

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Twisting the Day Away

by Fayza Haq

Women in Dhaka are into aerobics for at least the last ten years. They practise this in places ranging from Sony's Beauty Salon to the cafeteria hall in the American School. Somehow our women scrape the money together and go in for these classes.

Talking to Masud and Sara Ali, who run an aerobics school in Dhanmandi, one realises that women rush to these classes when they have put on weight after about 10 to 15 years of marriage. Husband's eyes begin to rove, and in order to avoid divorce or separation, slimming with aerobics seems the easy way out—specially for the wives of the well-to-do.

"To be physically fit is essential for a happy personal life," says Masud, who is a qualified doctor, while his wife is the instructor at the school. This runs six days a week, and has at least two sets of classes in physical exercise a day.

The aerobic school takes at least three months to break down the fat in the body. 95% of the weight control comes from the food that is chalked out for the clients.

"To exercise is not all. If you play tennis for an hour and then devour a massive club sandwich you have done no good to your figure. The reason why our women put on weight is because the work is done by servants and they sit around doing very little", comments Masud.

It is obvious that you cannot exercise all your life. Every woman has to control her food and do some form of exercise such as a morning walk, climb flights of steps a number of times, and stop thinking about mental and physical satisfaction of food. "Women have to learn to exercise, eat less and do some physical work", adds Sara.

The aerobic school charges Tk 1000 a month, which is cheaper than many other centres. Yet 60% of the women who are the clients are the wives of the upper middle class, who have the time, money and inclination to come here. For 15% of the women, who are the wives of industrialists and business magnates, the money is peanuts, or nothing to frown or have a migraine over. It is the teachers and the housewives of the lower income group who form 25% of the clients, who grumble at the payment, as their sources are limited. For them this is a luxury, although sometimes an essential one if it is to keep the husband from straying. "Working women and independent mothers are the most eager customers," Sara informs.

Apart from the lessons in aerobics the money gives the clients a body steam, a facial scrub, a manicure and pedicure, and a haircut. All these fringe benefits are naturally free. When you are a member you are served expensive slimming tea imported from Thailand, which cuts down the craving for food after exercise.

The clients get lectures on skin hair, physical and medical problems. Aunts and daughters of the customers also begin joining up for the morning and afternoon hop, skip and swings.

Are the profits high in such a business? "It's not like a garment industry. We simply break even. A lot depends on the situation of the country and whether the people are earning enough to be able to pay. With what we earn we cannot go in for a house or a car of our own or a second business. Even when the prices of the consumer goods shoot up we cannot charge the customers more, or we lose our clients," Masud explains.

Reducing by electrical impulses is a method which is common in the west, and is performed in Bangladesh too. But Masud and Sara are opposed to this. "You should do that which is natural. It is good for women who are athletic and have been working out otherwise. It might cause internal problems and affect the organs and glands," comments Masud.

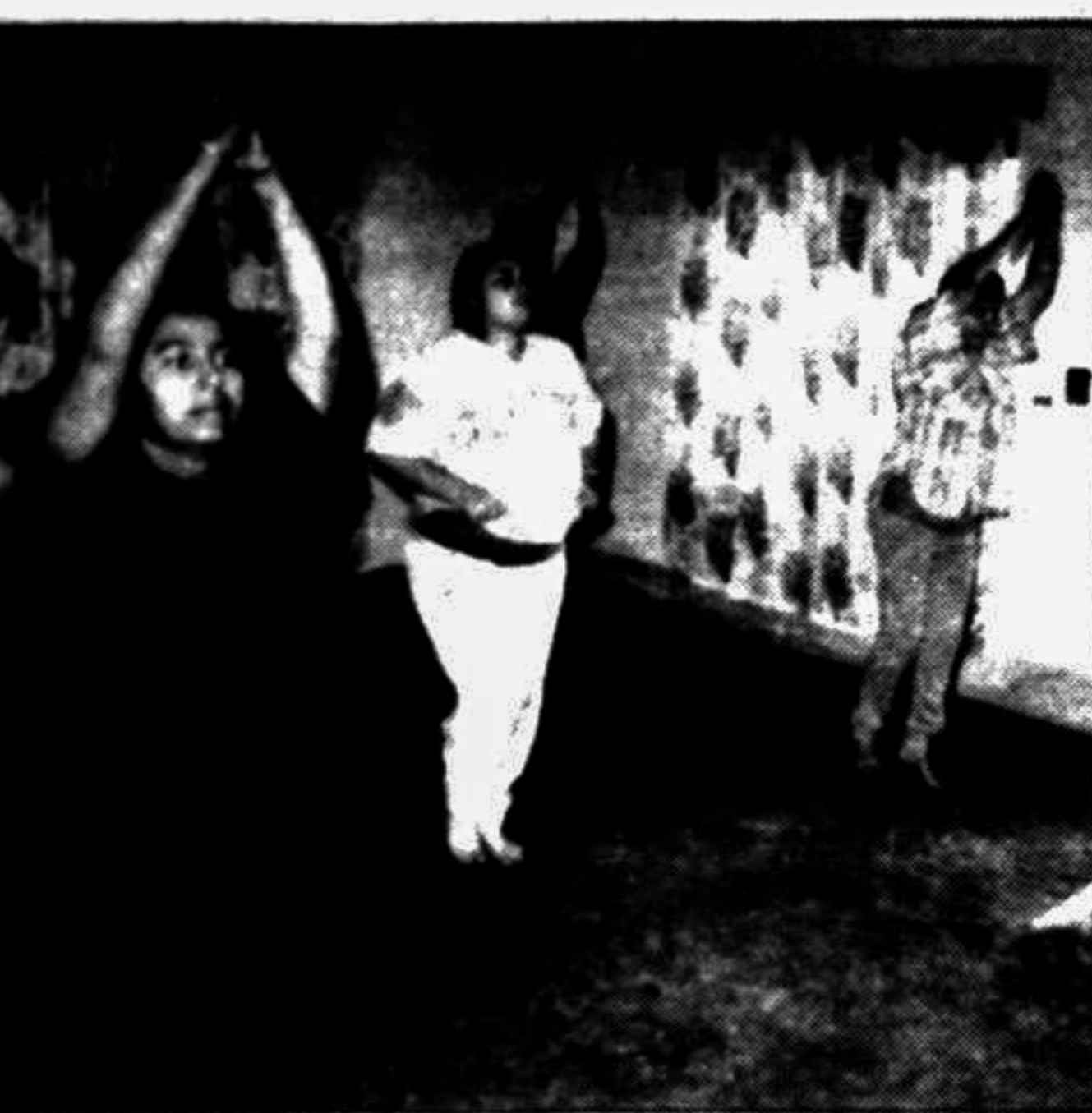
He is all for massages. He believes that it makes the circulation good and stimulates the blood and the skin. "It helps overcome fatigue, pain and tension too," Masud reminds.

Massages are available at the parlour and they range from Tk 80 to Tk 180, each day.

What about fat removal through operation? I have personally known of a woman to die in Melbourne after such an attempt. "Some people have surgical needs for this or their vital organs will be destroyed. The answer is no for cosmetology", Masud and Sara reply firmly.

A Bangladeshi woman's concept of beauty is often totally wrong. There are very few qualified persons to guide our women in the city and outside. They depend on 'upton' bason and home remedies. They think being fair is all that counts. They will even go in for unhealthy repeat bleaches, and wear heaps of make-up that does not suit their personality or complexion. It is believed over the years that a fair complexioned woman is naturally charming.

What is a nine to five working woman to do when she has no time to go beauty parlours? Masud and Sara promise to give voluntary service and give them diets and plan out certain household duties like sweeping to replace workouts.



Aerobics session in progress. — Star photo

### Painting show

A painting exhibition by Amir Jafar and Amir Hossain, two promising young artists of the country will be held at Soviet Cultural Centre, House No 510, Road No-7, Dhanmandi in the city on Sunday at 3 pm, says a press release.

Jointly organized by the cultural department, USSR embassy in Bangladesh and Explosion Artist Association, the exhibition will be inaugurated by Prof. M. Maniruzzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University while Igor A Saprykin Minister Councillor, USSR embassy will be the special guest.

### Programme

A press conference of BIWTA Labour Cooperative Federation will be held today (Friday) at Sicily Chinese Restaurant at 4 pm, says a press release.

The press conference will be followed by an Iftar party.

### Mime show

Renowned French mime artist Lorent Decal and his associates will hold a programme at Shilpakala Academy auditorium on Friday at 10.30 am.

Shilpakala Academy and French embassy have jointly arranged the programme.

Dr. Montirazzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University will attend the function as chief guest.

### Reception

A reception will be accorded to Rashed Khan Menon, Secretary General of Workers Party, at the auditorium of National Book Centre on FRIDAY at 4 pm. People from Babuganj Uttarpurbashi residing in Dhaka has arranged the reception.

### Two killed in road mishaps

Two persons including a minor boy were killed on Thursday in road mishaps in the city.

### Radio, TV to integrate health, edn programmes

An integrated programme on mass education, health care and agriculture will be introduced by Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh from the coming Bengali year, reports BSS.

A decision to this effect was taken at an interministerial meeting held here at the Education Ministry with the Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs Professor A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury in the chair.

The meeting reviewed the on-going programmes on health and agriculture of television and radio and decided to integrate those. It was also decided to change the language and contents of the programme to make it attractive and interesting for the common masses. The mass education programme will include functional education, civil and political rights and responsibility, religious education, education on system of government and science for everyday life.

### Decision to make Pathakoli Trust viable

A meeting of the Pathakoli Trust was held Thursday at Bangladesh Secretariat with Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs Professor A Q M Badruddoza Choudhury in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting reviewed the reports on financial position and status of four primary schools of the trust.

Education Secretary ANM Eusuf, Joint Secretary Nooruddin Mahmood Kamal, members of the trust F H Abd, Mahbub Hossain and Rokunuzzaman Khan (Dadabhai) attended the meeting.

### Tajul Islam PRO to Khaleda

Tajul Islam, Deputy Director of External Publicity Wing under the Ministry of Information, has been appointed Public Relations Officer to the Prime Minister. Islam is a member of the BCS (Information) cadre, reports BSS.

### Weather

## Rain with hails likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain with hails is likely to occur at a few places over Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi divisions and at one or two places over Khulna division during the next 36 hours. Met office said on Thursday.

Day temperature is likely to remain unchanged over the country during the period.

Light rain occurred at Kutubdia, Feni, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Sitakunda and Srimangal on Wednesday.

Day temperature remained nearly unchanged over the country except Srimangal, Sitakunda, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Ishurdi and Khepupara where it fell by two to five degree Celsius.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	33.4	26.0	82	67
Chittagong	31.4	19.5	81	82
Rajshahi	39.0	21.8	86	31
Khulna	33.8	26.4	78	69
Jessore	35.8	25.4		
Barisal	33.0	26.0	80	71
Sylhet	25.5	20.0	89	89
Rangpur	32.6	19.0	87	57
Khepupara	31.5	27.0	71	74
Sitakunda	30.5	20.0	78	78

# No capacity for accommodation in prisons now

## 4,893 convicted prisoners freed from jails so far

A total of 4,893 convicted prisoners had been released from different jails upto March 15 as per the government decision of January 13 following disturbances in Dhaka Central Jail and subsequently in other jails of the country.

In an interview with BSS on Thursday a high official of the Ministry of Home Affairs said the freed convicts also included 793 prisoners who were released from Dhaka Central Jail upto March 31.

The releases are being made under a general amnesty of the Government to the agitated prisoners who, since December last, have been demanding early completion of their trials and reduction of the length of punishment, he said.

The Government has been releasing the convicted prisoners on certain criterion basis under orders issued by the Acting President in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code 401(1), a Home Ministry Statement said.

According to the orders of the Acting President, those convicted prisoners who had served half of their total punishment with relevant concessions till December 6, 1990, would be released immediately. Those who were yet to serve half of their total jail term till December 6, 1990 would be released after the fulfillment of half of the punishment.

Besides, the life term of the convicts till December 6, 1990 will be deemed to be 20 years, those with the punishment of a total of two years or less till December 6, 1990 would be released immediately.

According to the orders of the Acting President, the under-trial prisoners of 16 years of age or less till December 6, 1990, would be released immediately and those of 60 years of age or more and certified by a Committee of Deputy Commissioner, Civil Surgeon, punishment would also be granted the amnesty and concession.

But, the orders said, the former members of the Armed Forces convicted under Bangladesh Army Act Regulation would not fall within the purview of the general amnesty and concession.

Meanwhile, the number of convicted and under-trial prisoners in the country's 76 jails including central jails of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla and Jessore came down to 31,976 on February 28 this year from 39, 917 on November 30 last year, the official said.

He said the accommodation capacity of 76 jails of the country is 20,803 inmates while the number has almost doubled in November. The Dhaka Central Jail, he said, held 3,941 inmates on February 28 in place of its capacity of 2,116 persons.

The prisoners' position in 76 jails of the country on February 28 was: convicted 10,173, under trial 20,316, detenues 1,347 and others 140. In Dhaka Central Jail, the position was: convicted 1,724, under trial 1,665, detenues 552 and others none, the official said.

The prisoners' position on November 30 last year in 76 jails was: convicted 14,815, under-trial 22,370, detenues 2,632 and others 100 while that in Dhaka Central Jail was convicted 2,533, under-trial 1,737 and detenues 996 totalling 5,266 inmates.

Of the 76 jails of the country, four are central jails (Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla and Jessore), 28 district jails, 28 sub-jails and 16 sub-district jails.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Prisons Col. Abdul Matin, told BSS that the overall situation in the jails had remained unchanged with "no improvement and no deterioration" because of the month of the holy Ramadan.

### High-powered body to help stop malpractices in examinations

A meeting of the high-powered committee constituted for making recommendation on stopping malpractices in different public examinations of secondary, higher secondary, degree and madrasa education was held at the conference room of Education Ministry on Thursday, reports BSS.

State Minister for Education and Convenor of the Committee Principal Eunus Khan presided over the meeting.

The meeting discussed matters relating to the sitting, printing and distribution of question papers, and holding of examination. It decided to arrange interviews of some teachers for collection of their opinion.

### Double burner policy of Titas Gas criticised

By Staff Correspondent

President of Bangladesh Gano Azadi League, Alhaj Abbas Samad and Joint Secretary Kazi Alul Islam Ukil in a statement on Thursday condemned the Titas Gas authorities decision to stop permitting one burner stove and also for increasing of gas bill.

They said many consumers of Titas Gas are the poor section of the society. The new decision of the authorities concerned will increase the plight of the poor, they added.

# Jamaat for parliamentary system, to back amendments

Jamaat-e-Islami on Thursday announced its tilt toward "parliamentary democracy" to establish a truly representative government in the country, reports UNB.

"It's the proper way to honour the objectives of the united anti-autocracy movement and get rid of all-powerful one-man rule," the Jamaat Working Committee resolved at a meeting.

The meeting, on the eve of inaugural session of 5th parliament today (Friday) congratulated Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and MPs and hoped it would lead the nation to the path of parliamentary democracy.

Jamaat urged the parliamentary members to play their due role in upholding powers and privileges of parliament and establishing a representative rule in the country.

The meeting with its Acting Ameer Abbas Ali Khan in the chair laid emphasis on a parliamentary system with checks and balance suitable for Bangladesh, saying Britain's parliamentary democracy will not be suited to our country.

"The prime responsibility of this parliament will be bringing necessary amendments to pave the way for parliamentary democracy", it said.

Jamaat called for unity of political parties in this regard like in the anti-autocracy movement to consolidate the victory of the mass upsurge.

In this context, it cited Jamaat's 1980 political declaration which called for introduction of parliamentary system with an elected President as the "Guardian of the Constitution".

Meanwhile, Jamaat's parliamentary party met at the Sunsgad Bhawan this morning with its leader Moulana Matmur Rahman Nizami in the chair.

The meeting, attended by all of its 20 MPs, including two women MPs, pledged to play a "responsible role" in parliament reflecting hopes and aspiration of the people.

# Artistes present guidelines for Radio, TV

A draft outline for transforming state-owned radio and television into autonomous organs has been placed before the government.

The guidelines drafted by the Radio and Television Artists Council (BRTAC), to ensure objective, independent and people-oriented broadcasting of the two mass media, were announced at a press conference in the city Thursday morning.

The BRTAC submitted separate copies of the draft structure of their proposed autonomous body under the style "National Broadcasting Authority" along with the guidelines to Acting President, Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the parliament recently.

According to the proposed principles, the radio and the television will broadcast programmes based on the spirit of the Liberation War and the ideals and principles of the country's constitution.

The Radio and Television will not distort history.

The press conference was attended by the BRTAC President Kalim Sharafi, General Secretary Jamaluddin Hossain, and other executives including Abed Khan, Asad Choudhury and Mohammad Jahangir.

### CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS: 1 "The — and the —" and "Pendulum"; 4 Ballot; 6 Type of cross; 11 Shaggy; 12 Mental image; 14 Azar ID; 15 Grain; 17 Confam; 19 Preame; 21 Cut de —; 23 Sator; 24 Harvest; 25 — and order; 28 Teat; 31 Vn lightly; 33 Proposition; 35 Dioxase; 36 Agave plant; 38 Chast; 41 Hollow; 42 Native metal.

DOWN: 1 Wood; 44 2,000 lbs.; 45 Follows; 46 April; 47 Sly look; 48 Condensed moisture; 51 "Heaven's"; 54 Mr. Buttons; 56 Sn is its; 58 "Married to"; 59 "the —"; 60 Small piano; 62 Speech; 64 Puff; 65 Exist; 66 Short; 68 Informal letter; 69 Telran's; 70 Neither; 71 Rend; 72 Remuneration.

worker's tool; 2 Maiden loved; 3 Couple; 4 Essential; 5 Hypothetical force; 6 Afternoon; 7 "— of Eden"; 8 "The Bull"; 9 Ventilator; 10 Rubber tree; 11 Scorch; 16 Equally; 18 Perched; 20 Make lace; 22 Body of; 23 advisors; 25 Moccasin; 27 Intellect; 29 Corried cloth; 30 Rom; 32 Mr. Boone; 34 Obstruct; 36 Cover; 37 Anger; 39 Seed container; 40 Fall behind; 43 More; 46 Uncanny; 48 Sweet potato; 49 Range of knowledge; 50 Broadly; 52 Show hosted by Gumbel/ Pauly; 53 Slack; 54 Body of the; 55 Yankess; 57 Bond; 59 — Francisco; 60 In honor of; 61 Pedal digit; 63 Gratuitly; 67 Tantulum; 69 Symbol; 69 Sun god.

Answer to Previous Puzzle:

JIB	DEPOY	ACT	
ODA	ANODE	GOA	
TAL	NENE	GOLD	
DECRY	HA		
YD	LEG	SALUTE	
ARA	REGULATED		
MOLL	YUG	SANE	
PLEADINGS	HEM		
ALARIC	EAR	TA	
GE	ISLES		
GALE	ONTO	WEB	
GBI	PATEN	AVE	
DAD	PRODS	YET	

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## Felicitations

April 5, 1991. A milestone in our national life. Today the freedom loving people of Bangladesh embark on a historic journey as the fifth Parliament goes into session. On this auspicious day, we heartily felicitate the newly elected Members of Parliament.

Like every citizen of this country, we too, look forward to the Members of Parliament to safeguard the democratic values and fundamental rights. We hope the guiding principle will be establishment of a "government of the people, by the people and for the people."

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