

Dhaka Day by Day

A Hand Full of Henna

by Sabah Chowdhury

Which woman can say that she hasn't secretly asked the mirror, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of all?" And wished she would be the one. But not everybody is endowed with the gift of beauty, and thus attempts are made through various ways, to emphasize the good points and hide the negative ones. Beauty care has been the companion of woman since civilization began.

Different countries and different cultures have varied concepts of beauty, depending on their respective traditions and cultures. While Western women are satisfied with having their hands and feet manicured and pedicured and putting on nail polish, women of the sub-continent go a step beyond. In our country, women enhance the beauty of their hands and feet by applying "Henna", or "Mehendi". The paste of "Henna" leaves is used to colour the hands and feet. It gives both colour and a special fragrance.

Traditionally, "Henna" is applied, in this sub-continent, on all festive occasions, like Eid, Bark-e-Eid, weddings, engagements, marriage anniversaries and any such joyous occasion. However, that does not mean that it is not applied on other days too. Even a few years ago, the paste used to be prepared by grinding "Henna" leaves with some water. This used to be put on the entire hand with absolutely no design except perhaps for a crescent

and a star, or some very rudimentary shapes. On the foot it used to be applied along the border. Making intricate designs with this paste was quite difficult and unknown, though some enterprising persons used to try to attempt at making patterns of some kind, with matchsticks and hairpins; it generally did not come out very well.

Womenfolk use to procure the Henna leaves from the garden of neighbours or from the market and then it was ground at home. Then the women would gather together after their household work was finished, and apply it late into the night, making a great occasion out of it. An atmosphere was created where fun, laughter, jokes and gossip were shared. Every family and household had its own special recipes, additions to these paste, intended to deepen its stain and increase its longevity.

With time, like everything else, the application of "Mehendi", has undergone a change. Innovations have taken the place of tradition. At present cones of henna are available in the market. This is actually fine, powdered henna paste put packed into a plastic or rubber cone shaped tube container with a pin-hole opening at one end through which henna is applied to make intricate designs. Therefore, now-a-days pastel and floral designs dominate the style in application of modern day Mehendi. This readymade cone is available in all big shops selling cosmetics. The price is reasonable too; each cone costs Taka twenty-five.

This method has its own rule too. After applying it, one has to keep it on for at least four to six hours, and, to keep it wet and intact, a concoction of sugar and lemon is used. Henna is then rubbed off and mustard oil applied. The hand thus decorated is not to be washed for at least twelve hours, as water prevents the colour from deepening. It generally takes a full day for the real colour stays for a week or two.

Now-a-days, this new look of Henna is a good business to be in. Beauty parlours charge between taka 100 to Taka 150 per hand depending on the design and extent, as some prefer to cover a portion of their wrist too. This style is becoming increasingly popular among the younger generation, and young girls themselves are trying to master this art. They do not wait for special occasions to put it on. The intricate design and coloured hands and feet are indeed a beautiful sight.

The putting of Mehendi or Henna as a ceremony has lost its significance. A few decades away, there was enough time on hand for friends, relatives, and neighbours to gather together, and apply it to each other. Today not everyone can afford to stay in houses which have Henna bushes or for that matter any bush at all. Apartment culture has driven us to hatches where green leaves don't sprout on the grounds and neighbourhoods have disappeared into residential blocks, where moving about too much is a risky venture. And finally not everyone has the time to sit, sing and apply Mehendi. Time itself has been squeezed into tubes and cones which while bringing in improvement have taken some part of the ceremony away.



An intricate design being done on a palm with Mehendi. — Star photo

Biman contradicts news item

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has contradicted a news item published in the Daily Star on March 8 last captioned "Aeronautical test for civil engs," according to a press release.

The Airlines made the clarification as: Biman Bangladesh Airlines neither called "building makers" as it was reported to appear in a test for aeronautical engineers nor the report has any compliance with the notice published that invite applications from eligible candidates for the 4 (four) posts of Junior Officer (NDT/Standard Room).

Moreover, the notice which invited applications for the said post did have all clarity containing other relevant terms and references prerequisite for appointment on purely competitive basis.

The question paper has been prepared duly in accordance with the qualifications preferred.

An acre of land in Buddha Gaya for Bangladeshis

The High Commissioner of India K. Srinivasan Monday handed over a communication confirming the Indian government gift of an acre of land in Buddha Gaya, Bihar to the President, Bangladesh Buddha Krishti Prachar Sangha at a simple ceremony held at the Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery, Kamalapur, Dhaka, a press release of the Indian High Commission said, reports BSS.

The gift is in response to a request by representatives of the Bangladesh Buddha Krishti Prachar Sangha for a plot of land at Buddha Gaya to enable the Sangha to build facilities for the benefit of the visiting pilgrims from Bangladesh. Speaking on the occasion the

High Commissioner of India expressed the hope that the Bangladesh Buddha Krishti Prachar Sangha will decide how best to utilise the land to the advantage of the pilgrims from Bangladesh. His Holiness Mahasanghanayaka Visuddhananda Mahathero, President of the Bangladesh Buddha Krishti Prachar Sangha presided over the function.

The Ambassadors of Thailand, Bhutan, Nepal and the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka also spoke on the occasion.

PROGRAMME

Baishakhi Mela

The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation will hold a week-long Baishakhi Mela at the premises of Azimpur Girls' High School from April 9, says a Press release.

Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan and Industry Secretary Shaiful Alam will attend the opening day function.

Leaders and workers of different social and cultural organisations will join Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangshritik Sangstha (JASASS) today. And iftar party will be held on this occasion at 5 pm at Majed Sarder Community Centre.

Children's Fest Apr 23

A Children's Day Festival and a Charity Bazaar will be held with festivities at the Turkish Embassy premises in Dhaka on April 23 (Tuesday), at 3 p.m. The day is celebrated every year on the international level in Turkey and is the first and unique official children's day in the world.



The All-Party Students Unity (APSU) brought out a procession on DU campus on Monday in support of its 10-point demand — Star photo

Memorandum submitted APSU unhappy over list of martyrs

By DU Correspondent

The All-Party Student Unity (APSU) submitted copies of a memorandum Monday to the Speaker, the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition at the Jatiya Sangsad to press for the realisation of its ten-point demands.

A delegation of the APSU went to the Sangsad Bhavan to submit the memorandum.

The ten-point charter of demands included immediate trial of the deposed President Ershad and his associates, establishment of a sovereign parliament and an accountable government, repeal of all black and anti-people laws, introduc-

ing of a scientific and secular educational system, distribution of educational materials in reduced prices and instatement in all 'one lakh and thirty-six thousand vacant seats' in government offices.

Earlier, the APSU held a rally on the DU campus which was addressed by Chhatra Mootree General Secretary Noor Ahmed Bakul. He expressed discontent over the incomplete list of the martyrs who laid their lives in anti-autocracy movement and said the list did not include the names of Habibur Rahman Kabir, Jamil Akhtar Ratan, Farukuzzaman and many others.

The Chhatra Mootree leader also demanded establishment of a "Shaheed Smriti Museum" at the Allah-Wala Bhaban.

Earlier the APSU brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus chanting slogans demanding hanging of Niru and Obhee, who are still absconding.

4 new DIGs of police

By Staff Correspondent

Four police officials have been promoted to the post of Deputy Inspector General, a press release said.

Commandant of Khulna Regional Police Training Centre A T M Mansurul Aziz has been appointed as DIG of Rajshahi Range.

M Rafiqul Islam, Noakhali Regional Police Training Centre, has been made DIG of Dhaka Special Branch.

Osmam Ali Khan commandant of Tangail Regional Police Training Centre, was made DIG of Dhaka Police Headquarters.

Assistant DIG of Dhaka Police Headquarters A F M Mahmud Al-Farid has also been promoted to the post of DIG.

The newly promoted police officials already took over their charges.

'BAEC training recognised abroad'

Dr M.A. Mannan, Chairman, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) informed that the scientists of BAEC in addition to their R & D activities occasionally managed to offer some in-service training courses, the standard of which is now internationally recognised, says a press release.

He informed that within a short period of time some trainees from Vienna and Nepal will attend a training course organised by the BAEC Scientists and Engineers.

Dr. Mannan was speaking as chief guest in a certificate awarding ceremony held in the auditorium of Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka (AECDC) on Sunday.

Dr. M. A. Wazed Miah, Director, AECDC was special guest. A group of 24 students of Mohila Polytechnic Institute, Dhaka received two-month training on Industrial Attachment (Electronics) offered by the Electronics Division of AECDC.

Bid to end malpractices

Selection of exam centres discussed

A meeting of the high powered committee for making recommendation on corruption in the public examinations was held at the conference room of Education Ministry in Dhaka Monday with State Minister for Education Principal Md Eunus Khan in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed various issues relating to preparation and distribution of question papers, selection of examination centres, maintenance of law and order situation at examination centres. Some prominent teachers of Secondary Schools were interviewed at the meeting to ascertain their views on these issues, according to an official handout.

The State Minister said the government was determined to make the education sector free from all sorts of corruptions and malpractices. He called upon the members of the committee to make their recommendations in this regard within the schedule.

Among others, members of the committee Wing Commander (ret'd) Hamidullah Khan MP, Dr Abdul Latif Bhuiyan MP, Dr Abdul Moyn Khan MP, Mr Abdul Hye MP, Mr Firoz Noon and Joint-Secretary of the Ministry Mr Ahmad Hossain attended the meeting.

BCS (Ansar) Assoc greets Khaleda

Bangladesh Civil Service (Ansar) Association Monday congratulated Prime Minister Begum Khaleda for taking the responsibility of the Home Ministry, reports UNB.

In a statement, the association expressed hope that the outstanding problems of the Ansar and VDP service will be solved under her leadership.

Weather

Long-awaited rain at last

By Staff Correspondent

After several days of sweltering heat, the city dwellers were showered with the long-awaited rain on Monday evening.

The sudden rain sent the home-bound people scurrying for shelter in the mid-way.

There was no report of casualties in thunder accompanied by brief rain recorded only 9 mm.

After the shower there was drizzling till the filing of this report.

Met Office on Monday forecast that weather likely to improve during the next 36 hours and more rain and shower may occur over the country.

On Sunday rain shower occurred at a few places in Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi and Dhaka division.

Twenty seven millimetre rainfall recorded in Feni, 9mm in Patuakhali, 7 mm in Rajshahi, 3 mm each in Chandpur, Sandwip, Sitakundi and Ishwardi. Rain also occurred in Sylhet, Rangamati and Bogra.

Day temperature on Sunday remained nearly unchanged over the country except Chandpur, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Ishwardi and Barisal.

Sunday's Westerly low lay over Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and adjoining areas with one of its through extended upto Assam.

Outlook for subsequent two days: weather likely to improve.

Extended outlook for another five days: weather likely to deteriorate at the end of the period.

Temperature and humidity recorded on Monday at major cities and towns.

Cities/ towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9am	6am
Dhaka	34.2	21.8	73	64
Chittagong	32.4	23.1	80	68
Rajshahi	36.6	21.0	70	60
Khulna	35.3	22.5	64	60
Dinajpur	33.6	21.0	84	49
Sylhet	30.0	18.0	82	65
Barisal	35.0	23.0	72	66
Jessore	37.7	21.4	68	45

Maximum temperature recorded in major regional cities on Sunday were:

New Delhi	31	Hong Kong	10
Bankok	34	Colombo	31
Beijing	3	Karachi	31

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Harvest goddess
- Waterway
- Born
- Squid
- Worship
- Recent
- Metal fastener
- Mexican dish
- Lure
- Equality
- "Grit"
- Sipton
- 12 months
- Handle
- Female colico
- Succumb
- A.E.—U
- Drunkard
- Meadow
- C-F linkup
- Pigpen
- Daily
- Uge forward

Answer to Previous Puzzle

BEND ALTO SAP
ERIE ROAD ALE
OAPPLE POMO A
LEAD REPEL
ASSESSED ALE
SPOTS GOT TELL
PI EERIEST AA
SNY NOD ERATO
EM DESTINES
STAI DUST
EAR RE PEOPLE
TIL OGRE NEON
SLY POUR SPUD

DOWN

- Former Russian ruler
- Insect egg
- Free ticket
- Cylinders
- 53 Shopping areas
- Carril and Blanche
- Bailey (toombs)
- Frozen water
- Cylinders
- 62 Grain
- 65 Billy
- Williams
- Saccharine
- Oelt bread
- 67 Down
- Forerunner of CIA
- Fruit seed
- of Liberty
- Serene
- Clever person
- Negative
- Carny
- Year
- Trapper
- Lamprey
- Solemn wonder
- Pares
- Fifth month
- Child's game
- Checker
- Disturbances
- Crony colico
- Assistants
- Walks
- Unsteadily
- Canine
- Hawaiian wreath
- 2,000 lbs
- Sufficient
- Stadium
- Obscure
- Head of church parish
- Female ruff
- Multiplication
- Goes astray
- For fear that
- Proposition
- High card
- Seed
- 59
- Summer Fr.
- 63 French article

NIRMAN SCHOOLS CRICKET TOURNAMENT THE LARGEST SPORTS SPONSORSHIP IN THE COUNTRY



NIRMAN SCHOOLS CRICKET TOURNAMENT

THE FIGURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES:

ZONES.	PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS								
	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91
DHAKA	22	34	30	30	30	40	35	36	35
JESSORE	—	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	10
RANGPUR	—	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	10
FARIDPUR	—	7	8	8	8	6	6	6	8
MYMENSINGH	—	12	12	16	10	12	18	13	16
CHITTAGONG	—	10	13	16	16	16	18	10	17
RAJSHAHI	—	—	8	12	12	12	13	12	14
KHULNA	—	—	9	13	8	12	16	16	16
DINAJPUR	—	—	8	8	8	8	8	10	8
BARISAL	—	—	—	8	6	8	8	8	8
SYLHET	—	—	—	7	5	6	8	8	9
NARAYANGONJ	—	—	—	8	5	6	5	10	6
TANGAIL	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—
PABNA	—	—	—	8	6	8	14	14	16
COMILLA	—	—	—	—	5	6	6	6	—
JHALOKATHI	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
NETROKONA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
MADARIPUR	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
PATUAKHALI	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
RAJBARI	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	8
THAKURGAON	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	6
SATKHIRA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
JHINAIDHA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	22	77	104	158	135	156	171	179	224

SCHOOLS IN EACH ZONE PLAY A TOURNAMENT TO DETERMINE THE ZONAL CHAMPION. ZONAL CHAMPIONS QUALIFY TO PLAY IN THE FINAL ROUND FOR THE NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAMPION OF THE YEAR.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

1984-85	WILLES LITTLE FLOWER SCHOOL	DHAKA
1985-86	WILLES LITTLE FLOWER SCHOOL	DHAKA
1986-87	WILLES LITTLE FLOWER SCHOOL	DHAKA
1987-88	NARAYANGONJ HIGH SCHOOL	NARAYANGONJ
1988-89	MUKUL NEKETAN	MYMENSINGH
1989-90		
1990-91		

ORGANISED BY : BANGLADESH CRICKET CONTROL BOARD.
SPONSORED BY : NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LIMITED.