

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Native Oliver twists

by Fayza Haq

Dressed in tatters, skinny, emaciated children on the streets of Dhaka often invite pity of the passerby. But are they really what they seem to be — hopeless victims of circumstances?

Thin, scrawny, sun-burnt and with spindly limbs, hundreds of urchins line the roads, and so make easy communications in our narrow streets near impossible. Mumbling prayers, moaning about pathetic plights about their non-existent mothers an ailing sisters, and muttering dire threats if teased or taunted by riders in their vehicles, these impoverished young boys are indeed pitiable. Swear words are the only volatile weapons that the hungry an penniless young things have ready at times against the slings and arrows of life.

Often, when the car is stopping for a traffic signal the poor beggars accost one with commodities like books and magazines, incense for burning, half-dry bouquets of jasmynes or marigolds. Little caged birds are also exhibited with the same enthusiasm, as are guavas or grapefruit picked from some garden a couple of days ago. They are enterprising enough to try and sell anything from books to sweet cakes although a lot of their efforts are no more than an exercise in futility.

These desperadoes serve as hawkers of newspapers and magazines. They cling on to freely distributed foreign periodicals, which they sell for a taka or so. This the buyer will pay only out of pity and sympathy for the woe be gone urchins.

Like cleaning cars, these waifs sometimes learn the art of shining shoes which come quite handy to them, providing them work and enough occupation to keep them out of mischief. Sucking at sugar cane pieces, chewing stale bread and munching a dried up peanut or two, the homeless and hapless streetboys often lend a hand with the wayside teashops. More

than in the ration shops or at the grocers, the urchins manage to carve out a career of a sort, by pouring smoking hot tea for tired way farers, who may be pausing a while in their desperate hunt to earn a living. With gossip and crumbs of food for their hungry stomachs, these kids are relatively better off than those who limit their activities hanging around traffic lights and cross roads.

When the urchins make an effort to learn they can be sensible enough to go in for regular jobs in the homes of people, for a small price. However, the average street child is addicted to being dirty, bedraggled, and half-starved rather than join up regular work.

The street kids can become ruthless, selfish and greedy with training under "ustads". They become so heartless that to earn Tk 100 they would be prepared to backstab their own friend. As for pick-pocketing, the hours of practice at the dens, ensure items like pens, watches, moneybags as booty to "ustad".

Instead of the criminal tasks, these boys on the streets of Dhaka would have well employed themselves as assistant, to car mechanics, or owners of teashops. But the unusual amount earned in a tricky way seems more attractive to them than being a cobbler's assistant or being the second man in a pavement stall for second-hand books.

It is up to the social workers and civil authorities to come to the rescue of the misguided and unaided young ones and to firmly dissuade the youngsters from sliding into perverse habits and questionable ways of earning a living. Punishment preceded by a just review of their faults should do away with the tantalising lure of outright stealing, cheating or begging.



A brief partime on the street where they belong. Photo Shamsul Haq.

## Suhrawardhy hospital strike for 3rd day

By Staff Correspondent

A section of physicians and employees of Suhrawardhy Hospital continued their partial strike on Thursday demanding the removal of Project Director, Dr. Jahannara Begum.

The Unit of class III Government Employees Association of the Hospital at a meeting held in February 7 urged the concerned authority to bring back normalcy in the hospital by removing the director, the press release added.

## Attack on PGA meet condemned

By Staff Correspondent

One hundred and fifty one students of the Pharmacy Department of Dhaka University and 64 students of the Pharmacy Department of Jahangirnagar University in two separate statements on Wednesday, expressed their concern and condemnation over the attack on the meeting of the Pharmacy Graduates Association (PGA) at the Planning and Development Academy at Nalkehet on January 18 last.

They said that at a time when a process of democracy was being reestablished, such incidences were not only unfortunate but also contrary to the values of democracy.

The signatories to the statements praised the role of the PGA for upholding the cause of the pharmacists of the country. They also demanded punishment to the culprits responsible for this heinous acts.

## Warning against move to impede fair polls

CHITTAGONG, Feb 7: Chief Election Commissioner Justice

Abdur Rauf Chowdhury Thursday warned against any move of any quarter to impede free, fair and neutral holding of parliamentary polls, reports UNB.

Addressing Government officials at Chittagong City Corporation auditorium, he said the election Commission was determined to hold the election in a free and fair atmosphere.

Alerting the persons engaged in election work about their role, he said they should behave in such a way that no quarters could question their sincerity, competence and neutrality.

Election Commissioners Justice Syed Mesbauddin Hossain and Justice Naim Uddin Ahmed were also present.

## TV employees on strike

Third and fourth class employees of Bangladesh Television (BTV) went on an indefinite strike from Thursday hampering its normal functioning, informed sources said, reports UNB.

The employees had been agitating for the implementation of the agreement signed with the past government.

# Wild bird fast going extinct

by Inam Ahmed

The lucrative trade in wild birds in reaping rich harvest for the illegal vendors at different city points.

Endangered species are among the birds on sale. Chakha (shel duck), a migratory bird is selling at Taka 350 a pair.

Vendors are also selling Kalim, a beautiful bird about the size of a chicken. Once found in abundance in the villages, Kalims are selling at Taka 300 to Taka 450 a pair. The more common Heron can be bought for Taka 50 to Taka 80 a pair.

The vendors are deceiving the public by selling Muscovy Duck, and Khaki Campbell, two domestic species, as exotic winter birds. Muscovy Duck, originally from south America, are bred in Bangladesh, wildlife preservationists said.

Muscovy ducks are sold at Taka 250 a pair. Khaki Campbell, often sold as Chakha, costs Taka 75 to Taka 90 each.

Vendors said they buy these birds from the wholesalers at Tejgaon and Kaptaan bazar of the city. The birds are procured mostly from haor areas of Sylhet and Mymensingh.

Ripon, a bird seller at Elephant Road, said he earns about Taka 700 to Taka 900 weekly. When the winter season passes, he trades in poultry. But the trade in exotic bird is more profitable. He said the traders sometimes have to pay off the police to carry on the illegal trade.

Wild birds are also sold at Manik Mia Avenue, Baily Road and in the old city area. Doves

are also found in the Kawran Bazar market throughout the year. Different species of rare winter birds are also sold in ferry ghats.

Wild Bird Preservation Society members talking to this correspondent expressed their concern that if wild bird hunting and trading were not

checked, some species may soon go extinct in the country.

The President of the society, Professor Zaker Hossain, said already some species have become extinct, and can not even be found in a zoo anywhere in the world.

Pink-headed duck is one of them. Once found in Bangladesh and Assam, it is now an extinct species in the world list. It was last seen here in 1935.

Professor Zaker named Mukta duck or combed duck of Sylhet and peafowl as two other extinct species of Bangladesh.

Peafowl was last seen in 1960 in Rathura, about 12 miles from Dhaka, though zoologists have not totally abandoned hope of finding a few.

Large whistling teal is yet another species once found here. Presently, only the small teal, known as Sarali, exists. In the winter, flocks of Sarali are seen crowding the sky.

Bangladesh has about 575 species of birds. About 350 are resident and the rest are migratory species.

Concerned sources said that due to destruction of habitats, the number of birds is diminishing rapidly. Haors and marshland, which are the main feeding and breeding grounds of these birds, are being converted to farmland, posing a

threat to the birds of Bangladesh.

Wild Bird Preservation Society has already listed 70 species as endangered. Sources said. Unless quick action programmes are taken, they will soon be wiped out from the earth.

Professor Zaker pointed out that "Man is trespassing into the terrain of the birds. There must be a balance between man and nature." Otherwise the earth will be denuded of some species, which will never be found again, he observed.

## Govt has failed to recover arms: Abbas

By Staff Correspondent

Acting Amoc of Jamaat-e-Islami Abbas Ali Khan has said there were doubts whether the coming parliamentary elections would be free and fair.

Addressing a meeting at Shantinagar Bazar on Wednesday he said government has failed to recover illegal arms.

He also alleged that the electoral code of conduct was being violated.

Presided over by Hasan Fazul Huq the meeting was addressed by Dhaka city Amoc of Jamaat, Abdul Kader Mollah and city secretary A.T.M. Azharul Islam.

## Welfare lies in 4 state principles, says Paltu

The City Awami League President Mozaffar Hossain Paltu said in Dhaka on Thursday that the welfare of the nation lay in the four state principles as enunciated by the father of the nation, reports BSS.

Mr Paltu was speaking at an election rally at Shantinagar here.

Mr Paltu said secularism did not mean atheism rather it ensured religious freedom for every community. The vested groups and the fundamentalists trade on religion as a means to exploit the god-fearing and innocent people of the country, he alleged.

## Video show on Zia

By Staff Correspondent

Sanskriti forum — a cultural organisation arranged a press conference and video-show at the National Press Club on Thursday.

Video cassettes of speeches and rare documentary of late President Ziaur Rahman and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia were played and shown in the conference.

Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury, Advisor of the forum, Professor Dewan Mohammed Azraf and Professor Shahed Ali were present.

## PROGRAMME

Annual confce

A three-day Annual Conference (Salana Jalsa) of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Bangladesh will be held from 8th to 10th Feb, '91 at 4, Bakshi Bazar Road, Dhaka.

The conference will be inaugurated by Janab Mohammad Mustafa Ali, National Amoc of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Bangladesh on 8th Feb '91 after Jumma prayer.

Press confce

Bangladesh Movement for Free Elections' will hold a press conference at National Press Club tomorrow (Saturday) at 11 am, in press release says.

Justice K. M. Sobhan will focus the activities of 'Movement for Free Elections'.

SIPHSA meet

The election meeting of Smoking and Intoxicant Preventive Human Service Association (SIPHSA) will be held on Friday at 4. p.m. at Malibag Biponi Bitan (1st Floor).

K H Soliman Ahmed Kamal, Chairman SIPHSA, will be the chief guest.

## Brazil-World XI match to be telecast today

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Television will telecast this morning the recorded exhibition match between Brazil and the World XI played in October last year. The match was held in celebration of Soccer King Pele's 50th birth anniversary.

The match was held in Italian city of Milan. The programme will begin at 10 am and has been sponsored by Pepsi Cola.

Added attraction of the BTV programme is that millions of soccer fans in Bangladesh will

see star players like Roger Milla and Cereca in action. Although Pele has retired from active soccer long ago, he is still in the football world, inspiring the players to attain fitness in the field.

A viewer, when contacted, told The Daily Star that the BTV would do a great service to the cause of sports in Bangladesh if it telecasts live matches like the Brazil-World XI in future. "There are many sponsors for funding the BTV programmes, if any," he felt.

In the non-stop transmission arranged, news bulleting on election results at every hour, flashes, specially composed songs, cartoons, features and plays will be broadcast.

Radio Bangladesh will broadcast radio reports of the different radio-zones from all the regional stations.

## 43 hour Radio transmission for polls results

Radio Bangladesh has made arrangements to run a continuous 43-hour transmission from 6-30 am on February 27 next through 1 am on March 1, 1991 for broadcast of unofficial results of forthcoming Jatiya Sangsad elections, reports BSS.

Radio Bangladesh will broadcast radio reports of the different radio-zones from all the regional stations.

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

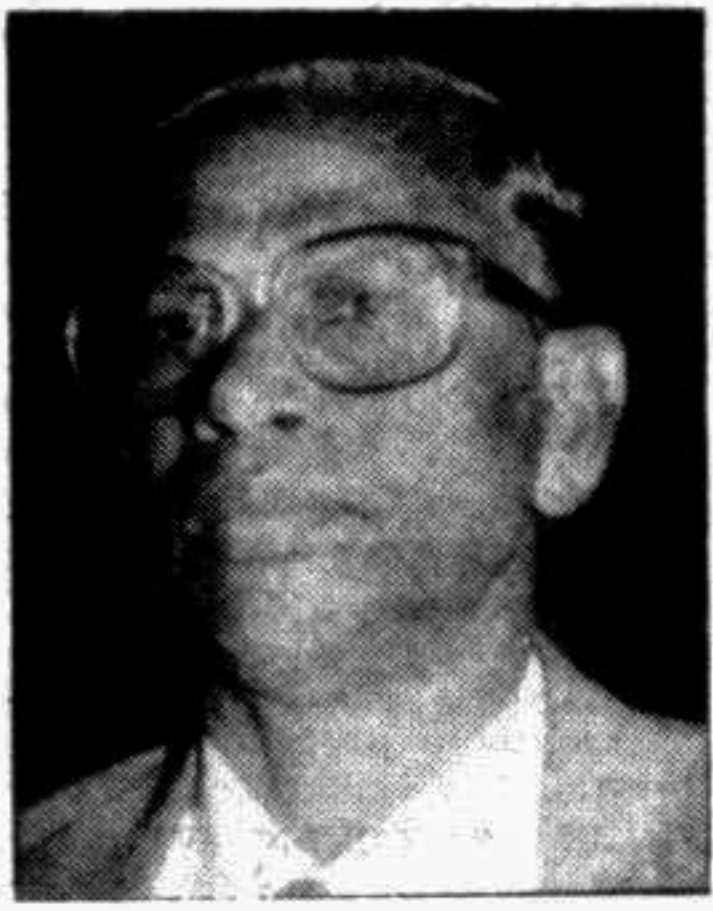
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21 Fern, holy person  
22 Auction word  
24 Vessel  
25 Snow vehicle  
26 Steak order  
28 Drum  
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33 Beamrches  
35 Totals  
37 "Family —"

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5 12 months  
6 Hive dwellers  
7 Youngster  
8-Commercial  
9 Irish  
10 Cornered  
12 Let fall  
13 Small  
16 House top  
19 Roused to vigilance  
21 Slim  
23 Evaporates  
25 European  
27 Guido's high note  
29 Harem room  
31 Trial and error  
33 Transgressor  
34 Hindu garment  
36 Designates  
37 Fluff the hair  
39 Und clothed  
41 Accumulate  
43 "Born —"  
44 Encounter  
47 Three-toed sloths  
48 Sp. woman  
51 Sun god  
53 Exists

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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FINES PEEL  
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ATE ALAR ERIE  
GAD BEDS RATE



## Prof Harun takes over as Bangla Academy DG

By Staff Correspondent

Professor Mohammad Harun -ur -Rashid has taken over as the Director General of Bangla Academy on Thursday. Professor Rashid replaces Professor Mahmud Shah Qureshi.

An eminent educationist, literary critic and columnist Professor Rashid was a Professor in the Department of English, Jahangirnagar University before his appointment as the Director General of Bangla Academy.

Immediately after taking over the charge, Professor Rashid laid floral wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar and the grave of National Poet K. Nazrul Islam.

Professor Rashid was born in Brahmanbaria on December 28, 1939.

He studied in Dhaka and Cambridge Universities. He got Tripose degree in English literature from Cambridge University.

The new Director General of Bangla Academy has authored a number of books. Professor Harun is married and has two sons.

## Seminar

Bangladesh Electronics Society is organising a seminar titled "non-ionizing radiation and its harmful effects" on Saturday at the Atomic Energy Centre in Dhaka, reports BSS.

## Chehlum

Chehlum of Najmunnessa, wife of eminent educationist of the sub-continent late Professor Abu Hena will be held today (Friday).

Milad and doa will be held after Asar prayer at the residence of the deceased at 40, D.N. Sen Road, Gandaria in the city.

Chehlum of Dr. Abdul Mueeed, a retired head for Third World Countries Education Division at UNESCO's Head Office in Paris will be held today

after Asar Prayer at his residence, House No. 28 A, Road No. 18, Sector 7, Uttara, Dhaka, Phone — (891375).

All his relatives, friends and well wishers have been requested to attend and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

## Weather

# Sky to remain cloudy partly

By Staff Correspondent

Weather with partly cloudy sky is likely to remain mainly dry over Bangladesh till Saturday morning, Meteorological Department said.

On Thursday, the night temperature remained nearly unchanged which was above normal by one to two degree Celsius. The night temperature today (Friday) will remain the same over the country, according to Met Office.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Bad weather likely. Extended outlook for another five days: little change. The lowest minimum temperature in Dhaka was 14.6 degree Celsius while the country's lowest temperature at 11 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangpur.

The sun sets today (Friday) at 5.49 pm and rises tomorrow (Saturday) at 6.36 am.

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

| Cities/Towns | Temperature in Celsius |         | Humidity in Percentage |      |
|--------------|------------------------|---------|------------------------|------|
|              | Maximum                | Minimum | 9 am                   | 6 pm |
| Dhaka        | 27                     | 14.6    | 73                     | 61   |
| Chittagong   | 27.4                   | 14.8    | 78                     | 61   |
| Rajshahi     | 27.5                   | 12      | 80                     | 70   |
| Khulna       | 25.2                   | 14.5    | 77                     | 66   |
| Jessore      | 29.2                   | 13.3    | 77                     | NA   |
| Mymensingh   | 26.5                   | 13      | 84                     | 57   |
| Cox's Bazar  | 29.5                   | 18      | 66                     | 57   |
| Bogra        | 28                     | 13      | 72                     | 63   |
| Sylhet       | 26                     | 13.8    | 87                     | 61   |
| Rangpur      | 26.3                   | 11      | NA                     | 53   |
| Barisal      | 27.7                   | 13.2    | 77                     | 75   |

The minimum temperature recorded in major cities of the region on Thursday was:

|             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| Cakuta :    | 16° C |
| Karachi :   | 14° C |
| Singapore : | 25° C |
| Bangkok :   | 25° C |
| Beijing :   | —8° C |
| Hong Kong : | 15° C |



UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh Cole P. Dodge addressing the first conference of editors of regional newspapers at the National Press Club auditorium on Thursday. The conference was organised by DEV features, a non-governmental organisation.

## 'People want to see Ershad in jail'

Awami League leader Dr. Kamal Hossain Wednesday demanded that former President Ershad be sent to Dhaka Central Jail from his present house internment, reports UNB.

Ershad, who is now an under-trial prisoner with two specific criminal cases against him, cannot be interned in a house, Dr. Kamal said addressing an election meeting at Mirpur Shah Ali Girls' High School premises Wednesday evening.

"People want to see Ershad in jail, not interned in a luxurious house", he said.

Referring to Tuesday's violence staged by the Jatiya Party activists near Notre Dame College, the Awami League leader said people must punish these hoodlums.

Dr. Kamal Hossain is contesting the parliamentary elections from Dhaka-11 (Mirpur) constituency.

## AL, JP workers clash in city

Gunshots and blasts in a series of clashes spread panic at Mohammadpur in the city yesterday, leaving at least two injured, police said, reports UNB.

The fighting was a sequel to Monday's attacks of Jatiya Party men on Awami League and BNP workers.

Tension has been prevailing in the area since Monday, when activists of Jatiya Party allegedly attacked and damaged election camps of Awami League and BNP at Salimullah Road.

At about 12 noon yesterday, Kamruzzaman Azad (18), an SSC candidate from Mohammadpur Government High School, was stabbed by armed attackers at the Mohammadpur bus stand, witnesses said. Azad was reported to be a Pro-Awami Chhatra League worker.

The attackers also fired a few blank shots and set off handmade bombs, injuring a truck driver named Abul.



Samaj Sanskritik Gosthi staged play 'Ekti Nabajatak Shishu Abong Kintu' (One New-born baby and but ...) at the Central Shaheed Minar premises on Thursday. With it, the drama week, in commemoration of the 1952 Language Movement, concluded. - Star Photo