

**Dhaka Day by Day**

**House of Prayers**

by Md. Atiqul Karim

If you put a simple question to a city dweller as to what attracts him most in the metropolis, one probable answer you might get in 'mosques'.

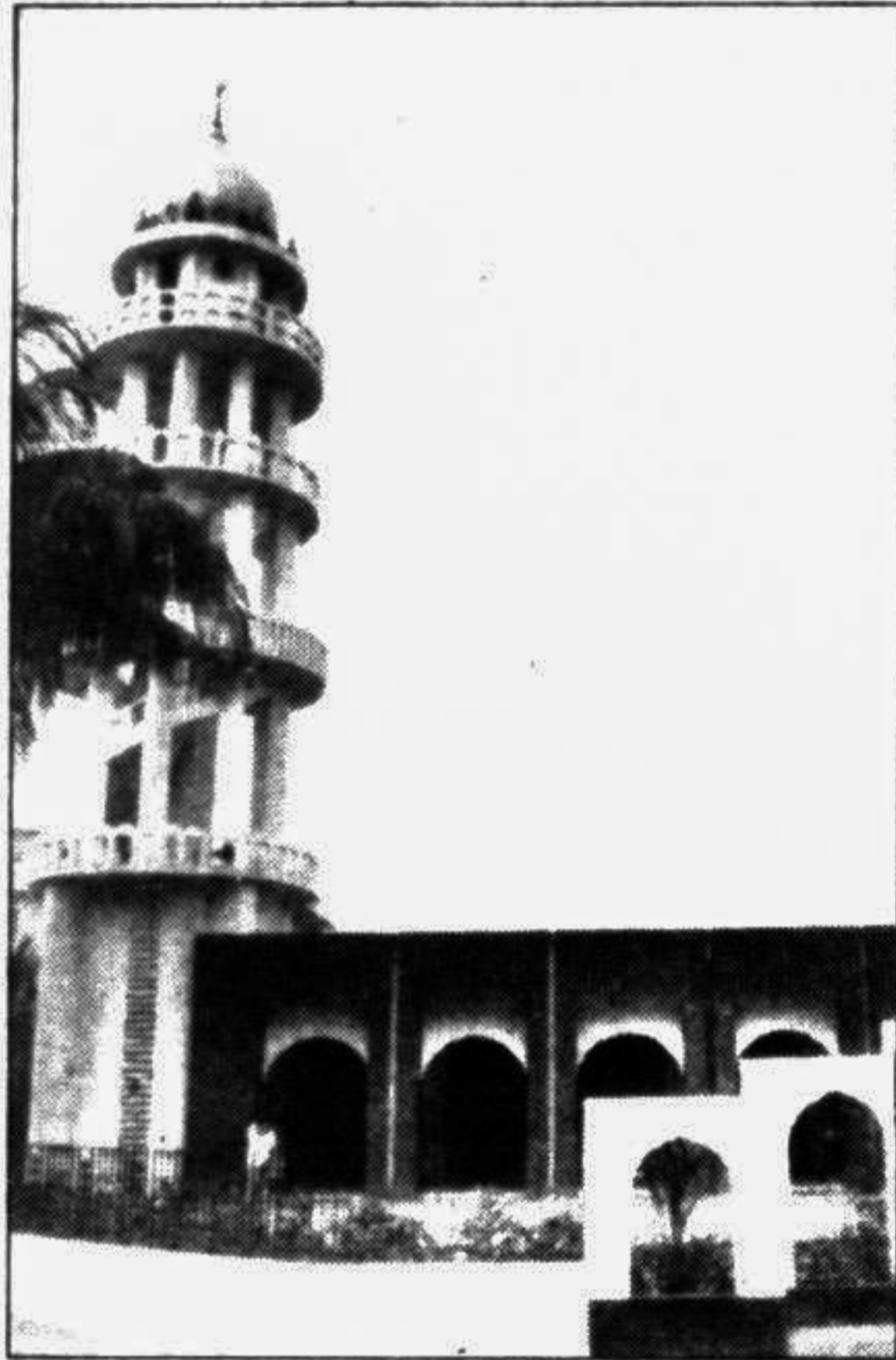
Dhaka is popularly known as 'The city of Mosques', the appellation being that from time immemorial, there have been numerous mosques built by different rulers. During its existence for nearly 500 years ago, the city has witnessed the erection of above one thousand mosques. The number is increasing with an expansion of the city day by day.

Very little can be said of mosques constructed in Dhaka before it became the Mughal capital in 1610 A.D. with the name 'Jahangirnagar'. The earliest pre-Mughal mosque in Dhaka can be found in Narinda area (part of old Dhaka). According to an inscription fixed on the entrance of the mosque, it was built by Bakht Binat daughter of Marhamat in 1457 A.D. This single domed mosque has lost many of its features because of much renovation.

Historians say, the Mughal governors, officials and nobility had graced the city by erecting a large number of mosques. These brick-built mosques were generally three and occasionally one or five domed. They depicted a uniform imperial style of architecture. The traditional terracotta surface decoration was substituted by plastered panels.

Shahasthan, who had the privilege of staying in Dhaka for nearly a quarter of a century in the 17th century, deserves the credit for building many mosques. The most renowned among them is the 'Sargambuj' mosque, literally meaning, a seven domed mosque. Actually the mosque has three domes.

During this period, two other 3 domed mosques were built. One is the mosque of Haji Khwaja Shahab near the Highcourt building and the other stands on the premises of the Lalbagh Fort.



Rajarbagh mosque

In recent times, the one which has attracted the attention of visitors is the Tara mosque meaning the star mosque. This is the most highly decorated mosque in Dhaka and situated on the western side of the Armanitola High School. Built by Mirza Ghulam Pir in early 18th century, this mosque was a simple construction with three domes and no decoration. A rich merchant in 1940s added imported Japanese and English China clay tiles for its surface ornamentation. In 1987, the mosque was expanded with two more domes.

With more than 85 percent of the population being Muslims, the building of mosques is a regular matter. The capital city is just a focal point of such activities. Mosques are erected, sometimes planned sometimes spontaneously by the people. The believer with his religious mind is ready to offer prayer anywhere he likes without any hesitation. According to the scriptures, the merit of constructing a mosque in this world is assured to be repaid in the next world.

In this continuous process, a number of new mosques have been built in Dhaka in recent years with new building materials and technologies. In the late 60s came up three such mosques, namely, the Dhaka University Jame Mosque, the Gulshan Jame Mosque and the Baitul Mokarram

Mosque. The Baitul Mokarram Mosque which gives the impression of the Holy Kaaba is without any minaret unlike other mosques in the city. It's seven storeyed prayer chamber can be entered from the one each from the northern and southern sides. Situated on the roof of a huge shopping complex, the mosque is an outstanding attraction of the city where thousands of devotees pray five times everyday.

**'AL govt provided food to crores'**

The Chief of the Dhaka City Awami League, Mr. Muzaffar Hossain Paltu, said in Dhaka on Monday that the forthcoming parliamentary elections would decide whether the country would go by the law and democracy get a shape, reports BSS.

"We have got a democratic atmosphere now but not the democracy as an institution for the government of the country," he said and added the forthcoming elections would provide the people an opportunity to institutionalise the system.

Addressing a public meeting at Shahjahanpur in Dhaka Mr. Paltu said that the country had, during the last few years, been thrown into a morass of lawlessness, jeopardy. Personal

whims, during these days, reigned over reasons, and corruption over honesty.

Narrating the achievements of the Awami League government during the post liberation period, he said that his party government had rebuilt thousands of bridges and culverts, rehabilitated lakhs of war-affected people and fed crores of people who had lost all they had in the war.

He said that the Awami League, if voted to power, would ensure that the rule of law get firm and democracy flourish. "We believe in people's rule."

Mr. Muzaffar Hossain Paltu also addressed two other public meetings in his constituency which comprises Motijheel-Sabuj Bagh area in the city.

**Seminar on 'democracy, our newspapers'**

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) will hold a seminar today (Tuesday) at 4 p.m. on "Democracy and our newspapers" at the TSC auditorium.

Prof. Maniruzzaman Miah, Vice Chancellor of the Dhaka University will attend as chief guest.

Dr. Enajuddin Ahmed, former Pro-Vice Chancellor will present the key-note paper of the seminar and Dr. Kamal Hossain, Barrister Najmul Huda, Hasanul Haque Inu, Haidar Akbar Khan Rono, Dr. Golam Rahman, Zahurul Haque and Ataus Samad will participate in the discussion.

**Anniversary of Nazir Ahmed's death observed**

By Staff Correspondent

The technicians and workers union of Film Development Corporation on Monday observed the first death anniversary of Nazir Ahmed, the founder of Film Development Board (FDC).

The union urged the FDC authority to name the new sound recording building after late Nazir Ahmed. The function was addressed among others by Managing Director of FDC Syed Yousuf Hossain, younger brother of Nazir Ahmed Mr Syed Ahmed, President of Producers' Association Azizur Rahman Bull, cinematographer Rafiqul Bari Chowdhury, producer Abdus Samad and Union Joint President Jonab Ali, says a Press release.

**CROSSWORD PUZZLER**

**ACROSS**

- Health report
- Printer's measure
- Baker's product
- Shirley of film
- Endured
- Old pronoun
- Holds in high regard
- Iron symbol
- World
- Diner sign
- Redact
- Sleeping room necessities
- Win, - or Draw
- It's the loneliest number
- Paper measure

**31 Dentist's office call**

- Rollie ID
- Repeat
- Extremely terrible
- Equally
- Verve
- River in Italy
- Fish eggs
- Jog
- Attitude
- Small rugs
- Performs
- Talbot ID
- Alternative word
- Having scalloped edges
- Hebrew month
- Mend
- Greet
- Sleeping quarters: colloq.
- Marshall

**67 Follows ess**

**DOWN**

- Pippen
- TV's Herman
- Early morn
- Otherwise
- Heavy

**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

WIG KNITS PAY  
 ORA NORIA LIE  
 NARROW EMBERS  
 NOT ADORN  
 ANEW AN SITES  
 ROT RIGA DYNE  
 IT ASTRIDE AD  
 SELL SIDE ATE  
 EDITS EE PEER  
 TAPIR SER  
 HATRED STRIVE  
 ALL EERIE EAT  
 SEE DAUNT STA

(music type)  
 6 Consecrated  
 7 Male sheep  
 8 Actual being  
 9 Near  
 10 Explain  
 12 Every ID  
 14 Hinder  
 17 Kind of collar  
 20 Kind of cheese  
 23 Fulfill  
 24 Reynolds ID  
 25 Pintail duck  
 27 Way out  
 30 Seasoning  
 32 Stumble  
 35 Pantries  
 37 Black  
 38 Protective outfit  
 39 Floated in air  
 41 "High -"  
 43 Landed property  
 44 Concerning  
 46 Taylor ID  
 48 Plague  
 51 Cicatrix  
 53 Type of party  
 57 Edge  
 58 " - Cid"  
 60 Spelling contest  
 62 Italian river  
 64 V. - - S. R

**Hearing on Moudud's detention today**

The hearing of the writ petition filed by former Vice-President Moudud Ahmed against his detention will resume today (Tuesday) before a division bench of the High Court division of the Supreme Court.

The hearing started on Sunday and Barrister Rafiqul Haq has still arguing on behalf of the petitioner when the court rose for the day.

The hearing scheduled for Monday did not take place.

**Discussion on Haji Mohsin today**

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Shilpa Kristi Sangsad has organised a discussion and prize distribution ceremony at 4 p.m. on Tuesday to commemorate the 178th death anniversary of Haji Mohammad Mohsin.

Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury will be the chief guest at the discussion to be held at Soviet Cultural Centre auditorium.

Presided over by Dr. Mohammad Maniruzzaman, the discussion will be addressed by poet Asad Chowdhury, Mahbub Anam, Major (ret'd) Ali Hasan Qureshi, Sabih-ul-Alam, Harunar Rashid Khan Monnu, Magfur Uddin Ahmed, Amanullah Kabir, and M. A. Kabir.

The discussion will be followed by a prize-giving ceremony and a cultural function.



Those who received Haji Mohammad Mohsin Gold Medal 1997 are - Dr. Muhammad Yunus (rural development and banking), Rahat Khan (literature and journalism), Narayan Chakravorty (acting), M. S. Bashir (author of books on economics), Yusuf Sharif (novel), Shah Mohammad Bakht Chisty (composer of Islamic songs), Abu Nasrat Rahmat Ullah (journalism), Abu Saleh (rhyme), Hasanur Rahman (children's literature), Mohammad Kaitmullah (social reform), Abdul Awal Prodhhan (culture), Mohammed Ali (social service), Ranabir Roy Chowdhury (social welfare).



Anxious relatives waiting at Zia International Airport for arrival of 75 Bangladeshis from Amman on Monday. (Arrival story on page 1) -Star Photo

**Dhaka denies secret dumping Yet another bid to import hazardous wastes foiled**

By Mostafa Kamal Majumder

Bangladesh has stopped another attempt to import industrial wastes into her territories. The Board of Investment (BOI) of the government has refused industrial registration to a project which, its applicant said, was to be based on imported waste films.

Import of wastes is banned in Bangladesh. But an entrepreneur had managed to seek an industrial registration from BOI by showing he was attracting foreign investment as a cover.

The entrepreneur who took Bangladeshi citizenship four years ago sought to set up a disposable razor factory, as there was no such factory in the country. Waste films to be imported from Finland was to be used not only as raw materials for producing disposable razors but also for recovery of silver.

**Bangladesh Assoc confce**

The fifth national conference of Bangladesh Association will be held tomorrow (Wednesday) at 9.30 a.m. at the TSC auditorium of Dhaka University, says a Press release, reports BSS.

The project submitted in May last year for setting up a disposable razor factory with imported waste films looked very attractive on the surface since it involved only (Taka three million) about US 90 thousand dollars in investment, but promised to save the country (Taka 288 million) over 847 thousand US dollars in foreign exchange a year. The industry was to earn a pretax net profit of Taka 108 million annually. A half of the investment was to be in foreign currency.

About five million pieces of disposable razor would have been produced and 2400 kilograms of silver recovered from the industry a year, the entrepreneur had promised. In his application he had also indicated that his principal in Finland had already sent the machinery and raw materials for the industry which was to start production in August 1990 and that he needed a registration as early as possible.

The Department of Environmental (DOE), the official environmental watchdog giving environmental clearances to new industrial projects raised serious objections on the plea that import of wastes was prohibited. It pointed out that the entrepreneur's plan to import waste films in sealed drums might be a trick to hoodwink customs inspectors. It raised the question why used or exposed films would have to be brought in sealed drums. DOE also asked how the applicant could start shipment of waste films without prior permission and requested BOI to seek and explanation from him. DOE warned that an industrial registration granted for the proposed project might give international hazardous waste traders a cover to dump such cargo on Bangladesh.

Again even though the entrepreneur had sought registration for setting up a disposable razor factory, the details of the project proposal showed that he had expected to fetch

about 823 thousand US dollars from recovered silver and only slightly more than 28 thousand dollars from razors.

The news media took up the issue. Following this another local entrepreneur who was awaiting bank loan for his own disposable razor factory project explained that such an industry cannot be set up by investing only US 90 thousand dollars. His actual investment excluding the cost of a building to house the factory, because he owns a building in an industrial area in Dhaka would be many times more than that amount.

Experts also pointed out that disposable razors are made of a plastic grade called styrene and not cellulose used for manufacturing films. Cost of cellulose is higher. They said even cellulose recovered from waste films would be at least three times costlier than that of fresh styrene.

Experts also said silver is present in waste films only in a trace form, one can recover only 100 grams of the metal from as high as one ton of used films. Moreover, the waste that would be generated during the process of recovery of cellulose and silver from used films would also be toxic and create problems of safe disposal.

Against this backdrop BOI requested the entrepreneur to reformulate his project proposal so that the industry could be operated with used films available locally. The entrepreneur failed to comply. He told BOI officials it was impossible for him to collect used films from thousands of studies, therapeutic and industrial x-ray units scattered all over Bangladesh.

BOI officials finally said there was no scope to consider the application for granting industrial registration. They felt that the proposed industrial project posed serious health risks to the people because films (proposed to be imported) are not biodegradable, and import of such cargo in huge quantities would only add to the degradation of the local environment.

**Weather Wintry chill again**

By Staff Correspondent

Weather will remain mainly dry with cloudy sky over Dhaka and Rajshahi Divisions till Wednesday morning but tight rain or thunder showers is likely to occur at one or two places over Khulna and Chittagong Divisions, meteorological Department says.

On Monday, rain or thunder showers occurred at most places over Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna Divisions. Rainfall recorded at Feni, Faridpur, Khulna and Dhaka were 5 cm, 2 cm, and 5 cm respectively. But at Rajshahi, Ishurdi, Jessore and Barisal the rainfall were recorded at one centimetre each.

The night temperature remained nearly unchanged on Monday over the country except Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tangail, Faridpur and Bogra where it fell by two to three degree Celsius which were above normal by two to six degree Celsius. The night temperature on Tuesday is likely to fall by one to three degree Celsius over the country.

Outlook for subsequent two days: little change. Extended outlook for another five days: no appreciable change.

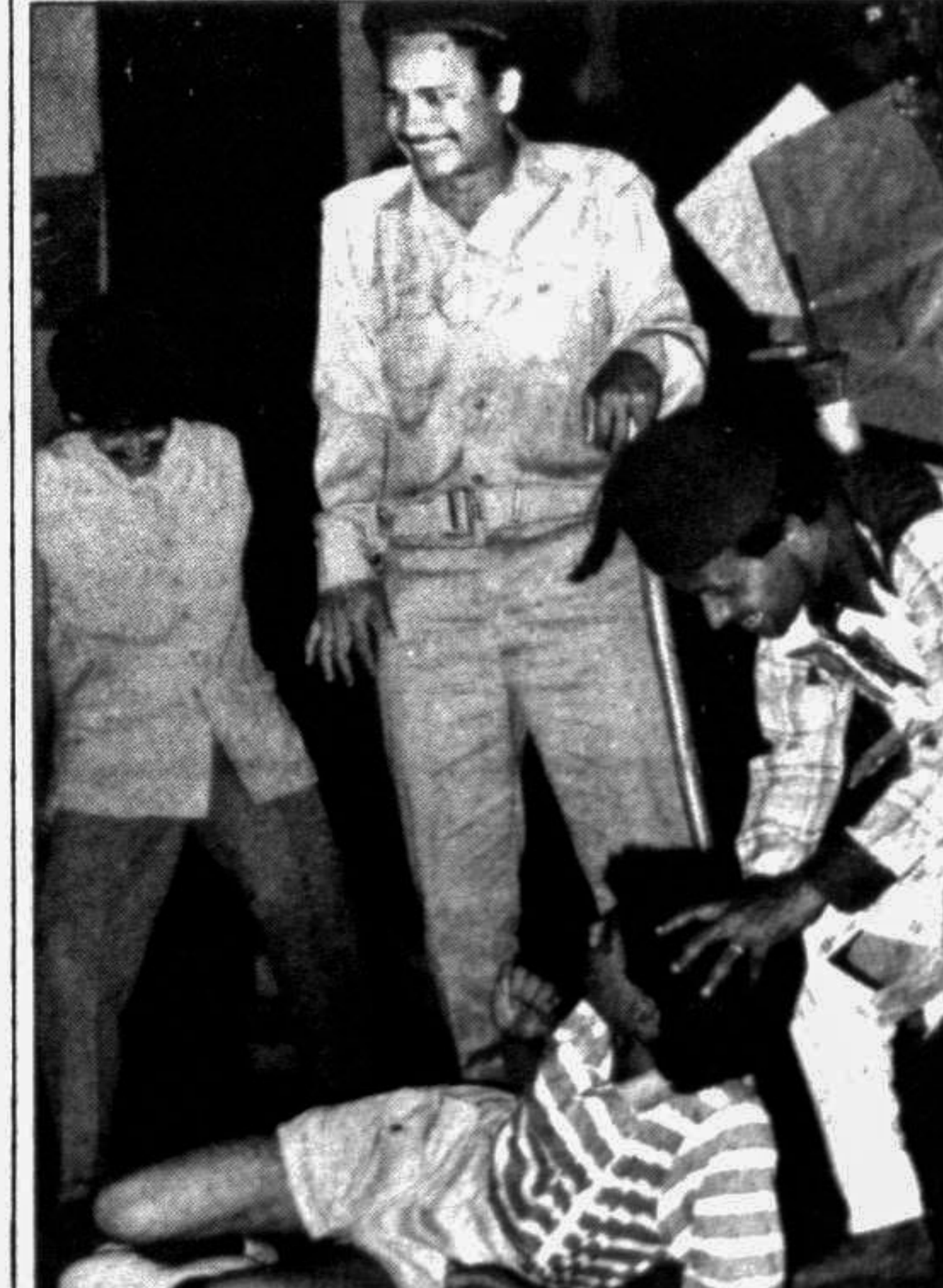
The lowest minimum temperature recorded in Dhaka on Monday was 17.5 degree Celsius while the country's lowest temperature 13.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Mymensingh.

The temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns of the country on Monday were:

Cities/towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Maximum	Minimum	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	22.5	17.5	89	78
Chittagong	24	17.9	82	78
Rajshahi	25.4	14.2	83	80
Khulna	22.5	16.5	100	87
Bogra	25.8	14.1	91	70
Rangpur	24.4	16.1	85	66
Jessore	24.2	17.6	Na	80
Barisal	22.2	17	100	85
Cox's Bazar	27.4	18	81	71
Mymensingh	23	13.2	89	73
Dinajpur	25.8	15	88	69

The minimum temperature recorded in important cities of the region on Monday were:

	degree	Celsius
Hong Kong	15	-
Karachi	13	-
New Delhi	9	-
Bangkok	22	-
Singapore	26	-
Beijing	5	-



Tirjak Natya Gosthi from Chittagong staging play Gridhar at the Central Shaheed Minar on Monday as part of week-long drama week, organised by Group Theatre in commemoration of 1952 language martyrs -Star Photo

**PROGRAMME DU debate contest**

Inter Hall Debate Competition '91 and Inter Department Debate Competition '91 of Dhaka University begins from today (Tuesday) a press release said Sunday night.

Under the auspices of DUCSU literary section the competition will be inaugurated by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. Wakil Ahmed on February at 3-30 pm.

**Seminar on democracy**

Dhaka University Journalists Union will hold a seminar on "democracy and our newspaper" on February 5 at TSC cafeteria.

Dr. Enajuddin Ahmed will present the keynote paper. Discussants of the seminar will be Dr. Kamal Hossain, Barrister Nazmul Huda, Hasanul Haque Inu, Haidar Akbar Khan Rono, Dr. Golam Rahman, Zahurul Haque and Ataus Samad.

**BUET seminar**

A National Seminar on "Technology for Sustainable National Development" organised by Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Teachers Association, will be held on February 14.

Leading educationist, politicians, economists, planners, architects and engineers will take part in the seminar. It is open for all interested are requested to contact the President and General Secretary of BUET Teachers Association for details.

**Rotary Club meet**

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held today (Tuesday) at 5 pm for 5:25 pm at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Today's guest speaker, Mr. M. Anisul Islam, Managing Director, IDLC, will speak on lease financing.