

Dhaka Day by Day

The Dating Game

by S. Bari

Remember the prince who scaled a mountain of glass to reach his beloved? Or fought an army of goblins? Every fairy tale bristles with the thorns of some enchanted forest which the lonely hero must cross before he can kiss his princess. Every bed-time story tells of straw that must be spun into gold and slippers that must fit before the girl is carried off by her Prince Charming.

Some things never change. Peas in the bed and fighting dragons is no longer required, but the path of love is still pretty sticky in Dhaka. For the vast majority of young people, careful planning of their extra-curricular activities demands strategic skills that rival space shuttle manoeuvres in difficulty and complexity. A friend of mine, eager for a chance to continue wooing his latest heart-throb, was willing to walk up to the fifteenth storey of her apartment building with her, in case anyone caught them together in the lift.

Dating in Dhaka comes complete with stomach-turning fear and every unforeseen circumstance under the sun. Even if you breathe a sign of relief at having left the house unseen, you are sure to puncture a tire or run into a street-wide political rally. Besides, the climax of the dating game here is: "In public, holding hands is risqué, and reserved for members of the same sex or couples over fifty; walking arm in arm is scandalous (also with the same reservations); kissing is taboo (no exceptions)."

Would-be daters also have to contend with a panoply of parental strictures, which make every step hazardous. Arranging the date is an operation in itself. The boy, usually unable to call the girl directly, relies on a go-between. If the girl calls and a guardian answers, she may promptly hang up, leaving an irate and very often suspicious parent on the line. Before picking her up, it is expected that you drive around her house several dozen times with the stereo blaring so loud that the entire neighbourhood reverberates. "In" spots like Hot Hut, Coffee House, TSC, and Yum Yum provide crowds for cover, where a group of friends can camouflage the love-birds.

Ideally, a girl should have a brother. There is no better alibi than, "I was with Bhaiya", when mother wants to know where you've been all this time (Bhaiya's co-operation, of course, must be established prior to this conversation). For university students (and this is probably why the Sciences are so much more sought-after than the Humanities), lab class explains away any tardiness.

There is no lack of romantic spots in Dhaka. The trouble is, everyone knows them, not only lovers, but beggars and peanut-vendors

and the next-door-neighbour's son. Crescent lake is lovely, if you don't mind being spotted by every passing car. Age-old Ramna is by now an institution of dating, but evening strolls may entail emptying your carefully-saved dating money into the waiting pockets of thieves. Lit up by discreet lamps, a very romantic promenade leads to the lake near the airport. This retreat is idyllic, except when nearby jet engines drown out the sweet nothings he whispers in your ear. And if a couple doesn't mind driving half-way to Calcutta for a few stolen moments together, Lover's Lane in Uttara (the far end of Rabindra Sarani) offers solitude, romantic darkness, and a panoramic view of wide expanses of nothingness.

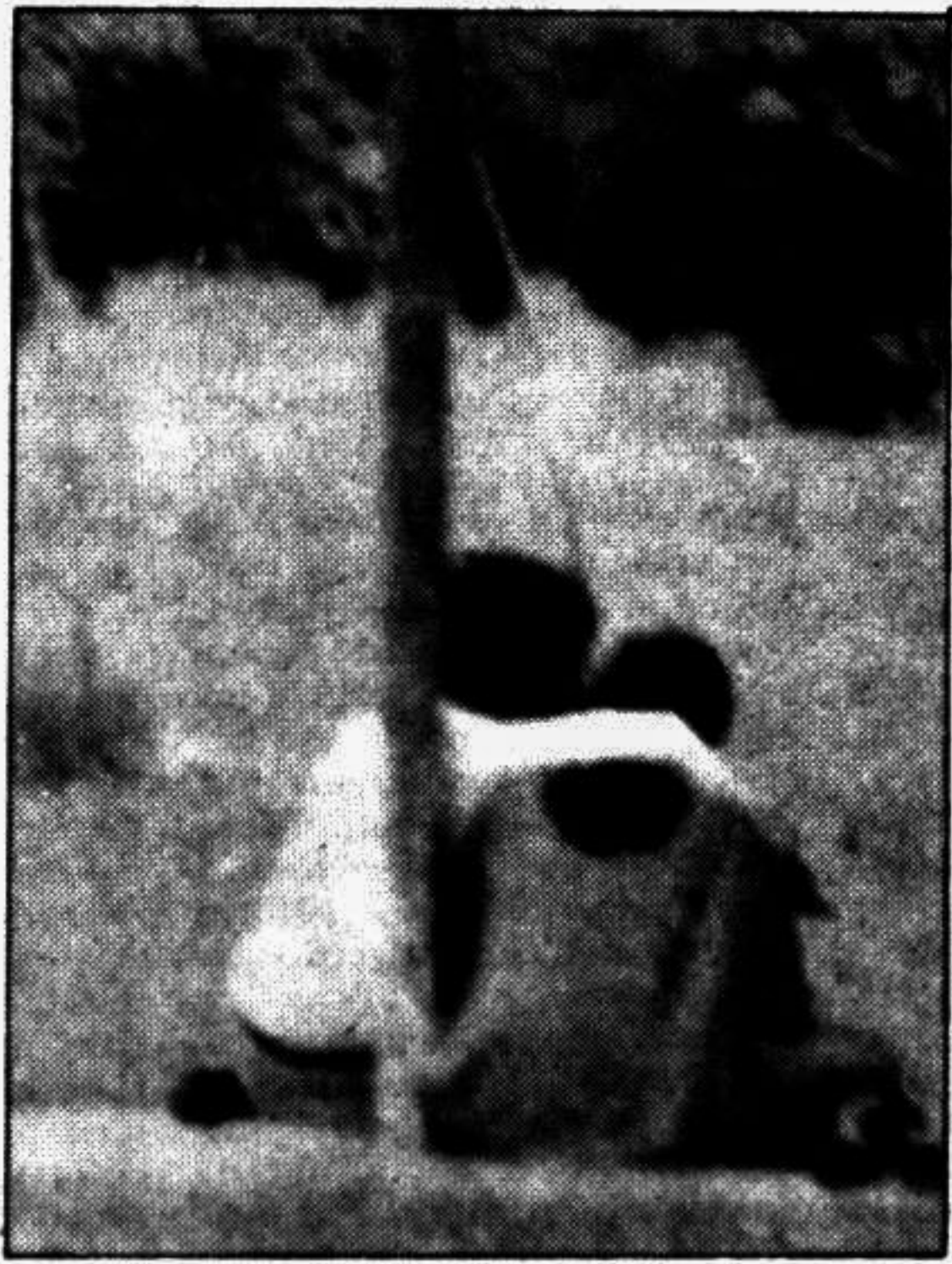
Privacy being at a premium, a boy whose car has tinted windows stands a better chance with the girls. Restaurants are quick to meet the demand for concealment: cozy curtained nooks and 0.05-watt bulbs make sure everything is invisible, including the food.

Not everyone has the patience to wait for privacy. A couple embracing on the Airport Road recently were oblivious to an enthusiastic audience lined up to catch the novel sight (nowhere is it more true that "All the world loves a lover"). In these modern times, the odd arms-entwined rickshaw-riding couple passes by, but then they are laying themselves open to the Great Dating Danger: meeting Auntie.

The two of you have carefully selected a restaurant you know your families will not be visiting to-night. You arrive quite late, and take the less-frequented entrance. Lo and behold, your timing is perfect: just as you walk in, smiling, with not a worry in the world, Auntie and Uncle are leaving. Embarrassed smiles all around. In a small city like ours, Aunties lurk around every corner. In the restaurant, at the video club, in front of school, as you are leaving her office,

somehow, someone, somewhere spots you. One father says, "I know my son has something going, but he hasn't been seen yet." Parents have endless faith in the Auntie system, which they believe will unfailingly reveal any secret love affair. A friend recalls how she was always extra-careful; one day, off-guard, she and her boyfriend held hands at the dining table, and that was the day an Auntie happened to be nearby. "It's enough to scare the daylight out of anyone," she smiles.

To manage such situations, to handle issues such as when to call, where to meet, how to flee the madding crowd, the basic requirements are those of a test pilot's: patience, skill, guts, and a whole lot of petrol to burn.



"All the world loves a lover"

Entrepreneurs' confce in Japan from Oct 21

Star Economic Report

An international conference for exchanging views among the Japanese and world entrepreneurs will be held in the Japanese city of Osaka on October 21-24.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) in a press release said on Thursday that it would be a rare opportunity for a country like Bangladesh to take part in the conference but it regretted that some quarters were politicking with the conference.

The FBCCI urged Ministry of Commerce to resist such attempts.

Drug Abuse Day June 26

The International Day against Drug abuse and illicit trafficking will be observed globally on June 26, says a press release.

The observance of June 26 each year as the International Day against Drug abuse and illicit trafficking was decided by the United Nations General Assembly in a resolution adopted in December 1987.

While calling upon the international community to observe the day, the Assembly in the resolution expressed its determination to strengthen action and co-operation at the national, regional and international levels towards the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.

In observance of the Day, the Dhaka Ahsania Mission in co-operation with United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Dhaka will organize a discussion meeting at UNIC premises on June 26 at 4.00 pm



Bangladesh Mahila Awami League brought out a procession in city on Thursday demanding withdrawal of proposed national budget.

13 cattle markets open in city: supply low

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka City Corporation this year made arrangement for 13 cattle markets for Eid-ul-Azha. Of these 13 markets only one or two have started selling sacrificial animals.

Supply of cattle head this year is still low. Only Gabtoli cattle market is now full with cattle heads, but, the number is still lower than last year. Sellers in Gabtoli are also asking much higher prices than last year.

Most of the markets will start selling animals from Friday. Golapbag market will open on Thursday. Owners of some cattle markets said supply of cattle head are low this year due to the cyclone which destroyed a size-

able cattle resource. Supply from other areas is also low. They said this were the reasons for price hike.

Goats were fewer in the Gabtoli market compared with cows. Prices of goats were also high.

The 13 markets which will be fully operating from Friday are: Fulbaria, Brothers Union Club, Glapbag field of Saidabad, Kamlapur field, Hosni Dalan Road, Gandaria link road, Dhakeswari road, Nayabazar, Dholakhal, Hazaribag field, Azimpur Primary School, Jagannath Shaha Road and East End Club.

The City Corporation this year bagged a record auction money of about Taka 50 lakh from these markets. Last year's collection from this sector was around Taka 23 lakh.

The situation of the cattle markets this year did not improve as the whole areas already became muddy with rain. A few buyers were seen to find an animal to their budget. They alleged that some local brokers were engaged in the price hike of the cattle heads. The brokers are mocking to buy the animals at higher prices making a false impression of high price of the sacrificial animals. They also complained that security system is not enough to prevent mugging.

Meanwhile, City Corporation sources said that special system has been taken to keep the city clean from waste from the slaughtered animals.

Recommendation for economic uplift formulated

Star Economic Report

A seminar on "the future course of the Bangladesh economy" jointly organised by Islamic Economics Research Bureau and Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited in the city, formulated a 29-point recommendation for the development of the country. The two-day seminar concluded on Wednesday.

The seminar expressed the view that development of agriculture and agro-industries was the prime need of the country. It said rapid industrialisation is necessary for creating more jobs.

It recommended for establishment of import substitute and export-oriented industries.

The participants of the seminar also stressed the need for an integrated planning approach to help accelerating the pace of development of all sectors of the economy.

The discussants stressed that a lack of relationship between the micro-economic level enterprises or units and macro-level planning is the reason for stagnation of the economy.

The seminar recommended that indigenous methods and processes should be stressed for reducing dependence on foreign aid for development.

Parliamentary team of Japan arrives June 23

A six-member Japanese parliamentary delegation, led by Masayoshi Takemura, MP, arrives in Dhaka on June 23 on a four-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Dhaka team to attend Munich Film Festival

Ahmed Muztaba Zamal, Secretary General, Rainbow Film Society and Senior Officer, Janata Insurance Co. Ltd, left Dhaka on Thursday to attend Munich International Film Festival at West Germany, a press release said.

TV Friday

- Morning session
8-00 Opening and recitation from Al-Quran
8-10 News in Bangla
8-15 Cartoon Film: Natun Kuri
8-40 News in English
10-05 Animation Special
11-15 Moner Mukure
- Close down
12-05 Evening session
2-15 Opening and recitation from Al-Quran
2-30 Live Telecast of Hajj
4-40 Shaurabey Gourabey
5-20 News in Bangla
5-30 Sports Programme Holy Hajj
7-10 Madhuchhanda
8-00 News in Bangla
8-40 Drama of the week
10-00 News in English
10-30 Film: L A Law
11-30 Khabar/ The News
11-45 Closing

Permanent blood donation cell set up

By Staff Correspondent

A permanent blood donation cell was set up at Sir Salmullah Medical College by Rotaract District organisation on Thursday.

District Governor Rotarian Mostafa Zaman Abbas inaugurated the cell. A Committee was formed with Dr Ahmed Newaz Khan as Chairman and Shohel Ahmed Khan as Member Secretary.

This cell will represent all the Rotary Rotaract Districts.

Stamps mark Philips' birthday

By Staff Correspondent

Philips celebrated its 100th anniversary on May 15 this year. For the centenary, the Royal Dutch Post issued two commemorative stamps. This is the first time that stamps have been issued with designs inspired by a private company.

Philips has lit up Bangladesh for over half a century. Its bulbs are top sellers country-wide. In television sets, cassette players and domestic appliances, Philips is also one of the leaders in the market. Larger projects undertaken by the multinational include the conference system in the National Assembly, the lighting in the

Mirpur Stadium and in the President's Secretariat, Rural Telecommunications System, and SOX road lighting. Philips has recently become involved in supplying hospital equipment.

OOCL ORIENT OVERSEAS CONTAINER LINE LTD.

Dedicated to Quality Service

NOTICE TO CONSIGNEE (S) / SHIPPER (S)

Feeder Vessel MV WESER STAR/V-9111 & FONG SHAN / V-9111, Will arrive Chittagong on or about June 24, 1991 with OOCL containers relayed at Singapore from Hong Kong, Dubai ex mother Vessels

ACE CONCORD / V-21W, AL-WAJBA / V-50, WILLINE ORIENT / V-53, IBN MAJID / V-20E OOCL ACCORD / V-215

Consignee (s) are hereby requested to clear their consignment (s) within 45 days from the date of unloading. Failure to which will be guided by Customs Rules.

FONG SHAN / V- 9112

Will load containers for US West and East coast / Canadian Port / European Ports with intermodal services to Inland Destinations. Please call / visit us for details and booking.

General Agents :

OMNITRANS INTERNATIONAL LTD.

Newly introduced VAT to affect industries

Star Economic Report

Speakers at an open discussion on the proposed budget for 1991-92, organised by International Fiscal Association-Bangladesh on Thursday at a city hotel, said the newly introduced Value Added Tax (VAT) will adversely affect industries and specially agricultural industries.

Rezaul Karim, Finance Director of a multinational company, said the VAT at the rate of 15 percent to be introduced from July, would create problems for industries at its beginning. He heard that double taxation on stocks in particular would hit the industries hard, he opined.

Speakers also said the VAT will affect agricultural industries. They said this taxation system is suitable for industrialised countries.

A F M Firoz Uddin Bhutya, an economist, said the provision for payment of 50 percent of the taxes before filing an appeal, relating to taxes, with the Supreme Court has been reduced to 25 percent. He said

National Board of Revenue has been given power to modify or to waive the requirement. He observed that any condition or impediment for seeking justice should be considered a violation of the fundamental rights of the citizen. He said any infringement of the right to appeal will breed corruption.

He also said any hasty disposal of appeal cases is bound to deteriorate quality as the time limit for the disposal of cases by the taxes appellate tribunal has been fixed at 2 years.

However, Firoz welcomes the new measure about certificate for transfer of property or immovable property required prior to registration. He said this would relieve the citizens from unnecessary harassments.

The speakers also criticised the trial proposal for the withdrawal of entertainment allowances which were tax-exempted for salaried employees.

Weather

Thundershower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at a few places over Chittagong and Dhaka divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions during the next 24 hours of Friday.

The day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country. Meanwhile, rain or thundershower occurred at a few places in Dhaka and Chittagong divisions. The chief amount of rainfall recorded on Thursday were Sylhet 23 mm and Mymensingh 17 mm.

The maximum temperature recorded on Thursday was 35.7 degrees Celsius from Satkhira.

The sun sets today at 6.49 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.12 am.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change. Extended outlook for another five days: No marked change. The temperature and humidity of some cities and towns on Thursday were:-

Cities/Towns Temperature in Celsius Humidity

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS: 1 Grasses, 6 Food programs, 11 Vast throng, 12 Mechanical man, 14 Hypothetical force, 15 Boac, 17 - Ives, 18 Consume, 20 Decorates, 23 Chinese pagoda, 24 Peruse, 26 Public storehouse, 28 At home, 29 Sipper, 31 Wearing away, 33 "The Parent", 35 Mix, 36 Ancient.

DOWN: 1 Revise, 2 Griffith ID, 3 Drink slowly, 4 Bard, 5 Trap, 6 Physician, 7 Maiden loved by Zeus, 8 Recode, 9 Race-track, 10 Draw light, 11 Clever earth, 12 Cent, 13 Ceremony, 14 Fruit cakes, 21 Planet, 22 Blemishes, 25 The nostrils, 27 Roman official, 30 Needs, 32 Turkish decree, 34 Pare, 35 Motives, 36 Grad-to-by.

Answer to Previous Puzzle: SHOE, ONUS, SEA, POEM, ROSE, ALB, AS, UNDO, WAR, PA, TESS, NICE, PINS, RENT, BOX, ATTA, SAAR, NC, RAISIN, PRANCE, LB, HOES, TREES, ELL, TAPS, BARS, YEAR, TRIP, NY, GAB, ADIV, IV, ONE, ERIE, ACNE, FUR, DUNS, LOAD.