

English translation:

Interviewer: For how long... what is it that you sell?

Street Vendor: I buy it first in order to sell it.

Interviewer: From where do you buy it?

Street Vendor: From the market.

Interviewer: Which market?

Street Vendor: New Market.

Interviewer: Can't you find this in any other market place?

Street Vendor: Yes, you can. You can find it in Baitul Mokarram, in Chowk Bazar.

Interviewer: Yes, go on. Where else can you find it? Can't you find it anywhere else except Chowk Bazar?

Street Vendor: Yes, you can. Like Baitul Mokarram... yes, yes Khaderbazar... you can find it there.

Interviewer: For how long have you been buying and selling these?

Street Vendor: For the past ten years.

Interviewer: Ten years. How will you charge...?

Street Vendor: I will sell it for minimum of 250 taka.¹

Interviewer: You won't go down below 250 taka?

Street Vendor: No way.

Interviewer: For how long have you been buying and selling these?

Street Vendor: The past ten years.

Interviewer: Is it enough to support your family?

¹ The taka is the basic unit of currency in Bangladesh.

Street Vendor: Yes, apparently.

Interviewer: How many children do you have?

Street Vendor: Five girls and one boy.

Interviewer: What do your girls and boys do?

Street Vendor: They live in the village. I am here, not a permanent resident... alone.

Interviewer: Where do you live?

Street Vendor: Shoriodpur.

Interviewer: Shoriodpur.

Street Vendor: My village.

Interviewer: Your village home is in Shoriodpur?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: And where do you live here?

Street Vendor: I live in Chowk Bazar.

Interviewer: Chowk Bazar?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: Who else lives with you?

Street Vendor: I live alone.

Interviewer: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Street Vendor: We are five brothers. One is dead. Now I am the eldest. My elder brother died. So I now have five brothers.

Interviewer: What do your brothers do?

Street Vendor: They too do business... business like me.

Interviewer: Do they sell similar...?

Street Vendor: No, not similar ... different

Interviewer: Different. Do they do anything else?

Street Vendor: ... different. They work in agriculture and in graveyards.

Interviewer: How do ... from where to you get this?

Street Vendor: We buy it from the market. Where they make this, I can't say.

Interviewer: Do they fit these glass covers in the market?

Street Vendor: No. We bring the fittings.

Interviewer: Okay. You bring the fittings?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: But where do they make it...?

Street Vendor: No, I won't be able to say that.

Interviewer: Okay. Then you buy and sell all around different places?

Street Vendor: Yes, I go around the whole town.

Interviewer: Where do you go?

Street Vendor: I will go to Norshingdipur, Gausia, Savar, Nobinagar

Interviewer: Yes, go on naming places like this. Narayanganj?

Street Vendor: Yes, I go to Narayanganj and other places there... I go to different places.

Interviewer: Okay, Tongi-thongi²...?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: So you go everywhere?

Street Vendor: We go everywhere.

Interviewer: Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Banani

² "Thongi" is not a word, but people who speak in Bangla develop this habit of attaching a made-up "word" to a proper word. The improper word usually rhymes with the actual word. This is a way to express "Tongi and related places."

Street Vendor: Definitely. We go everywhere.

Interviewer: Everywhere... and many a time you even charge the customer higher?

Street Vendor: Yes. Sometimes I can even sell it for 300 taka.

Interviewer: You sell one for 300 taka?

Street Vendor: Yes, one for 300 taka.

Interviewer: If you sell one for 300, how much to you gain?

Street Vendor: Umm, if I sell for 300, then I get 150 taka as profit.

Interviewer: You gain 150 taka?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: Then you almost gain double of what you spend.

Street Vendor: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Then your business is not honest.

Street Vendor: Why? I have bought, and will set a price, and if you like [it] you will take it.

Interviewer: Oh okay. So you will ask for a price and sell whatever you can.

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: And with that you can support your family, along with your boys and girls?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: In which grade is your girl in?

Street Vendor: The first girl, I married her off. The second, I married her off, too. The third is in the sixth grade, and another is in the seventh grade.

Interviewer: How many children does that daughter have?

Street Vendor: Two boys...my eldest daughter... my second daughter has one son.

Interviewer: One son. What do their husbands do?

Street Vendor: Works in the village graveyard.

Interviewer: They work in the graveyard? How many brothers does your son-in-law have?

Street Vendor: Two brothers.

Interviewer: Two brothers. Is their father alive?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: Oh! So you live like this on the mess and walk around the roads?

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: Oh, and that's how your life goes on.

Street Vendor: Yes.

Interviewer: Thank you.

Street Vendor: Thank You.

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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