

Dhaka Day by Day

Of Retirement and Idiosyncracies

Tasneem Mosaddeq

Retirement evokes mixed feelings. Some dread it, while others look forward to it. Nevertheless, if one is lucky enough to survive the turmoil of living upto the sixtieth birthday, the compulsory giving up of office and job comes as shock, not altogether pleasant. Especially, if the person happens to enjoy sound mind and body. Though, professionally they are considered as unfit, yet they remain an intrinsic part of our family and social scene. Actively participating (asserting their opinion) in all matters. Children like their company as they willingly give in to all sorts of pranks. But stepping into adulthood we become, more and more aware of the idiosyncracies that come nicely gift wrapped with retirement.

Retirement is not given much thought in our society. It happens to persons who by virtue of age and worldly experience are placed on a pinnacle with the epithet of "wise" attached to their being. And likewise they take full advantage of it, exercising their newly acquired wisdom in any manner. In western world discussions are held for people approaching retirement and their spouses. Advice is given on how to tackle the situation that may become depressive for certain people. But after closely associating with some retired relatives, I am confused whether to sympathise with them or pity their respective families.

Most people, wait for retirement to do the things that they always wanted to do but did not get time for it. Yet, once retired these hobbies and wishes are easily forgotten for new and more "challenging" pursuits. Those who are afraid of being branded as old and senile, sometimes display their youth and vitality in a peculiar way. So, the usually strict and withdrawn, retired uncle may one fine morning shed his inhibitions and embark on a "getting young campaign." Donning flashy clothes and whistling the favourite tune he proceeds to get pally, pally with the younger generation. The poor young souls are so overwhelmed that they pour their hearts out, romantic inclinations and all. Two contradictory reactions then follow, he either clamps up and the culprits are properly reprimanded or he joins the party complicating relationships. Then there are those who spend their retired life making resolutions. This type may at bed time declare, he would take an early walk to assess the condition of the locality, after all as a senior citizen he has some responsibility to the community. Hence, instructions, are given to the spouse to serve breakfast at the crack of dawn. But next day the conscientious personality, snores till noon, through three alarm clocks set at five

minutes' interval and on waking up nonchalantly announces that evening is perhaps the best time to venture out.

Retirement is also a time for reminiscing. In the twilight of life it is natural to remember the past and amuse oneself. But trouble starts when he decides to entertain the family with a detailed account of his adventures. Not only that the bewildered family has to put up with memory lapses, as well. More often than not, events from distant past is recounted while completely forgetting the name of the listener, even if he happens to be the son. Sometimes, temporary amnesia is feigned to conveniently forget the chore that is most disagreeable, like shopping for groceries. But when others pledge to do errands for him, his memory bank comes alive instantly, recalling without a moment's hesitation that the son had promised to wash the car and the daughter was to iron his best suit.

Conversation with retired people is mostly one sided. They have a tremendous faith in their oratory skills on any topic, contradictions and arguments are not welcomed. Therefore, it is not unusual for a retired engineer to give lengthy discourse on the nutritional value of apple and for an economist to compare the works of Rembrandt and Michelangelo. Then there are the athletic type who suddenly wake up to the need of keeping a healthy and active body, only after they retire. They enroll in aerobic classes and enthusiastically display their new found agility by performing such absurd feat as putting on socks while standing. Presenting a weird picture, with one leg up in the air, quivering with the strain of pulling the sock on, they frequently land on their backs, breaking limbs and dislocating joints. The reticent and sedate collect books all through their working life to pass the retired hours pleasantly. But retirement somehow turns them into extroverts and they are no longer content in reading by themselves. So, they move around the house reading loudly and no one, not even the family dog is spared from lending an ear.

Retirement is for leisure and undisturbed relaxation. But after years of plaining when retirement finally ensues it ironically makes people hyper-active. And the empty hours are energetically filled with erratic behaviour, whimsical activities and interfering in everything. And before long they are branded as eccentric. But in spite of their peculiarities they are like children craving for attention. And instead of avoiding them we should make allowances for their oddities, which results from having too much time and not enough to fill it up.



What's on today . . .

Seminar on unemployment

A seminar on 'Unemployment and industrialisation' organised by the Forum of Engineers and Architects will be held today (Saturday) at 4.15 pm at the Institution of Engineers. Soil Science Ex-students' Assoc

The Executive Committee meeting of the Soil Science Ex-students' Association of Dhaka University will be held today (Saturday) at 4 pm at the Atomic Energy Commission Guest House at Mohakhali.

. . . and tomorrow

Anjumaney Ettehadul Muslemin

The council meeting of the Anjumaney Ettehadul Muslemin to form a new executive body of the organisation, will be held tomorrow (Sunday) at 3 pm at its central office at Mirpur.

Hospital inauguration

A hospital of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust will be inaugurated tomorrow (Sunday) at 10 am by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Muktiyoddha Complex at Mirpur. The hospital comprising 130 beds, 30 of which are mobile, was set up with the financial assistance from French government.

HERE and THERE

Muslim League

Speakers at a meeting of Muslim League activists at Dhaka District Sports Association auditorium on Friday said the political, economic and law and order situation of the country was really alarming.

The meeting presided over by Sheikh Abdul Malek said the government had failed to maintain the sovereignty of the country and make the country economically self-reliant.

JSD meeting

The general meeting of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) on Friday supported the hartal programme of Upazila Chairmen against the abolition of the upazila system.

The meeting presided over by Nur Alam Ziku said the abolition of the system would establish autocracy in the politics and bureaucratize the administration.

The meeting said JSD would start movement to force the government to withdraw the decision.

Pannya Barjan Sangram Parishad

Bideahi Pannya Barjan Sangram Parishad in a meeting on Friday demanded formulation of laws to ban use of foreign goods in the country.

The meeting presided over by former minister A K Fayzul Haq hailed the government decision to check smuggling. The meeting said there was no alternative but to ban all foreign goods in order to make the local industries viable.

College Teachers' Assoc

A meeting of the Bangladesh College Teachers' Association on Friday demanded payment of enhanced government salaries to the

non-government college teachers with arrears from the beginning of the current fiscal year.

The meeting presided over by M A Latif, President of the organisation also demanded the immediate implementation of the high level decision adopted during the rule of late president Ziaur Rahman regarding nationalization of college education by 1985.

Bangladesh Krishak Federation

Bangladesh Krishak Federation, Bangladesh Kishani Shava and Chhatra Oikya forum on November 27 held a joint rally at Dashmoni upazila of Patuakhali district in demand of distribution of land among the real landless according to a press release.

CPB rally

Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, President of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) on Friday said the newly-floated left morcha, democratic front would launch greater movement to establish democracy and social justice.

Speaking at the joint meeting of Dhaka City and Dhaka district committee, Manik said the government had failed to revamp the economy and contain terrorism. He stated that these situations are threatening democracy.

Janata Party

The chief of Jatiya Janata Party, Sheikh Assad in a statement on Friday demanded the formation of an inquiry committee to check the misuse of money through the upazila system in the name of development works.

He said the parties which protest the abolition of upazila system are in fact diverting the public attention from the burning issues faced by the nation.

126 arrested

Police in a special operation in the city arrested 126 people in 24 hours ending 6 pm Friday, reports UNB. Among the arrested, 5 were known to be toll collectors, 7 snatchers, 9 hooligans and 105 on different other charges, police said.

CIDA official arrives today

David Holdsworth, Vice-President, Asia branch of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will arrive in Dhaka today on a week-long visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

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IN MEMORIAM



In memory of our beloved mother Begum Anwara Khatun, ex-MLA and ex-MPA who left us in bereavement on this day in 1988. May God rest her soul in peace.

Iqbal A. Khan, Munira Khan.

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Progress of on-going projects discussed

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Communications was held in Dhaka Thursday with Communications Minister Oli Ahmad in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed different development programmes in the road, road transport and railway sectors. The progress of work of the on-going projects in the development and maintenance of

national, regional feeder and connecting roads were also discussed in the meeting. Emphasis was given on the equitable development of all region in the road communications sector.

Weather

Dry weather to prevail

Weather is expected to remain mainly dry across the country during the next 24 hours till 6 pm today (Saturday), reports UNB.

Met office says night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Friday's maximum temperature in Dhaka was 27 degree Celsius and the minimum 18.2 degrees. Country's lowest temperature 12.5 degrees was recorded at Rajshahi.

Percentage of humidity was 96 in the morning and 63 in the evening.

The sun sets today (Saturday) at 5.11 pm and rises on tomorrow (Sunday) at 6.25 am.

53 DU teachers condemn Hasina's statement

Fifty-three (53) teachers of Dhaka University Friday described the letter of the Leader of the Opposition in the Sangsad, reports BSS.

Parliament, Sheikh Hasina addressed to heads of foreign missions in Dhaka, "as opposed to democratic practice."

In a joint statement in Dhaka they termed the said letter of Awami League Chief "as an attempt to frustrate" the democratic process, which had been established through great sacrifices.

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