

অশোক প্রসঙ্গে নিজের প্রবন্ধ (অনুবাদসহ) বাংলাদেশে প্রকাশ উপলক্ষ্যে
ব্রুস রিচ (Bruce Rich)-এর বার্তা

WORDS FROM BRUCE RICH

I am very gratified that my essay on the meaning of Ashoka for our contemporary world is being published in Bangladesh. My research on Ashoka, and his message of tolerance and compassion for the world, was inspired by two great figures, both Bengali: Rabindranath Tagore and Amartya Sen. Both Tagore and Sen are Nobel laureates (literature and economics); and both drew on their Bengali culture to promote in their areas of distinction a global message of tolerance, equity, and compassion. The respective writings of both on the message of Ashoka moved me to write more on the subject for a Western audience. Though Tagore preceded Sen by two generations, there are direct personal and family connections between the two; Sen's early education, as well as that of his mother and sister, took place at the progressive school founded by Tagore, Santiniketan, and Sen actually met Tagore several times as a child. Sen observed that "Ashoka's championing of tolerance and freedom may not be at all well known in the contemporary world," and for Tagore "Ashoka's thought had been standing on the wayside for all these ages longing to find a refuge in the mind of every man,"

Thus, I am very happy that my own musings on Ashoka, inspired by these two great Bengali thinkers of world significance, have now, in a small way, come home to be published in the Bengali language.

—Bruce Rich
Washington DC
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