

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Heavenly Acts, Earthly Delights

by Sabah Chowdhury

Marriages are made in heaven, goes the common saying and indeed if one were to see the colourful marriage preparations in this part of Asia, one would almost believe it.

Generally, Muslim marriages are dominated by social custom going beyond the simple religious ceremony which faith dictates. If one counts the number of occasions, beginning from the time when the boy's side visit to "look" at the bride-to-be, till the final reception given by the boy's side, it could last anywhere from 15 days to 1 month.

The social practices are in exact contrast to the simple religious ceremony, and in cases border on the showy. While the upper class finds weddings an excuse to spend wildly, the middle class manages to find a reason to go on a shopping spree. In fact, shopping is more than half the fun, for ladies specially in case of weddings.



A typical 'zori' shop, offering materials meant for pre-wedding rituals.

Such customs have naturally spawned its own market and specialised shops catering to the marriage crowd, is quite common now. Usually named "Zori Mahal", "Zori Bitan", "Shubho Bibaho" etc. Dhaka has these kinds of shops in almost every shopping centre of the city, be it big or small.

These shops are easily identified by the dazzling and glittering streamers and decorations of other kinds, hung all around the shops. It is a small enclosed world of beauty and eye-catching colours.

As one enters these shops, a whole indulgent world awaits. The rows of shelves are full of cosmetics and toiletries, both local and of foreign make.

However, a very interesting part of these shops are that they mostly supply items used for the "Gaye Holud", a function which takes place both at the bride's as well as the groom's; two or three days before the actual wedding day. This has nothing to do with Muslim marriages ritually, but much with traditional Indian custom.

Mr. Zatul Abedin, owner of one such shops at Kalabagan said that winter is the high tide

for sale, as it is the marriage season which lasts from October to February.

Talking about business, he informed that cosmetics and toiletries of foreign brand are more expensive than the local ones. The "Pagri" or the headdress of the groom to be worn on the wedding day would cost anything between Taka 200 to 800 depending on the material of which it is made. Those made of costly Bangladeshi synthetic "Muslin" as popularly known would be Taka 500 to 800.

Sold in transparent boxes, they are either white or golden in colour. The traditional shoe to be worn by the groom, often called "nagra" would be something between Taka 200 to 350. One can see rows of these two things in these shops. The cost of decorating the bridegroom's car varies from Taka 200 to 6000, depending on the variety and combination of fresh flowers ordered. Roses and Rajonigandhas would cost the most. It would cost much less, if done with flowers made of cloth or paper. Mr. Abedin said shops like his have design books, to choose from.

About "Gaye Holud," items he said that the items special for this occasion is the "uptan", (a kind of preparation por the skin) locally made, Sohaag Oil etc. Flower jewellery made for the bride-to-be, worn on the Holud, costs between Taka 200 to 500 depending on the flowers. Marigolds cost lesser.

Abedin remarked that "marriages as a social institution is under pressure in Bangladesh, but weddings are becoming more colourful." Perhaps making sure that even if the end is gloomy for some the beginning is at least joyous and colourful.

Replying to a question on the choice of his trade he said, "Although there is a lull period after winter, this is a comparatively stable business, for as long as weddings are to be celebrated in such an elaborate manner, we will be in business".

China clay developed

Bangladesh Shilpa Bank will undertake techno-economic feasibility study of the process developed by BCSIR for producing China clay kaolin from Bijoypur and Sherpur clay, says a press release. An agreement in this regard was signed between Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) and Bangladesh Shilpa Bank at the committee room of BCSIR recently. Dr. M. Wajizaman, Chairman, BCSIR and Abdul Karim, Managing Director of BSB signed the agreement on behalf of the respective organisations. It is mentioned that China clay kaolin is used in ceramics and paper industries to a great extent. Bangladesh imports huge quantity of China clay kaolin from abroad at the cost of foreign exchange component of Tk. 10 crore per year.

Australian prints for museum

A collection of prints of famous Australian paintings was donated to the National Museum by Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans, and his wife, Dr Meran Evans, on February 18, says a press release.

The presentation of the Australian prints was made on behalf of Dr and Senator Evans by the Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh, Mr RK Gate, to the Director General of the National Museum.

Concern over JP mastans' reign of terror

By Staff Correspondent

'Bangladesh Movement for Free Elections' in a statement on Monday expressed concern over "a reign of terror" created by the Jatiya Party mastans.

The Andolan also appealed to the Election Commission to verify the candidates financial position stated by them with evidence of expenditures in different constituencies.

In the statement the Andolan also revealed doubts about the neutrality of the caretaker government.

Paltu condemns attack on Delwar

By Staff Correspondent

The President of Dhaka City Awami League Mozaffar Hossain Paltu on Monday condemned the attack on Maulana Delwar Hossain, Principal of Nurbagh Hospital, a press release said.

He went to see him in a clinic of Malibagh Monday and said such activities of Jamaat-Shibir must be stopped immediately. He also urged AL to exercise restraint.

Illegal travel by train: 2 killed

By Staff Correspondent

Two passengers travelling on the roof of a train were killed and one seriously injured when hit by the iron balls installed to prevent illegal travelling on roofs.

The dead could not be identified and the bodies were not brought to the morgue till 8 at night. Mr Shankar (20) whose head was crushed on the right side is in a comma. His condition is stated to be critical.

The incident happened between Dhaka cantonment station and Tongi station at 3 pm. The travellers were on top of a train coming from Kishoreganj to Dhaka. No cases have been filed.

Ekushey book fair disrupted

By Staff Correspondent

Ekushey book fair was disrupted Monday when employees of Aruna book stall violently protested what they said, authorities' failure to check stealing of books, they also kept the book stall closed in protest.

Employees of 'Aruna' book stall stated, that books worth Tk. 10,000 were stolen on Saturday night and they informed it to the authorities of Bangla Academy demanding compensation. But authorities did not take any step, they complained.

However, some employees of other stalls also alleged. The Academy had failed to perform their role in checking pilferage of books from the stalls regularly.

Bangla Academy sources said that they made a probe body including representatives from book publishers and distributors to enquire into the matter. They also denied the allegation.

Indian Airlines resume flights to Dhaka Feb 23

Indian Airlines will resume its flights between Calcutta and Dhaka from February 23 next after a break of one month, reports BSS.

Initially, the flights will be operated biweekly on Wednesdays and Saturdays but it may later resume its daily schedule. S. Burman, country manager of Indian Airlines, Dhaka said. The Indian Airlines flights between Dhaka and Calcutta were discontinued in the wake of the Gulf war last month.

Weather

Light rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Light rain with thundershower is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi division, Mymensingh and Sylhet. Weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Night temperature is likely to rise by one to three degree Celsius.

Lowest minimum temperature of 10.6 degree Celsius was reported at Srirangal on Monday night. The sun sets on Tuesday at 5.56 pm and rises on Wednesday at 6.29 am.

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

Cities/towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6pm
Dhaka	29.2	16	51	42
Chittagong	28.4	15.4	70	56
Com's Bazar	31.8	17.5	56	48
Rangpur	25.5	12.6	73	53
Rajshahi	28	14.4	78	47
Sylhet	28	14.4	78	47

Minimum temperature of international cities:
Calcutta : 17
Karachi : 25
Bangkok : 25

One-fifth associated with criminal elements

88 per cent candidates in election graduates

Eighty-eight per cent of the candidates contesting the parliamentary polls are graduates and above, indicating an overall high educational status among candidates, according to Preliminary findings of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), reports BSS.

The survey conducted by Mr Mahabub Hossain, Mr. Hossain Zillur Rahman and Mr. Binayak Sen in 61 Upazila and 30 District Headquarters between January 16 and February 2 revealed that only two per cent of the candidates are below SSC.

A total of 1265 households, 2,925 respondents, 605 candidates and 151 constituencies had been covered during the survey.

Dr. Mahabub Hossain, Director General of BIDS said at a seminar at the institute's conference room.

He said large and small traders and professionals dominate the ranks of candidates (82 per cent) while those associated with sectors (Agriculture and Industry) constitute a distant second of 18 per cent.

There is little difference in terms of the class-occupational background of candidates among Awami League, Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jatiya Party, the survey said.

The ranks of Jamaat candidates are dominated by professionals (60 per cent). The ranks of left alliance candidates are evenly divided among professionals (38 per cent), agriculturists (23 per cent) and small traders (21 per cent), findings said.

The survey further said that 69 per cent of all candidates are from higher income groups and they belong relatively more to Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party (75 to 85 per cent) as compared to Jamaat and left alliance (38 to 41 per cent).

An overwhelming urban bias is noted in the residential status of the candidates which constitute 72 per cent. Only eight per cent are regularly resident in villages and another 20 per cent in Upazila Headquarters, it said.

The survey pointed out that Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party candidates are relatively less rural based i.e. 18 to 25 per cent as compared to Jamaat and left alliance candidates with 31 to 47 per cent.

On the question of candidates patronising muscleman, the survey observed that one-fifth of the candidates are alleged to be associated with criminal elements.

Regarding the involvement of the candidates in development activities in these respective constituency, the survey observed that nearly one-quarter of all candidates (24 per cent) have no active involvement in development affairs of their constituencies. "Like absentee landlordism, this points toward a serious problem of absentee politicians," it observed.

The figure showed that 17 per cent of the candidates belonging to Awami League have no developmental role while both Jatiya Party and BNP accounted for 31 per cent each, Jamaat for 30 per cent left alliance 21 per cent.

Tk 4 lakh granted for poet Khaleque

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on Monday sanctioned an amount of Taka four lakh from his discretionary fund for treatment of poet Abdul Khaleque in Bangkok, reports BSS.

The Acting President made the grant for treatment of the poet following appeals to him by different quarters including the Bangladesh Human Rights Organisation to send him abroad for treatment.

Earlier, poet Abdul Khaleque was under treatment at the Pongu Hospital in Dhaka. The hospital authorities recommended that the poet should be sent abroad for better treatment.

The Pongu Hospital authorities estimated that the cost of treatment of poet Abdul Khaleque in Bangkok would be Taka four lakh.

Restriction on licensed arms

The government has issued an order restricting the movement of the owners of the licensed arms out of their houses with arms from February 20 to March 2 in the interest of public safety and maintaining law and order during the coming parliamentary elections, reports BSS.

An official handout said in Dhaka Sunday that as per provision of Section 17 a of the Arms Act of 1878 (11 of 1878) legal action will be taken against the violation of the order.

The prohibitory orders, however, will not be applicable to members of the law-enforcing agencies, the security men and the employees engaged in various government, semi-government, private offices and other important and key installations.

New ICB MD

Quazi Baharul Islam was appointed the Managing Director of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) the for with effect from February, 17, according to a press release.

PROGRAMME

Women Journalists Forum discussion

Bangladesh Women Journalists Forum will hold discussion on "Ekushey February and Role of Woman" today (Tuesday) at 4 pm at Jatya Press Club, reports BSS.

Conscience Council

Conscience Council will hold a press conference today (Tuesday) at 5 pm at the hall room of the National Press Club, Dhaka.

TV refuses to telecast pro-democracy film

By Staff Correspondent

Ehteshamur Rahman, member of the Advisory Council of Bangladesh Human Rights Implementation Organisation alleged that the television authority has refused to exhibit a movie 'Ganotantr Sandhane' (In search of democracy).

In a press conference on Sunday at Press Club Ehteshamur Rahman said that the film was produced with the financial assistance from Asia Foundation to create aware-

ness among the people about their exercise of franchise. The Film Censor Board duly examined the film and released it after necessary editing.

He said that the human rights organisation was ready to make payment to show the film through the television but the Information Secretary in a letter regretted the proposal made by the organisation to telecast the movie through Bangladesh Television.

70 foreign journalists to cover polls

Seventy journalists have, so far, obtained visas from Bangladesh missions to visit the country to cover the parliamentary elections, official sources said, reports UNB.

They represent various foreign and international media including radio, television, news agencies and newspapers.

Hotel Sonargaon will open a media centre from February 22.

JSP to blockade Dhaka demanding Ershad's release

By Staff Correspondent

General Secretary of Jatiya Samik Party, Mr M A Gafur in a workers meeting on Sunday said the workers would stage a blockade on Dhaka unless deposed President Ershad and his accomplices are freed.

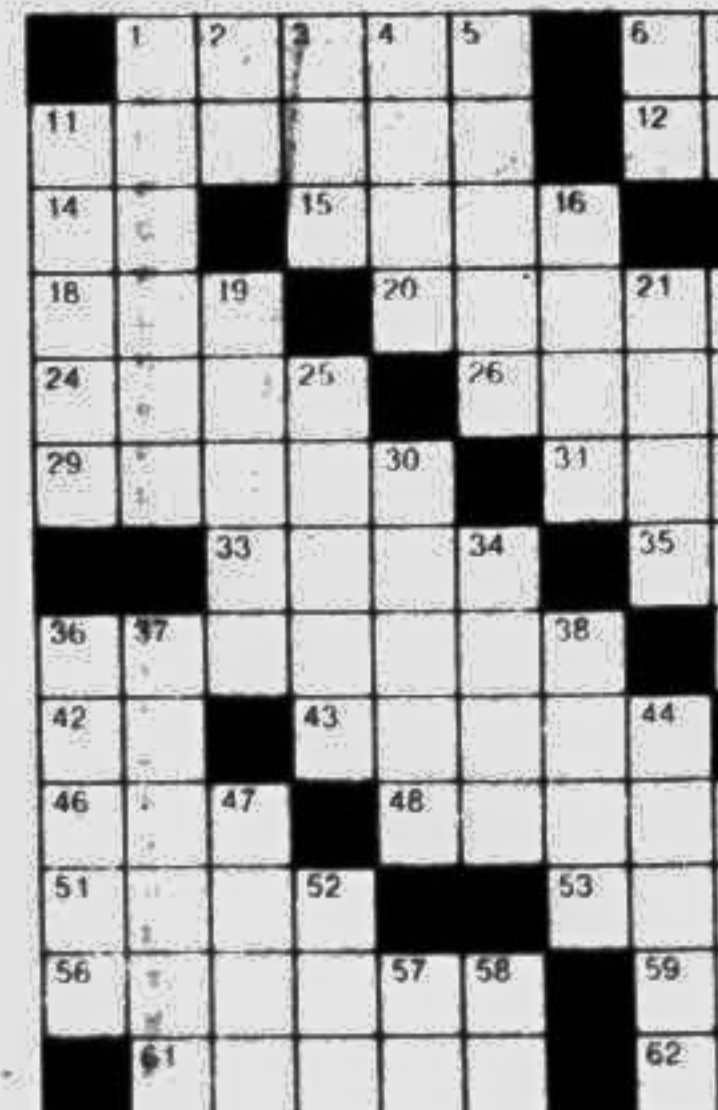
He also urged the government to implement the wages commission for the workers, says a press release.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

- ACROSS
- 1 Delamatory statement
 - 6 Title of respect
 - 11 Signify
 - 12 White poppies
 - 14 Silver symbol
 - 15 Baseball's Berra
 - 17 Departed
 - 18 Inlet
 - 20 Tiles
 - 23 Nice season
 - 24 Vast ages
 - 26 Washes
 - 28 Early morn
 - 29 Pny in a manner
 - 31 Domestic servants
 - 33 Lat fall
 - 35 Decays
 - 36 Bailey of the
- DOWN
- 1 Multitude
 - 2 At home
 - 3 "Golden"
 - 4 Short jacket

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	D	A	M	U	R	A	W	L
D	I	M	E	S	E	R	E	L
O	F	P	O	S	T	S	U	E
F	E	R	E	E	L	P	U	P
M	E	T	E	T	R	E	E	T
E	R	O	D	E	S	A	R	A
D	E	N	I	A	L	D	O	N
I	N	T	R	I	P	S	T	R
A	C	T	N	A	I	L	S	A
L	E	A	N	R	A	I	D	N
B	A	N	E	T	O	S	E	L
E	A	T	T	O	S	E	L	W



- ACROSS
- 39 Musical symbols
 - 42 -- garde
 - 43 Siskins
 - 45 Fasten
 - 46 Swiss river
 - 48 Writing tablet
 - 50 Even score
 - 51 Pintail duck
 - 53 Play part
 - 55 French article
 - 56 Occupant
 - 59 Colorful bird
 - 61 Tardier
 - 62 Scoff
- DOWN
- 5 "Eagles"
 - 6 Mother
 - 7 Jewish month
 - 8 Condensed moisture
 - 9 Toward shelter
 - 10 Pertaining to the mind
 - 11 Challenges
 - 13 Stalks
 - 16 Moham-medan priest
 - 19 Positive pole
 - 21 Without end
 - 22 Spanish title
 - 25 Classifies
 - 27 Locations
 - 30 Takes a vote
 - 32 Item of property
 - 34 Toll
 - 36 "Beauty and the --"
 - 37 Glossy paint
 - 38 Mast
 - 40 Clothes-maker
 - 41 Rain and hail
 - 44 Ceases
 - 47 Rockfish
 - 49 Verve
 - 52 Dine
 - 54 Before
 - 57 Neon symbol
 - 58 Roosevelt ID
 - 60 Concerning

PHILIPS IN SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM



For more information call our specialist at Tel : 316011. Contact Person : Dr. G. Faruque, Philips Bangladesh Limited, 16/17 Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.

