

Dhaka Day by Day

National Flag Flying over Our House

By S. M. Ali

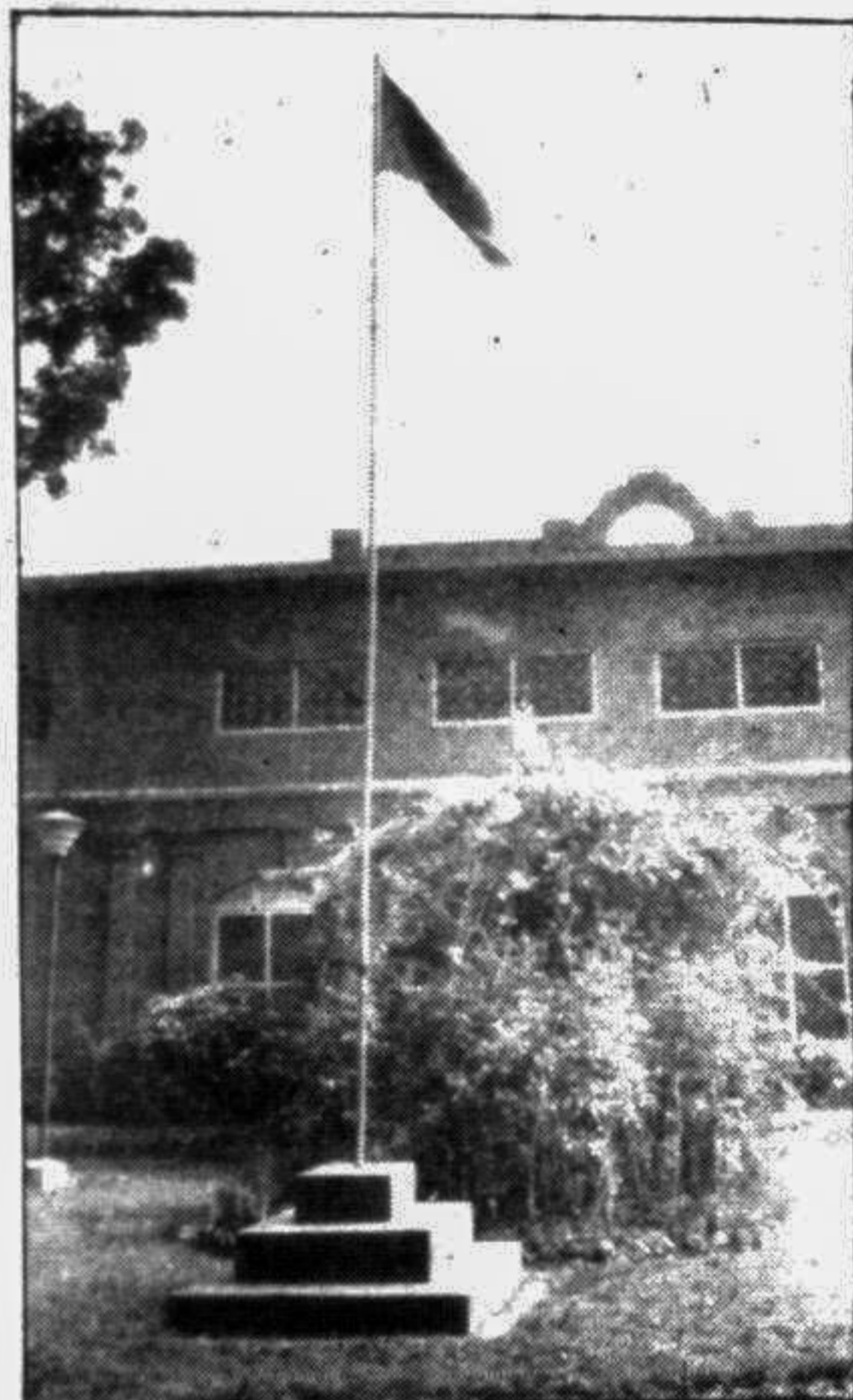
The national flag is now flying over our house, not from the roof, but from the top of a white pole which has been securely placed on our front lawn, appropriately enough, surrounded by flower beds.

The flag looks new as it flutters in the wind. We would like to think that it has not been brought here from the residence of one of the former ministers, especially of the ousted regime. But would it matter, anyway?

In addition to the dignity given to our house by the national flag, we now have something else, protection. There are armed guards placed outside our main gate, who have also put up a tent, the kind that is used by the defence forces, on a vacant plot facing our house.

If our readers cannot yet follow what we are talking about, they may not know what a ministerial residence looks like, from outside. Well, ours is one, perhaps only temporarily. All said and done, I am enjoying the reflected glory of sharing a house with a cabinet minister of barely a week old government.

It is quite a simple situation, anyway. We live in fairly large two-story single house, one half of it is owned and occupied by a well-known politician who has now earned his well-deserved place in the cabinet. In the other half of the house, we — my wife and myself — have rented the first floor from the wife of the



In eager wait for new tenant — a Minister. —Star photo.

nephew of the politician-turned-minister, while the ground floor is occupied by a senior official of the Government of Bangladesh, whose landlord is the nephew of the Minister. A little complicated? Perhaps.

In other words, the politician-turned-minister is NOT my landlord. We would certainly be most uncomfortable having a cabinet minister to deal with, say, about plumbing, repeated power failures and the water bill. So, the present situation in which he is my all-powerful neighbour-minister without being my landlord suits me very well, indeed.

We like seeing the national flag fluttering in the wind and the armed guard standing to attention when the white official car of the minister — mine is also white which causes some confusion — goes out, usually around the time I leave for office. His car is packed with

aides, secretaries and unexpected visitors, with the minister sitting — or rather squeezed — in the middle and looking anything but comfortable. I have so far watched such a start of Minister's day only a couple of times, wondering if all other cabinet members go through the same ordeal every morning. I really would not know.

I would not know because I have never been particularly close any minister in my life, in Bangladesh or outside. None my close relatives has ever reached such a position — this has left a huge gap in our family history — except, I must not forget it, a first cousin who, decades ago, became a state minister in the short-lived central government of Pakistan, under the late Hussain Shahid Suhrawardy. Once, when he was on a visit to Dhaka, I joined him for breakfast which, for a young reporter like myself, was a great treat. However, looking back, I still fell amazed that any man, even a minister, could eat such a huge breakfast. Now, I learn from a colleague that all ministers eat staggeringly big breakfast 'because that's the only way they can face up to the day's ordeal, not to mention of harassment from visitors.'

My colleague's statement about all ministers eating huge breakfasts cannot be entirely true. In 1972, the late Tajuddin Ahmed, the then Finance Minister of Bangladesh invited me over to his place for breakfast. It was one of the simplest, the most wholesome and certainly the most delicious morning meals I have eaten in my life. There was a bowl of 'chira' soaked overnight, mixed with sweet home-made yogurt and banana. This was followed by a soft-boiled egg, a piece of dry toast and hot steaming tea.

I mention about breakfast, because we — my wife and myself — have discussed the question of inviting our neighbour-minister for breakfast, after Ramadan. We feel, we should show this gesture, as one neighbour to another, in recognition of his success which we see in the national flag flying over our house and the armed guard giving all of us the 24-hour protection.

"But why just a breakfast?" my wife, slightly puzzled, asks, "why not lunch or dinner?"

I think of telling her that entertaining a cabinet minister for lunch or dinner involves elaborate preparation and formal protocol arrangement. May be there would be a food taster, with security personnel insisting on eating with us. I will really get very nervous.

Instead, I just say, "Well, a breakfast is a simple, informal affair. He may even appreciate being rescued from his morning visitors many of whom, I am sure, do not let him eat alone."

Since she sees my point pretty quickly — she insists on serving fried noodles while my choice lies with soaked 'chira' mixed with home-made yogurt — I bring up another reason for getting to know my neighbour-minister on a new basis.

"Well," I say, "we can also quietly discuss how we can do a few things together, I through our newspaper and the minister through the government."

"What do you have in mind?" she looks suspicious, puzzled.

"For instance, The Daily Star can start campaigns for better garbage collection, against bad driving and senseless killings on the road, against profiteering in markets and hoarding of essential items, against pollution and lack of sanitation in public places and so on and so forth. While our paper steps up the campaign, one after another, our neighbour-minister will use his official position to ensure that something comes out of our efforts. In other words, he will be our secret ally in the cabinet. We will meet for breakfast at least once in a month and work out our strategy."

My wife looks impressed. "If this is your plan, I will offer him something better than just fried noodles," she says, cheerfully.

We must indeed do it soon. It won't be long before he moves into an official residence somewhere around Minto Road, when, among other things, the national flag will no longer be fluttering over our house.

Dhaka to observe World Theatre Day

World Theatre Day will be observed by the theatre community all over the world on Wednesday, with due festivity, says a Press release. To mark the day, Bangladesh Centre of the International

Theater Institute and Bangladesh Group Theater Federation have organised a seminar on 'Theater for Liberated Society' on Wednesday at 4 pm at the TSC premises.

Nazrul Sangeet Sangstha formed

A new organisation has been floated in city under the name and style of Bangladesh Nazrul Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha, reports UNB.

A 15-member committee was formed with Firoza Begum as President at a meeting of renowned artists of Nazrul's songs held on March 14 to celebrate Nazrul's birth anniversary, a press release said Sunday.

Other members of the committee are Ferdousi Rahman, Khalid Hossain, Nilufar Yasmin, Rawshan Ara Mustafiz, Shabnam Mushtari, Sadia Afrin Mallick, M. A. Mannan, Dilruba Anam, Dalia Nawshin, Fatematzohra, Khairul Anam Shakeel, Rashidunnabi, Salma Ahmed and Barkat Hossain.

Monday

- 5-00 Opening and recitation from Al-Quran
- 5-20 News in Bengali
- 5-30 Cartoon: Flash Cargo
- 5-55 Mahe Ramzan
- 6-20 Bashundhara
- 7-05 TV debate
- 8-00 News in Bengali
- 8-30 Jiboner Janna: Population programme
- 9-00 Hiramon
- 10-00 News in English
- 10-30 Trona Centre: Drama Serial
- 11-15 Khabar/The News
- 11-30 Closing



The APSU held a rally in city on Sunday observing the Black Day highlighting misrule of deposed President HM Ershad —Star photo

Bank mismanagement deplored

No more harmful foreign assistance, says Saifur

Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman on Sunday categorically said the new government would not take any foreign aid that would counter act national interest and need, reports UNB.

Addressing officials of the External Relations Division (ERD) at the National Economic Council (NEC) auditorium in Dhaka on Sunday morning, he asserted the BNP administration would make utmost efforts to mop up the legacy of corruption and mismanagement in aid utilization.

Rahman, however, spoke in favour of continuity in policy reforms, already agreed by the previous regime with donors, meeting sources said.

Any abrupt reversal of existing policies is neither possible nor will it be practical, he added.

Saifur Rahman, who re-

turned to the Finance Ministry after nine years since the overthrow BNP government by Ershad in 1982, in his deliberation painted a gloomy scenario in the country's economic front. The nine-year autocratic rule has destroyed the basic structure of economy.

Growth in productive sectors like industry, agriculture and other major spheres of the national economy have virtually come to a standstill, Rahman said.

Corruption, both policy-based and institutional, which has pervaded the administration over the previous decade should be stamped out once for all, the minister told the officials.

He noted with deep concern existing 'mismismanagement' in the banking sector. Banking has been the worst victim to the autocratic

rule, and it has to be revamped on priority basis, the minister said.

On bilateral relation with India, Saifur Rahman said it is expected to improve following Bangladesh's return to democracy. "Relations between the two democracies should be much better than the relations between an autocracy and a democracy."

He stressed better utilisation of regional forums like SAARC as well as international ones for the benefit of the national economy. Joint economic commissions with different countries will have to be reactivated soon, Saifur said in his speech focussed on the BNP government's economic plans.

ERD Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury also addressed the meeting on behalf of his colleagues.

Plea to cancel promotions

By Staff Correspondent

Engineers' Service Structure and Welfare Committee on Saturday demanded immediate cancellation of promotions of 19-joint Secretaries, who were hurriedly promoted to the rank of Additional Secretaries in different Ministries.

The demand was made in a resolution adopted at a special general meeting of the committee at the Engineers' Institution auditorium.

The meeting also demanded the immediate cancellation of the appointment of a non-engineer as Secretary in the Ministry for Public Works and called upon the authorities to appoint an engineer to the post.

The meeting called for promoting engineers as Secretaries and Joint Secretaries in the Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, Communications, Telephone

and Telegraph, Energy and Mineral Resources and Shipping Ministries.

The meeting in another resolution demanded the cancellation of the appointments of those who are not engineers and hailed from Bangladesh Civil Service cadre as chiefs of the engineering-oriented organisations.

In the resolution the meeting also demanded cancellation of the recommendations of the Matin Committee Report and CONCOPE Model Service Rules.

President of the committee Engineer Md. Anwar Hossain presided over the meeting and Member Secretary of the Committee Engineer Md. Ruhul Matin presented the topic and spoke at the meeting.

Weather

Rain, shower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Cherished rain, shower occurred at Ishurdi, Rajshahi, Bogra and Rangpur while traces of rain unmeasurable were experienced in Dhaka and Faridpur on Sunday, Met office said.

Met office forecast on Sunday more rain and shower during the next 36 hours over one or two places in Rajshahi division and the region of Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tangail, Comilla, and Sylhet.

Weather likely remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Day temperature fell on Saturday by two to four degree Celsius over the country except Kutubdia, Sitakundu, Cox's Bazar where they rose by two to three degree Celsius.

Temperature was unchanged on nearly normal elsewhere over the country.

A complex low lay over Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar and West Bengal on Saturday. Seasonal low lay over South Bay.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Rainfall activities likely to continue.

Outlook for another five days: Dry weather expected. Temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns on Sunday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	29.8	22.2	58	61
Chittagong	35.4	22.6	68	65
Rajshahi	27.5	19.5	94	78
Khulna	33.0	19.8	71	63
Mymensingh	26.5	18.8	86	78
Sylhet	25.7	21.0	87	72
Barisal	32.2	21.2	63	55
Cox's Bazar	35.0	22.5	57	71
Dinajpur	25.5	19.0	62	73
Srimangal	-	18.5	75	-
Sitakundu	35.5	20.0	39	52

Sunset today (Monday) in Dhaka at 6:12 pm and sunrise tomorrow (Tuesday) at 5:58 am.

Highest temperature recorded in the major regional cities on Sunday were:

Karachi	35 degree Celsius	Celcius	Bangkok	38
Colombia	32 degree Celsius	Celcius	Beijing	13
Rangoon	35		Hong Kong	21
Singapur	31			

Painting show concludes

By BUET Correspondent

The 13-day painting exhibition arranged by 'contemporary young artists' exposition 91' concluded at the National Museum gallery Sunday.

Atiqul Alam gets highest C'wealth award

By Staff Correspondent

Mr Atiqul Alam, Dhaka Bureau Chief of Reuters, has won the highest Commonwealth award for journalism — the Astor 1990.

Mr Alam will be flying to London next month to personally receive the award from the Commonwealth Press Union (CPU) at a formal ceremony.

In conferring the award, the CPU has taken into account Mr Alam's excellence in international journalism, particularly his contribution to this profession in the face of great difficulty and sometimes great danger.

Mr Alam becomes the first journalist in South Asia to receive such a high international



award. He is internationally recognised as one of the leading journalists in the Subcontinent.

He has contributed in past to all major newspapers in the world on social, political and economic events in the Subcontinent.

Although by no means a soap-box, Mr Alam has distinguished himself as good speaker. He has travelled across the United States in 1974 and 1979 speaking to students in 36 universities on Bangladesh and its problems.

Mark Wood, Editor-in-Chief of Reuters, say, "Mr Alam's objectivity and fearlessness have become legendary. His refusal to bow to pressure, from whatever sources, has put him in danger a number of times."

Mr Alam, 57, set up Reuters Bureau in Dhaka, the first international news Bureau in Bangladesh, in 1982 and took over as its Chief.

Trial of Ershad demanded APSU call to fill up 1.86 lakh vacant posts

The All Party Students Unity (APSU) Sunday strongly demanded speedy trial of ousted President Ershad and his cronies, reports BSS.

The APSU also demanded arrest and trial of Ershad's corrupt Ministers, MPs, bureaucrats and businessmen.

Speaking at a rally held to mark the democracy killing day entitled 'Black Day' at Dhaka University Aparajeya Bangla premises, the APSU leaders also demanded implementation of their 10-point charter of demands which include withdrawal of all black laws, fill up the vacant one lakh and eighty six thousand government posts.

The APSU leaders said General Ershad had ousted the elected BNP government on gun point on March 24, 1982.

Presided over by Mokhelesur Rahman of Bangladesh Chhatra League (N-S), the rally was addressed by Mosarraf Hossain of Bangladesh Chhatra Mukti, Sajauddin Jafar of Ganatantrik Chhatra Union, Nur Ahmed Bakul of Bangladesh Chhatra Motri and Nasir-Ud-Doza of Bangladesh Chhatra Union.

The student leaders observed that although the autocratic regime had come to an end following the continuous struggle of the three main-

stream opposition alliances, All Party Students Unity (APSU), and other political parties and professional groups, the trial of autocrat Ershad whom they called as 'democracy killer' was yet to complete, they added.

Case against Naba Avijan disposed of

By Staff Correspondent

The Press Council has recently disposed of the case filed by Saiful Islam Dildar, Secretary General, Bangladesh Human Rights Commission against the Editor of the Daily Naba Avijan.

Dildar filed the case for publishing a report titled 'Saiful Islam Dildar removed from Bangladesh Human Rights Commission' in the paper's November 17, 1990 issue which he said, was 'objectionable, false and imaginary'. Dildar also complained that the paper failed to publish a protest letter as was the norms.

The Editor of Naba Avijan appearing before the Commission admitted that the news item was published without his knowledge. He also agreed to publish the protest letter and duly published it.

Job Opportunity

SABINCO invites application for the position of two typists with good command over English language having minimum speed of 40 WPM in English. The position offers a salary around Tk. 5,000/- per month.

Applicants who can join on short notice having minimum qualification of H. S. C. should only apply along with complete bio-data, two passport size photographs, testimonials/ certificates to SABINCO, Steel House (5th floor), Karwan Bazar, Dhaka latest by 03 April 1991.

D-08

NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY BANGLADESH

Essay Competition

to Create Public Awareness on Natural Resources Conservation

Eligibility for the Contest: Students of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools, Colleges and Universities.

Essay Size: About 1200 words for School students and about 2000 words for College and University students.

Prizes for Each Topic:
For School students Tk. 300.00 to Tk. 1000.00 - in total 12 Prizes.
For College and University students Tk. 400.00 to Tk. 2000.00 - in total 18 prizes.

Topics:

1. Landuse and Land Management
2. Tree Resources
3. Fishery Resources
4. Livestock Resources
5. Wildlife Resources
6. Population and Family Planning
7. Health and Sanitation
8. Floods and other Natural Hazards
9. Chemical Fertilizer and Pesticides use
10. Food and Nutrition

The essay should be written on the problems noticed in the locality (Upazila and Zila) of the writer and recommended solution of the problems with a view to sustainable development should be given.

As for example while writing an essay on Landuse and Land management, the present status of Landuse and Land Management in the locality, issues arising out of the present practice and solutions of problems for sustainable development will be discussed. Essays with maps, graphs, and statistics will be given weightage during evaluation.

Terms and Conditions

1. Essay can be written in English or Bengali, typed or handwritten legibly on one side of the paper only.
2. Essays to reach positively at the address of the advertiser not later than 31 May 1991.
3. Each essay to accompany a bio-data of the writer with address and a certificate from the Head of the Institution to the effect that the writer of the essay is a student of the Institution. In case of University students a certificate from the Head of the Department will be acceptable.
4. One student can submit essays on more than one topic.
5. Amount of prize money will depend on the quality of the essay and the decision of the authority will be final.

Names of prize winners will be published in national dailies in due course and the individuals will be contacted directly also.

RESIDENT SENIOR ADVISOR
NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (IUCN)
BANGLADESH AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL BUILDING
FARMGATE, DHAKA-1215

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Detonator
- 4 Bullwinkle, e.g.
- 9 Remuneration
- 12 Time gone by
- 13 Ink
- 14 Falsehood
- 15 Tell
- 17 Handies
- 19 Anger
- 20 Shabby; collog.
- 21 Top of head
- 23 L., N.O.,
- 24 Food
- 25 Subtle
- 27 Half
- 28 Subtle emanation
- 30 Woody plant
- 31 Concerning
- 32 Designates
- 34 Sun god
- 35 Transgresses
- 37 Greek portico

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

HES SCOUR ELL
ARC LAPSE SEA
WARDENS SATED
AIDE IPSO
CAPE STROPPED
REEDS IONS LI
IRS MEANS DIN
MI PARR ELATE
PECULIAR AWED
ORLE ARID
ORALE TWIRLED
NIT SWEEP ETE
EMS TEARS SAW

DOWN

- 5 Individual
- 6 Hypothetical force
- 9 Contestant
- 10 River island
- 11 Affirmative
- 16 Exist
- 18 Redacts
- 20 Apparitions
- 21 Peels
- 22 Avoid
- 23 Disarrange
- 25 Brief
- 26 Junctions
- 28 Equally
- 29 Kept up with interest
- 32 Showy flower
- 33 Symbol
- 36 Most unusual
- 38 Standards of perfection
- 40 King of birds
- 42 Sick
- 43 Toll
- 45 Church part
- 46 Urge on
- 47 Cry of goat
- 48 Deposit
- 49 Decase
- 50 In what manner?
- 53 Princess of Wales

ACROSS

- 38 Doctrine
- 39 Union
- 41 For example; abbr.
- 42 Roman date
- 43 Harvests
- 45 Sudy brew
- 46 Come into view
- 48 Daryl Hannah film
- 51 Aeriform fluid
- 52 Takes on charges
- 54 Zodiac sign
- 55 Ship channel
- 56 Choice part
- 57 Stubble