

Dhaka Day by Day

When 'babies' refuse, Mishuks ready to greet

by Sabah Chowdhury

In ancient times, Romans as well as the Arabian conquerors of the subcontinent used to go to war on chariots, but for normal journeys they depended on their own feet. For special occasions there were the palanquins for those who could afford them. Alas! for us, ordinary mortals of the modern day substitutes are there in life but quite unreachably so.

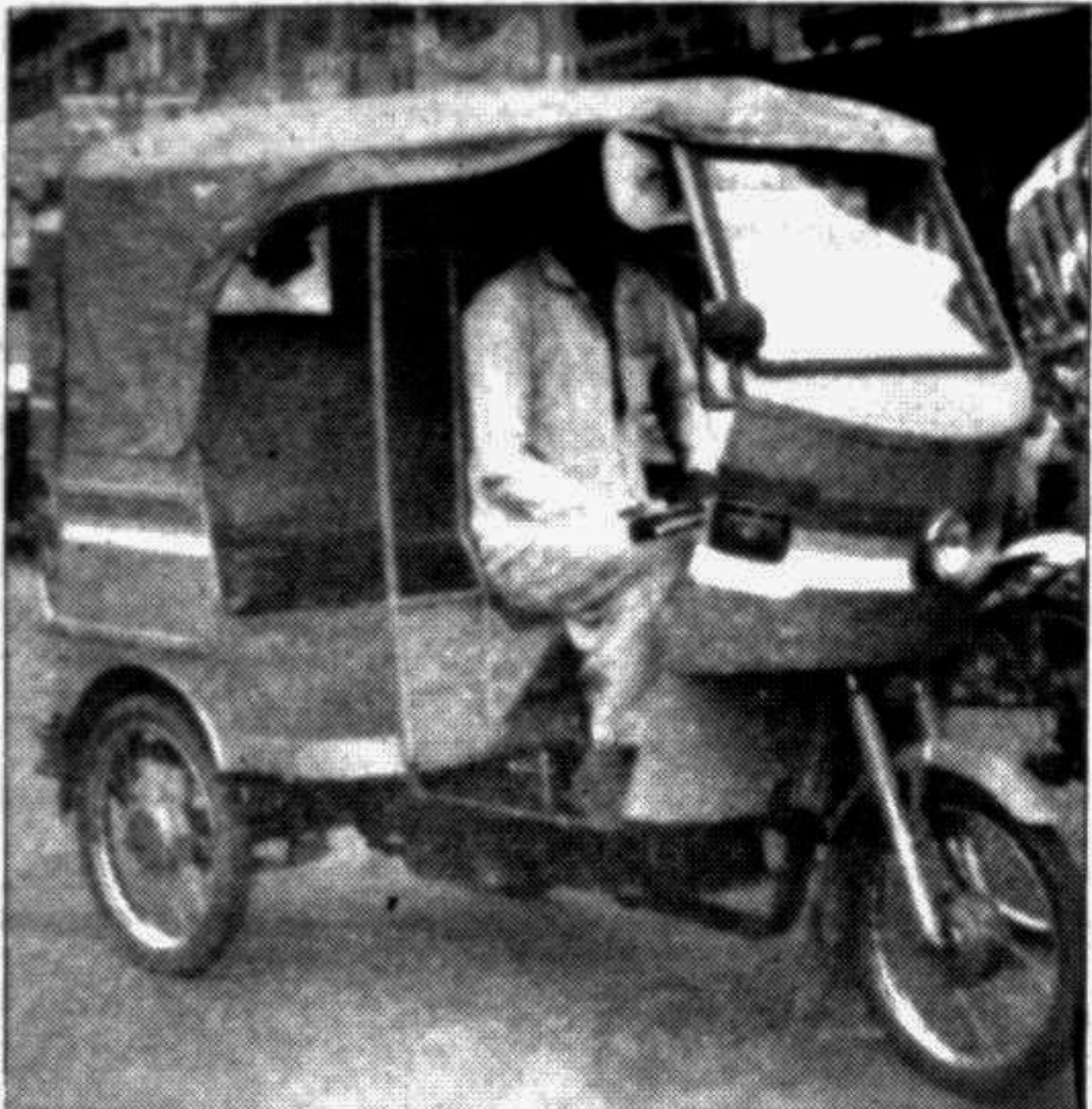
That does not mean we do not have our own kind of public transport. We do have them and in a wide and rich variety too. They may not be as regal as those used by the Romans but they are good enough for us.

Foremost among them is the cycle-rickshaw. Any one who has visited our metropolis could have hardly failed to notice it or even have a ride on it. Operated by muscle-power, it is used, by and large, both for short and long distance travel within the city.

For three decades now, engine-run three-wheelers, known as "Scooters", or "Baby Taxis", or even just "baby", have also been plying the roads of Dhaka. They are naturally faster, more expensive and are more spacious than the cycle-rickshaw. Therefore, it is used by the more affluent section of our people, who do not own a private transport like a car. These vehicles are specially useful in times of emergency, like removing a patient to the hospital or for a family outing when both speed and space is required.

Over the years, the city of Dhaka gradually expanded, and to fulfill its growing demands, new means of transport besides the age-old buses, were introduced. Minibuses, tempos and vans are some of them.

Some six years back another type of a three-wheeler was introduced, called "Mishuk", which means "friendly", in Bangla. They were means in the first place to provide alternative employment to educated youths of the country.



Mishuk, the alternate 'baby'

"Mishuks" are lighter and prove quite jumpy on bumpy and uneven roads. These are slightly different from the "baby taxi", being more open on the sides and less spacious than the "scooters".

Initially people were a little hesitant in using these new three-wheelers. They took these to be accident-prone and perhaps with reason.

Ahmed Hussein, a driver of one such "Mishuk", is quite a gentleman and is all co-operation. The vehicle he drives does not belong to him. He has hired it from a friend of his, to whom he pays a daily rent of Taka 130.

An under-graduate, Hussein was previously employed with a firm. Due to a layoff there, he lost the job. Trying his luck at a number of jobs as well as moonlighting, he finally got this chance. He drives his vehicle from seven in the morning to 9.30 at night. After payment of necessary expenses, i.e. house rent, education of two school going children he has about 100 Takas left for himself each day. That's not a bad sum at all, he says.

A Mishuk costs, Taka 45 thousand, and the engine is of Japanese make. Those of the "Scooters", are mostly imported from India, informed Hussein.

"These days people do not hesitate to ride a Mishuk. Certain parts of its engine has been modified so that it jumps less and therefore is more comfortable than before," Hussein says.

"We are able to charge less, as the fuel consumption is less. People are growing to like Mishuk more and more these days", said Hussein proudly.

Whatever the views of the driver of the Mishuk, there is no doubt that it has in its own way been able to be of substantial help in the already over-burdened transportation situation of the city.

Civil defence week begins in Ctg, Rajshahi

CHITTAGONG, Mar 10: The Fire Service and Civil Defence Week began here this morning as elsewhere in the country, reports BSS.

Divisional Commissioner M. A. Bari inaugurated the week and a fire fighting display was held on the occasion at the divisional headquarters of fire service and civil defence here, an official handout said.

Speaking on the occasion, the Divisional Commissioner stressed the need for peoples awareness to minimise recurrence of fire incidents. He also called upon fire service officials to discharge their duties honestly and promptly so that loss life and property due to fire incidents could be brought down substantially.

The inaugural function was presided over by the Deputy Director of fire services.

BSS adds from Rajshahi: The Fire Service and Civil Defence Week-'91 began here this morning at the premises of Rajshahi Fire Service Station with a colourful march past as a part of the country-wide annual programme.

The week was inaugurated by Mohammad Saifuzzaman, Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi as the chief guest.

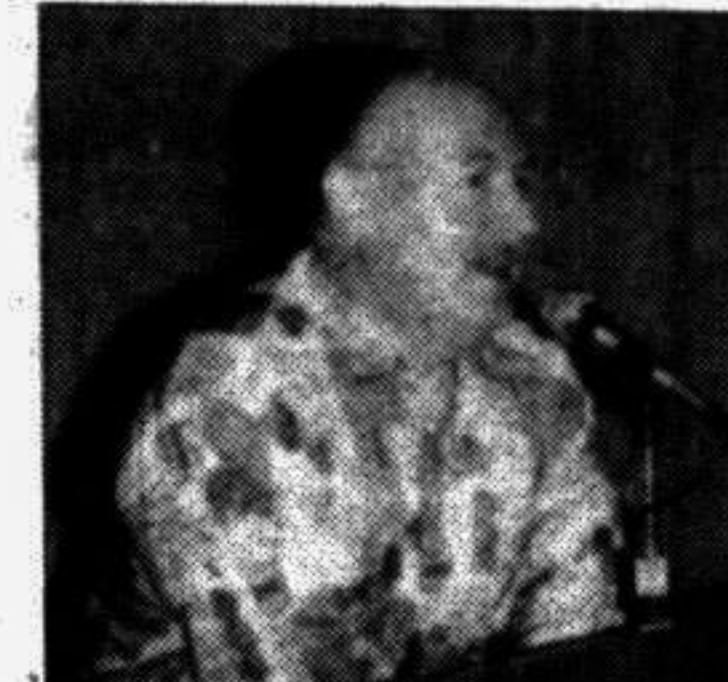
While addressing at the function, he said that the aim of the week was to create awareness among the people against fire incidents.

Mohammad Ali, Deputy Director, Fire Service and Civil Defence of Rajshahi Division also spoke on the occasion.

Satyajit Ray Film Society fest begins

The Satyajit Ray Film Society has organized a week-long festival on the celebrated film-maker in the premises of the Soviet Cultural Center in Dhaka. The festival was inaugurated on Sunday, says a press release.

With the chief guest Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, educational adviser to the President and Special Guests Mr Igor A Saprykin, Minister Counsellor of the Soviet



Embassy in Dhaka as well as Mr AKM Rouf Curator Bangladesh Film Archive, the meeting was presided over by the famous Bangladeshi cartoonist and Vice-President of the Satyajit Ray Film Society Mr Rafiqun Nabi.

"Being rather young the Satyajit Ray Society is doing pretty well in promoting the ideas of peace and humanism among the people, by exploring the art of the famous son of the Bengali nation and world famous film maker," said Mr Saprykin, while addressing the audience. The films of Satyajit Ray have become the symbol of the struggle of the Bengali people for its independence, national culture and language, he added.

The Soviet Counsellor addressing a function on Satyajit Ray in city on Sunday.

Additional Foreign Secretary Riaz Rahman made it clear that "scope is limited right now as the post-war scenario is marked by clearing mines and debris".

Repolling in 5 Rangpur constituencies demanded

Ershad bought hoodlums, admn to win elections

Five candidates who lost to Hussain Muhammad Ershad the Feb 27 polls in Rangpur today demanded repolling, accusing the ousted President of violating election rules, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference in Dhaka, they

alleged Ershad had spent nearly Tk. 15 crore in the five constituencies to "purchase" local hoodlums and the administration.

The local administration was not neutral and failed to take preventive measures against excessive election

expenditure and violence, they complained.

A huge amount of money, they said, was deposited in the accounts of Jatiya Party leaders of Rangpur, while a large chunk in cash was carried from Dhaka by the brother of the former President before



Three of the five Parliamentary poll candidates belonging to the Awami League from Rangpur who addressed a Press conference at National Press Club on Sunday. They alleged supporters of deposed President H.M. Ershad had let loose a reign of terror during polls. —Star photo

the election. The Eight and the Five-Party Alliances' nominee in Rangpur-3 (Sadar) Mohammed Afzal, Awami League candidates, former minister Mottur Rahman of Rangpur-6 (Pirganj) and Ashiqur Rahman of Rangpur-5 (Mithapukur) addressed the conference held at the National Press Club. JP and its labour front unleashed a reign of terror in the areas and attacked workers of other political parties before and during the elections, they told reporters. The candidates, who contested the election with boat symbol, blamed the law enforcing agencies for not arresting JP terrorists including Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu and Abul Kashem, against whom specific charges were lodged. Citing press reports, Ershad's rivals said the voters of Rangpur were "held hostage with money and arms."

Referring to names of nearly 1400 stranded Pakistanis in the voting list in Rangpur-3 constituency alone, Afzal said a huge number of non-local were included in the list by JP activists.

Ershad contested the election in five out of 6 seats in his home district from detention and won all. The other seat was also captured by a JP candidate.

JCD leaders' death anniversary observed

The fourth death anniversary of two central leaders of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal was observed on Saturday, reports BSS.

The central leaders of Chhatra Dal at a commemorative meeting with its convenor and DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman in the chair recalled the contribution of the two leaders and urged all to work to establish their ideals.

Aman in his speech said that real respect to the shaheds would be shown only through implementation of the 19-point development programmes of Shaheed President Zahir Rahman under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia.

Rahman told newsmen the government was in constant touch with countries and agencies concerned to provide them with "our men" in reconstruction works in the war-torn countries. He said American and Saudi companies, given contracts for "rebuilding Kuwait", were expected to recruit Bangladeshi technicians and labourers. The official informed that an official delegation which was due to leave last week for tour of Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia was postponed at the request of the government of the Kingdom. "The scheduled tour was designed to determine the way we can contribute to the reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in the war-ridden regions," Rahman said.

He added the Kuwaiti authorities had assured of redressing losses Bangladesh nationals had suffered after the Iraqi invasion in due course. Ambassador MR Osmani told newsmen "as Iraq is in the grip of civil war and communal violence, the question of getting back our men there doesn't arise right now".

Advertisement for 'প্রপাটি' (Prapati) featuring a logo and text in Bengali. It mentions 'প্রপাটি' and 'ডেভেলপমেন্ট সি' (Development City).

Govt trying to export fresh manpower to Gulf

The government is not only trying its best to send all the repatriated Bangladeshis back to the Gulf countries but also export fresh manpower in large numbers, said an official, reports UNB.

"It's a paramount necessity," said the Foreign Ministry spokesman while briefing newsmen Sunday on the prospect of country's technicians and skilled personnel participating in massive reconstruction and rehabilitation works in the war-ravaged Gulf states.

Additional Foreign Secretary Riaz Rahman made it clear that "scope is limited right now as the post-war scenario is marked by clearing mines and debris".

"We're, however, trying to see how best we can deal with the situation," he told reporters.

Among some 65,000 Bangladeshi nationals working in Kuwait in pre-occupation period, twenty per cent was employed by various public departments, the officials said.

He stated that many Kuwaitis who engaged the rest in their private firms were yet to return to the liberated Emirate.

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Vote dacoity by BAKSAL activists alleged

BNP candidate from Shariatpur-3 constituency S. M. Lutfur Rahman, defeated in the February 27 election, on Saturday alleged that BAKSAL activists had committed "vote dacoity" and were still continuing terrorism in the area, reports UNB.

In a press release issued here, the lost BNP candidate blamed BAKSAL leader Abdur Razzak for the vote dacoity and unleashing a reign of terror. He demanded stern action against it.

Lutfur Rahman strongly protested Razzak's statement, published in a section of the press on Friday, accusing BNP of creating violence. "Razzak's statement was concocted and ill-motivated."

Tk 4 lakh to be spent for Faruq's treatment

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed has sanctioned an amount of Taka four lakh from his Relief and Welfare Fund for the treatment of Faruq Mazhar Raju, a student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, reports BSS.

Mazhar was injured in the same incident in which Dr Milon, a central leader of Bangladesh Medical Association, was killed.

Earlier, the Institute of Engineers sent him to Bangkok for treatment but he had to return home before being fully cured due to financial difficulties.

The Acting President has decided to donate two buses for the transportation of the students of the Dhaka University.

Three held for selling dead cow's meat

Mirpur police arrested Friday three persons on charge of selling rotten meat of dead cow, reports BSS.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said they had taken Abdus Salam, Abdur Rashid and Sekander into custody from near the Water Tank, Section-1, for selling rotten meat and recovered one gunny-load of such meat. A case has been filed, the DMP said.

Programme

A seminar on "application of optical mark reading technology in Bangladesh: practices and prospects" organised by the Computer Centre, BUET, will be held Wednesday at 2.30 p.m. at the BUET Seminar Hall.

Two admitted to DMCH with burn injuries

By Staff Correspondent

Three dwellers of Malibagh slum were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with burn injury on Saturday.

Hospital sources said that Jahangir (24), Selim (24) and Alifon (35) were taken by their neighbours when fire broke out in the slum. Some houses of the slum were also gutted.

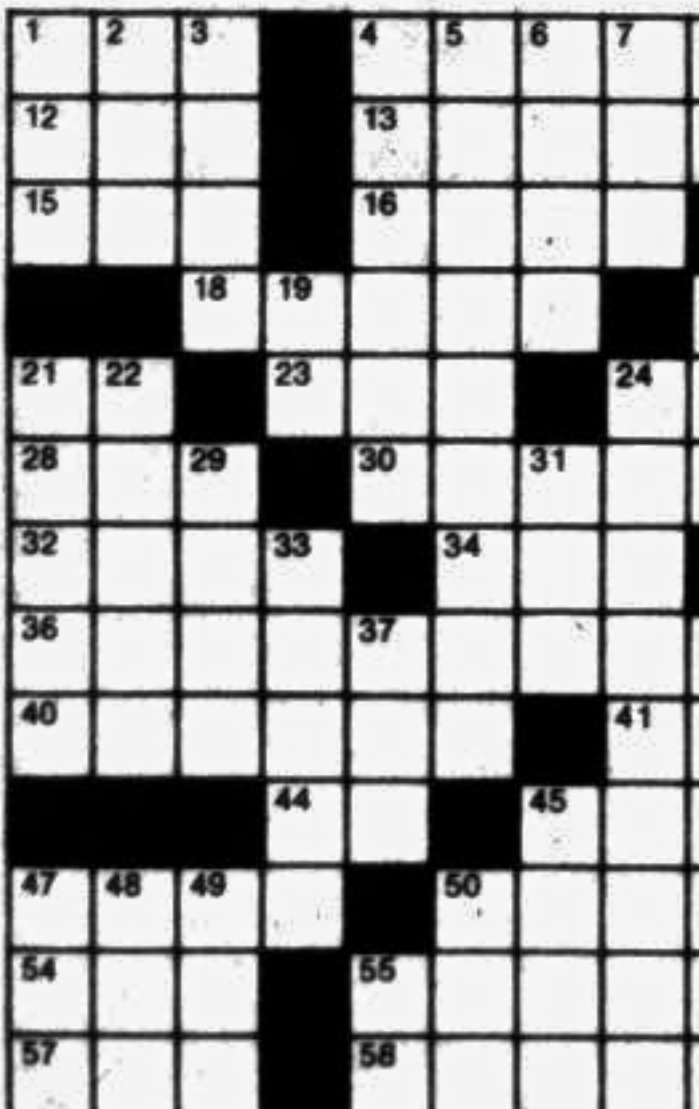
When contacted Police and Fire Brigade authorities expressed their ignorance of the incident.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

- ACROSS
1 Novelty
4 Scatter
9 TV's Carney
12 Frozen water
13 Clan
14 Female deer
15 Earl Grey
16 Mature
17 Speck
18 Hold on
19 property: pl.
20 Behold!
21 Sun god
23 Algonquian
24 Pretentious home
26 Orangutan
30 Relieves
32 "— the
34 Transfix
35 Warren
36 Beauty film
38 Widespread
39 Diocese

Answer to Previous Puzzle

MAP FATE HEAT
ERA RIOT ETNA
TERROR ARM EM
DOG APE OWE
SHOW ATE NU
HEN FIT TITL
OR LATERAL AG
POWER NIB BIG
AT ADO WARS
OLD ENFS FAT
GO BAT ULSTER
LAME EASE LEA
EDIT SMEE ELM



- DOWN
1 In great health
2 High card
3 Monty Hall's speciality
4 Brook
5 Fundamental truth
6 Tears
7 TV's Vigoda
8 Old pronoun
9 Fuss
10 Decay
11 Golf mound
17 Tooth
19 Exits
20 Fall behind
21 Grates
22 Separate
24 Highest points
25 The sweetsop
26 Yielded; granted
27 Ancient chariot
29 Without end
31 Even score
33 Moral badness: pl.
37 Suitable
38 Walks on
42 Printer's measure
45 Painful
46 Pieces out
47 A DeLuxe
48 Period of time
49 Recent
50 Thick, black substance
52 Greek letter
53 Nevertheless
55 B-E linkup

Weather

Light rain likely

By Star Correspondent
Light rain or shower with temporary gusty/squally winds likely to occur at one or two places over the regions of Rajshahi, Bogra, Pabna, Tangail, Dhaka, Comilla, Noakhali and Jessore. Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged all over the country.

Weather remained dry in the country. Day temperature remained mostly unchanged throughout the country except Rangpur, Ishurdi and Teknaf where they rose by 2 degree Celsius.

Highest maximum temperature of 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Ishurdi and lowest minimum of 14.2 degree at Dinajpur.

The sun sets Monday at 6.06 pm and rises on Tuesday at 6.12 am.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change. Extended outlook for another five days: Rainfall likely to increase. Temperature and humidity of some cities on Sunday:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity (%). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Jessore, Barisal.

Obituary

Mr. Jamaluddin Ahmed Chowdhury, a social worker and one-time student leader of Dhaka University during 50's died of a heart attack at his Pirana Paltan residence Saturday, reports BSS.

He was 57. The deceased was son of late Mr. Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chowdhury of Shuagazi in Comilla who was a Minister under the United Front government during the then Pakistan.

DUJ meet March 13

A meeting of the Executive Committee of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) will be held on March 13 at 10.30 a.m. at the National Press Club, DUJ press release said, reports BSS.

The meeting will discuss Wage Board award, welfare fund and organisational matters.

Large advertisement for Reliance Insurance Limited. Features the slogan 'Reliance is not just a Name. You can come and see for yourself.' and a large stylized 'R' logo. Includes contact information for BSB Building, 8 Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.