poets, and also actresses... come to witness our display. And then, there is a lot besides this... at the beginning of each year, we have different... educational [unclear] – we are taken on trips to... different places of educational interest. After that, there is... I mean, plenty to learn from [life in] school... from life in boarding school: the sympathy one has for a fellow-boarder, the... friendly sacrifices made for one another.... There is plenty to learn from all that. And then again, we do our own chores over there; I mean... there is no shame attached to doing any kind of work. For instance, we... I can't go on any more.

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