

CultureTalk Bangladesh Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
Preferring the Bangladeshi Lifestyle

English translation:

Woman 1: Do you wish to go to Italy?

Woman 2: A foreign country ... obviously there is a natural inclination for traveling.

Woman 1: But there is also the factor of preferences. For example, do I like that country? Italy....

Woman 2: There is nothing not to like about Italy.

Woman 1: America?

Woman 2: Yes, America and Italy -- there is nothing not to like. However, my country is my primary choice.

Woman 1: You want to stay here?

Woman 2: I like staying here. And besides, my friends who live abroad call me up and tell me that it is not as fun or as beautiful a picture as people draw it out to be. The sincerity that you feel in your own country is not present abroad.

Woman 1: You need to work hard.

Woman 2: Yes, true.

Woman 1: Hard Life.

Woman 1: Yes. When I think about that....

Woman 2: In one line, "hard life."

Woman 1: That is why recently I am not that eager to go abroad.

Woman 3: That is true.

Woman 1: I am always traveling abroad and, in my opinion, it is good to go abroad for education, for a career -- but when your life is settled, I feel that one is truly satisfied after he/she has returned to his/her home country. After he has earned a considerable income, one can return and build a house.

Woman 3: At the end of one's life....

Woman 2: Not necessarily at old age but around middle age.

Woman 3: Middle age.

Woman 1: Yes, one can return when he is middle-aged. But abroad, whichever country you are living in, be it the U.K., America, Europe, i.e. any European country, you have to live a hard life. Look at Bangladesh. One member of the family is earning the income and with that all family affairs are running smoothly. Nobody has a shortage. Everyone is leading their lives in peace and beauty. Yet in Europe, every single individual earns an income but no one keeps track of one another, no one turns around and helps out another individual; everyone is very self-centered and does things on their own. Even though we live in a poor country, you should ask, who has greater happiness? We have more happiness, and why? Because we look after each other in our environment. We spend time with each other and often have get-togethers. That is why it is my wish, and I feel that no matter where people live, once they become middle-aged, they should return to their motherland and settle there. And Bangladesh is the only place where you can find such happiness, peace and fulfillment.

Woman 3: There was a research done around a year ago and the topic was, “Which country has the world’s happiest people?” The results showed that the people in Bangladesh are the happiest in the world. Nobody else in the world shares with us the open-hearted laughter and smiles. No other country has such sincerity and dedication.

Woman 1: Indeed. Families do not give each other time. They do not give their children time. Look at us. All of us sisters are together. We spend time with each other. We enjoy each other’s company and we have fun. In Europe, America, can you give so much time and spend your hours so freely?

Woman 3: [Nods her head as if to say no.]

Woman 1: You were not able to. In the U.K., was I able to give so much time to my family and children? No, I was not. When I go for vacations to Italy, everyone goes to work and I stay by myself and feel so depressed. Yet, over here, all of us...the men are going to work, the women are carrying out the household chores, and all of us are spending time with each other, having meals together, taking care of each other, looking after the children, looking after the elders, we have an eye out for everyone. We do not have any agitations. Then why is there so much concern all over the world that we do not have any peace or happiness, or the fact that we are so poor? Wealth does not bring happiness. This is a fact. Only inner satisfaction can bring happiness. If your mind and soul are in the right place ... and those who can laugh open-heartedly ... that is happiness. In Europe, the culture of smiling is not present. They do not even know how to laugh. In order to have a good laugh, they have to set out some time, make calls, make an appointment and then meet up for a laugh. Can they laugh at any time? An individual...Can you do that over there?

Woman 3: No, no. I liked what she said earlier. The thousands of boys and girls who live abroad think that everything over there is perfect: golden deer and rainbows. In reality, there are no

golden deer there. I work hard here when I come, but over there, the amount of hard work I do...one person plays the role of a chauffeur, baby-sitter, housekeeper, chef; you have to do everything on your own; one person does everything.

Woman 1: Students have to do all that alongside their homework.

Women 3: Everything...a lot....

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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