

Dhaka Day by Day

Romance on the strings

by Fayza Haq

Ustad Abed Hossain Khan and Shahadat Hossain Khan gave a splendid performance at the Alliance Francaise on Saturday evening.

They played on the sitar and the sarod. They were accompanied on the tabla by Kirtti Bhushan Odhikari, and the tanpura by Monwar Hossain Khan. Both the pieces they presented were "jugalbandi" (duets). The first "raag" was a "bhinjeri" about the meeting of two lovers and lasted an hour, while the second was a forty-five minute piece, "raag pilu," invented by Amir Khusro in the thirteenth century.

"When we played in Paris the audience would not stop clapping after a performance and would want us to play all night," said Abed Hossain Khan talking about his experiences in Europe. "We would be too tired with sight seeing and could hardly oblige the listeners. We found the audience in Europe extremely sensitive and appreciative."

Abed Hossain Khan who began playing at the age of seven has been playing sitar for over 50 years. His son, Shahadat Hossain Khan has played for 28 years. Both are international artists. Abed Hossain Khan has performed in Europe and India (which includes Calcutta, Madras, New Delhi, Bombay, Hyderabad Bangalore and Jaipur) while his son Shahadat has played in UK, US, Europe, USSR, Middle East and India.

The Shilpakala Academy has awarded Abed Hossain Khan an honorarium in August '90. Earlier in '85, he was awarded the Ekushey Padak. The father and son have enjoyed lavish receptions in London and Paris.

"An artist feels satisfied if the audience listens attentively. Commented Abed Hossain Khan about the people who had gathered at the Alliance Francaise. Half of these were foreigners. "Everybody listened without talking or walking out. By this you know the listeners included music lovers. Everyday the response will not be the same. The audience reaction varies."

"It is difficult to survive by playing an instrument like the sitar," Abed Hossain Khan said about the prospects of making a decent living on music alone. He combines his performances with being a chief music producer in the radio, apart from being a casual artist on TV, helping with the orchestration, audio and

video presentation of songs. The ustad and his players were paid about Taka 8,000 for that night at Alliance Francaise. Apart from being a music director on the radio and television, the ustad is the author of a book "Sur Lohori" which is taught from class VI to Class X to music students. He is also an examiner and paper setter for the Dhaka University and the Intermediate Boards of Dhaka, Jessore and Rajshahi.

"By 1951 the ordinary people of Bangladesh were not interested in classical music. We, the players went on despite lack of encouragement. We played on shamelessly," Abed Hossain Khan, the musician, narrated about the lack of appreciation in Dhaka decades ago. "Today, classical music is something people will appreciate but will seldom come out to learn themselves. Yet there is more enthusiasm today."

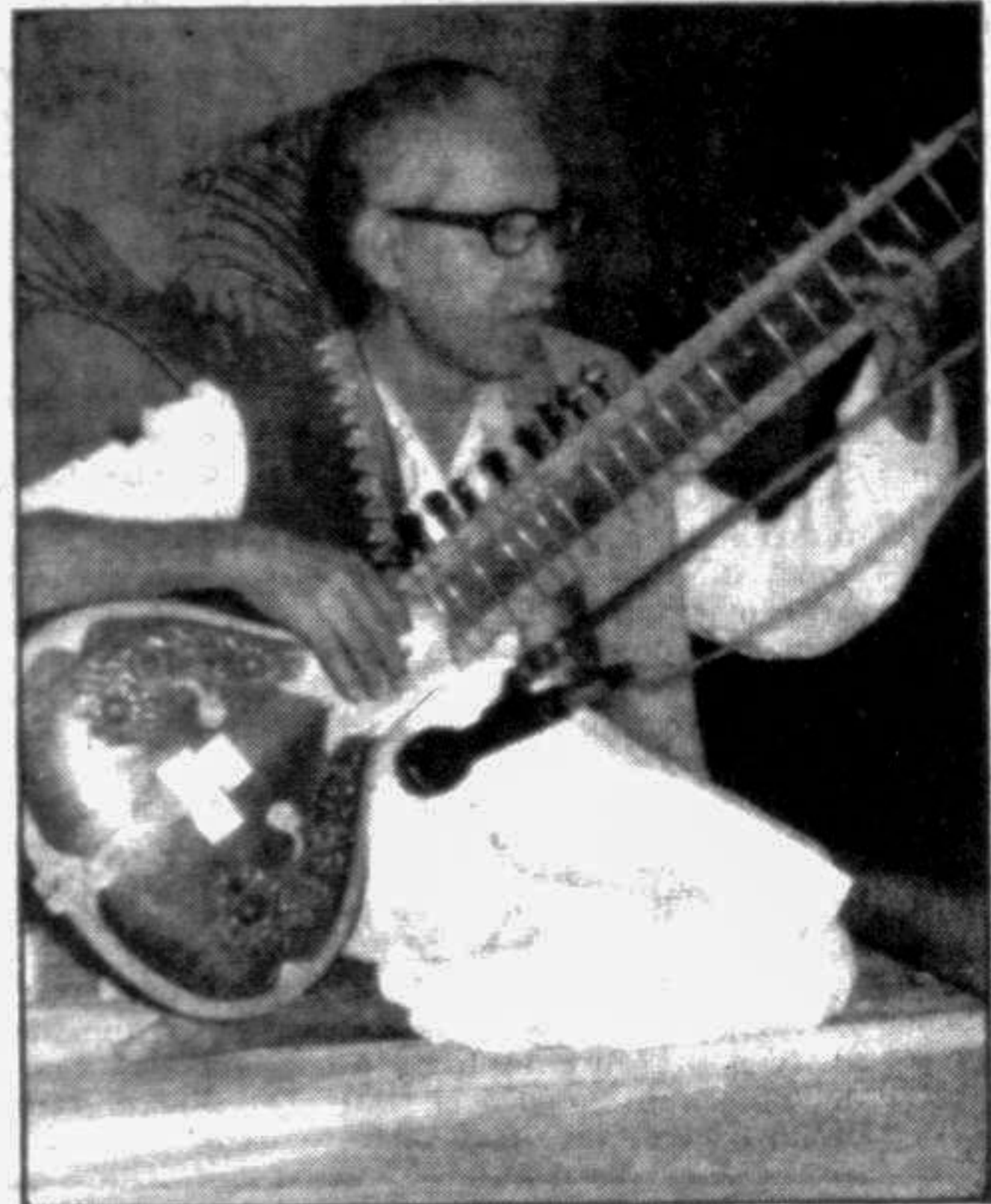
"Both the sarod and the sitar are imported from Central Asia, and developed by Ustad Ayet Ali Khan. Both are stringed instruments. Playing on the sitar and sarod are like knitting the different designs," the artist elaborated about the similarity and difference between the sitar and the sarod. "The sitar is light and sweet while the sarod is more base," he continued.

Is there any secret of being a good sitar player? "Any musician must practise hard and concentrate. You have to contemplate on the subject all your life. You have to think about playing so deeply that you should be able to dream about it. Without total dedication nothing can be achieved," Ustad Abed Hossain Khan commented.

As a schoolchild, he practised thrice a day. Now a man in his 60s, he practises whenever he has the time. "I don't have much energy now. I simply contemplate on music." The 63-year-old musician confessed.

He believes that the Indian Subcontinent has certainly influenced the West. "People have gone from this place to UK, US and Europe and taken the music there. I have a cousin teaching music in America for 30 years. The West has integrated sitar and tabla music in their own composition," he added.

Abed Hossain Khan is born in Brahmanbaria in 1929 while his son Shahadat Hossain Khan is born in Comilla in 1958.



Ustad Abed Hossain Khan on the strings.

Electoral rolls can be obtained from district election office

Electoral rolls of each district have been kept in the offices of the respective district election officers, a press release of E. C. Secretariat said, reports BSS.

Electoral rolls may be procured, if necessary, from the office of the concerned District Election Officer. The electoral rolls are to be purchased in cash, price of which will depend upon the number of pages.

The electoral rolls have been arranged constituency-wise for the election to Jatiya Sangsad. Any person, who intends to purchase electoral rolls, will have to purchase electoral roll of an entire constituency.

Adult education to increase literacy rate emphasised

A meeting was held at the Ministry of Education in Dhaka on Sunday to review the status of primary education and literacy programme in the country with Education Adviser, Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed various issues relating to implementation of the Universal Primary Education and Mass Education Programme. It took note that it is not possible to increase literacy rate up to 50 per cent by the year 1995 only through introduction of the compulsory primary education and laid emphasis on adult education and non-formal education programmes for achieving the target.

The meeting held a discussion on formal, non-formal and adult education programmes being implemented by the government and the N.G.O.s and emphasised on the coordinated efforts of government and non-government organisations for increasing overall literacy rate.

Education Secretary, Mr. ANM Yusuf, Joint Secretary of Education Ministry, Mr. Nooruddin Mahmud Kamal, Project Co-ordinator of General Education Project, Syed Alamgir Faruq Chowdhury, Director General of Primary Education Department, Mr. Abul Hossain, Dr. Hafiz Ahmed, Dr. Jahurul Islam Bhuiyan, Dr. A. H. M. Karim, Mr. Azizul Hoq, Mr. Ferdous Khan, Dr. Abu Hamid Latif and Executive Director of Bangladesh Literacy Society, Mr. Osman Gani and representatives of some N.G.O.s, attended the meeting.

Australian Senator visits ICDDR,B

Senator Robert Hill, shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia Sunday visited the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), reports BSS.

The senator was accompanied by Ms. Stephanie Shawbbsky and Dr. Chris Kenna of the Australian High Commission in Bangladesh. Senator Hill was received by Professor Dennis Habbie, Director of the Centre, and senior staff members.

The distinguished visitors were briefed on the activities of the centre, its cooperation with Australia, which dates back as early as 1962, and the centre's current financial status. They were then taken around the ICDDR,B Research laboratories, Computer and Library facilities and the Dhaka Hospital.

The government of Australia has been one of the regular financial sponsors of ICDDR,B in 1990, Australia provided US dollar 220,000 for the centre's activities.

Senator Hill showed keen interest in the activities of the centre which benefits many other countries of the world.

Obituary

Mr. Abul Qasem, a renowned chartered accountant died of cardiac failure early Monday morning at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital, he was 71, reports BSS.

Late Abul Qasem had been suffering from kidney and heart problems for a long period.

Late Abul Qasem of A. Qasem and Company, Chartered Accountants, was the senior most chartered accountant of the country and the first President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh. He was also a former President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

He left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter, and a host of friends and well wishers to mourn his death.



This road at Kawran Bazar is in pitiable condition as city fathers just sit over many petitions from the citizens to have it metalled. The WASA too is a mute spectator to the water-logging the road is in during and after rains. —Star photo.

No budget for city drainage

By Enamul Haq

Indiscriminate filling of the city's natural water reservoirs, insufficient drainage and poor maintenance of the existing drainage system has been hindering normal disposal of water resulting in water logging on city roads every year.

Dhaka WASA, an autonomous body, which looks after the city's drainage system has no separate budget for drainage. It has to divert funds from the revenue earnings of the water and sewerage system which, competent sources in Dhaka WASA say, is meagre.

Dhaka WASA even has no manpower of its own for the drainage division. The workforce, now running the drainage division, are on deputation from the Public Health Department. As a result flood and waterlogging at the onset of rainy season has become a regular feature.

Experts say, flood is caused

by internal water that is rain water, and external water, culled tidal water of the rivers.

The government took a plan to erect embankment around the city to save it from flood. Erection of the embankment on the western side of the city was completed with local resources. The government had sought financial help from the Asian Development Bank and Japan to complete the embankment on the eastern side of the city and procure four pumping stations but no response has yet been received.

Solution suggested

Sources in Dhaka WASA say, the city's water-logging problem could be solved in two ways: through mechanical system which could be very costly and returning to natural system which is near impossible. According to the sources a

mixed system could be adopted to solve the problem.

Experts have suggested a number of measures in this regard. The measures include construction of an underground drainage system at different points of the city, permanent structures like box-culverts where expanding width of canals is not possible, more lakes to absorb water and disposal of water in to the rivers by using pumping stations.

The Japanese government conducted a installation of feasibility study in 1987. They recommended under-ground drainage line development of the canals and disposal of water into the rivers by pumping.

They will start from February '91 the first phase of work which includes developing canal at Kalyanpur and Begunbari. It will take three years

to complete the first phase involving about Taka 68 crore.

In the second phase they will develop the drainage system of Segunbagicha, Shantiganj, Inner Circular Road, Motijheel and Arambag - which are most affected by waterlogging.

The drainage system in Dhaka city, introduced in 1964, was originally under the Public Health Department. In March 1989, it was handed over to Dhaka WASA. Dhaka WASA requested the government to provide grants for running the drainage system but the authority refused.

WASA sources say about one crore taka is required annually to maintain the drainage system which they lack. They said, water-logging problem might aggravate if steps were not taken immediately to maintain the drainage system and check siltation.

Here and There

Inter-ministerial meet on problems of jute traders

An inter-ministerial coordination meeting was held at the conference room of the Jute Ministry with the Adviser in-charge of industries, Jute and Textile, A.K.M. Musa in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting reviewed implementation of the decisions taken earlier by the Cabinet sub-committee on the problems of raw jute traders, according to an official handout.

Jute Secretary M Asifadoulwa, and high officials of Bangladesh Bank, Finance Ministry, Jute Ministry, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation and the representatives of Pat Sangram Committee were present.

Arms recovered

Dhaka Metropolitan Police in a special drive during the last fortnight recovered a large number of arms and ammunition including one cut rifle, two single bore rifles, four country-made revolvers, five foreign-made revolvers, one country-made pistol, 32 rounds of ammunition, 79 round bullets, home-made bombs and sword, reports BSS.

In this regard 17 cases have been filed and 17 persons have been arrested, according to a press release.

Second workshop on election reporting begins today

The first of the three workshops on election reporting concluded Monday at the Press Institute of Bangladesh, said a Press release.

Mr Enamul Haq, Director General of the Institute, distributed certificates among the 15 participants from newspapers of Dhaka and Bangladesh Television.

Constitutional expert, Election Commission officials and senior journalists conducted different sessions of the course.

The second workshop on the subject will begin today (Tuesday) at PIB Bhaban. Twenty-six journalists from daily newspapers from outside Dhaka will participate.

64 lakhs to get free biris during polls

About 60 lakh boys and girls and four lakh poor women would be addicted to smoking due to free distribution of biri and cigarettes during the coming general elections, reports BSS.

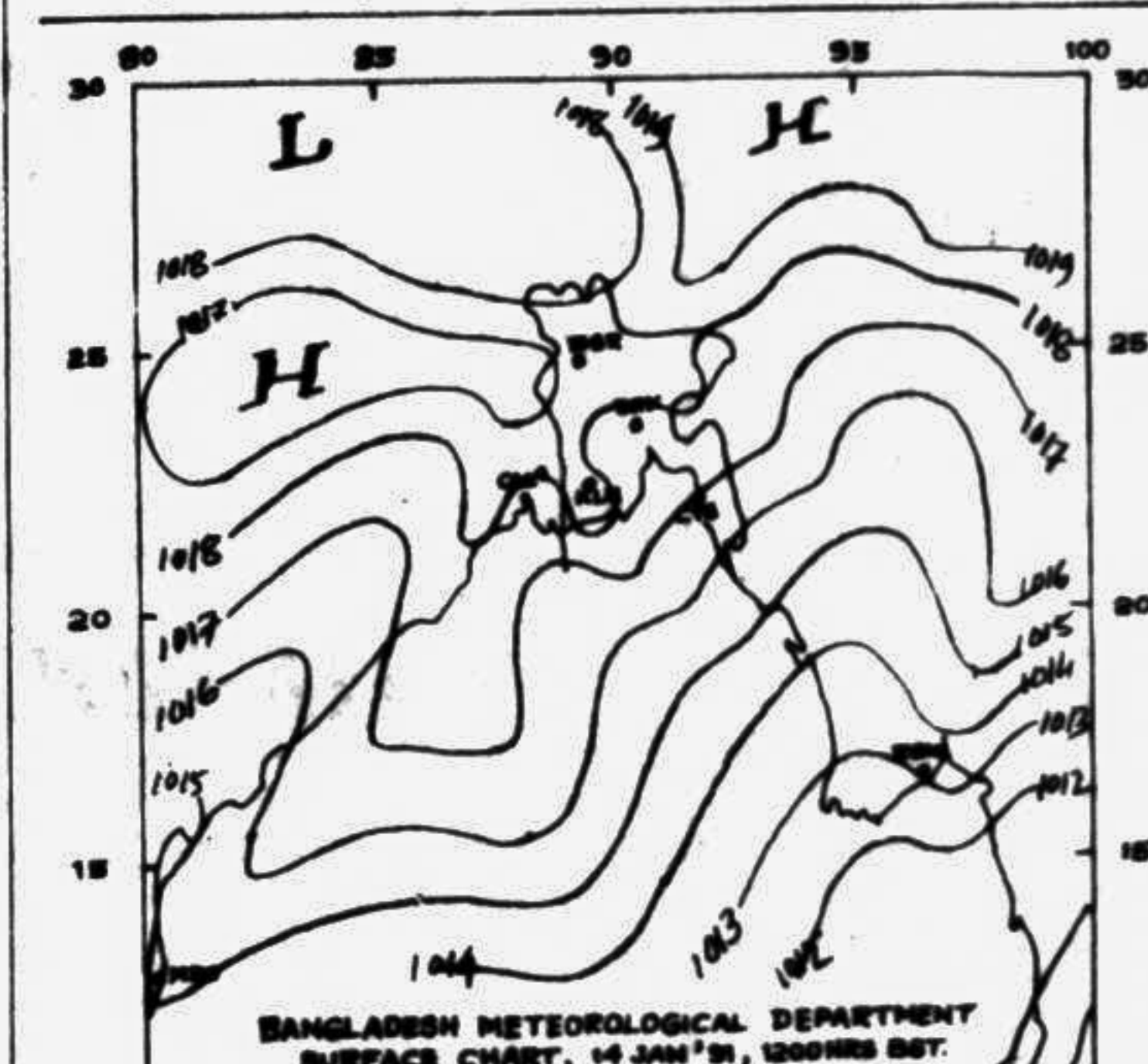
Bangladesh Peace and Development Mission made this estimate on the basis of a study, according to a press release.

Based on its study, the Mission also estimated that during the 1988 general elections about 1.7 lakh boys and girls and 4 lakh poor women had been addicted to tobacco due to free distribution of biri and cigarettes. By this time

about 30 thousand of these young boys and girls turned to drug and alcohol addicts.

To combat this national disaster, the mission has undertaken a programme to make election campaign tobacco-free and observe no-tobacco day on February 27.

Mr Amanullah Aman and Mr Khairul Kabir Khokan - Vice-President and General Secretary respectively - of DUCSU in a joint statement, have supported this programme and invited all conscious people to come forward to make the programme a success.



Cold wave to continue

By Staff Correspondent

A moderate cold wave from the west blew over Bangladesh on Monday evening. The cold wave may continue for the next two to four days, the Meteorological Department says.

The cold wave may lower the minimum temperature at most places. The Met Office forecast the mercury may fall by one to three degree Celsius by this (Tuesday) morning.

The weather is likely to remain mainly dry with clear or partly clear sky.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change. Outlook for another five days: No appreciable change. On Monday the westerly low was lying over Uttar Pradesh, Bihar plain, sub-Himalayan

West Bengal and adjoining areas of Bangladesh. The seasonal low lay over the South Bay with its associated through extending to the Andaman Sea.

The night temperature fell by one to three degree Celsius at many places on Monday. However, the minimum temperature was one to four degree Celsius above the normal for the time at most places except Mymensingh, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra and Rajshahi where the temperature was one to two degree Celsius below normal.

On Monday, the lowest minimum temperature - 8.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Dinajpur.

AL to wipe out corruption: Hasina

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina Sunday said her party was determined to wipe out corruption and establish a corruption-free administration in the country, reports UNB.

Hasina was talking to visiting Japanese parliamentarians Nakoto Taneja and Tetsuo Inoue who met with her at the Bangabandhu Bhaban Sunday evening.

The Awami League chief said if returned to power, she herself and her party would take about measures against corruption by any quarters.

Briefing the Japanese lawmakers on the country's present political scenario, she said Awami League preferred parliamentary form of government.

"A government accountable to the people can only contribute to economic progress by curbing corruption in the country."

BNP to return with a majority in polls, hopes Khaleda

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Begum Khaleda Zia Sunday hoped her party would return with a majority in the coming parliamentary polls, if held in a free and fair atmosphere, reports UNB.

She was exchanging views with the visiting Japanese parliamentary delegation led by Nakoto Taneja at the Gulshan residence of BNP leader ASM Mustafizur Rahman.

The BNP leader said the interim government should make such arrangements as could enable the people to vote freely and without fear.

Establishment of democracy, Begum Zia said, largely depends on neutral and peaceful holding of the ensuing election. She also expressed her party's willingness to help ensure peaceful elections.

Patience and tolerance are a must for maintaining democratic atmosphere she said, adding both the government and the opposition should cooperate with each other for flourishing democracy.

Khaleda also explained the contribution she had made in the anti-autocracy movement as well as the economic programmes undertaken by late President Ziaur Rahman, which BNP would again offer for the progress of the country.

Sheraton Car Park opens

Dhaka Sheraton Car Park resumed on January 14 after a winter recess. Car Park is an exotic Asian Food Fair which has already gained popularity among the local and expatriate community, says a Press release.

The highlights of this magical evening which takes place at Poolside alternate Mondays are delicious and authentic food of various countries such as China, Middle East, Indonesia, Thailand and Bangladesh. In addition, mouth watering seafood are also served from Sea Food Stall.

Police asked to recover illegal arms soon

Mr. A. M. Chowdhury, Inspector General of Police, has instructed the police Sunday to devote all energies to recovering illegal arms and arrest all absconding criminals as early as possible, reports BSS.

He gave this instruction at the fortnightly meeting of the senior police officers held at Rajarbag Police Headquarters an official press release said.

It was the first meeting of Mr. Chowdhury with senior police officials after taking over as the Inspector General of Police.

Tuesday

- 5-00 p.m. : Opening announcement, Verses from the Holy Quran and programme summary.
5-15 p.m. : Verses from the holy Gecra
5-20 p.m. : Cartoon film Albat and Costello
5-45 p.m. : Programme on Primary Education
6-10 p.m. : New Horizon : Programme based on scientific information
6-55 p.m. : News
7-05 p.m. : Songs of Nazrul Islam
7-45 p.m. : Programme summary
8-00 p.m. : News at Eight : Bangla
8-30 p.m. : Prabha-Newsreel on recent
8-45 p.m. : Ayonoi : Drama series
9-50 : Tomorrow's programmes
10-00 : News at Ten in English
10-30 : Filmshow : Return to Eden
11-30 : News
11-40 : Wednesday's programme summary, Verses from the holy Quran, Closing announcement and National flag and anthem.
11-45 : Close down.

Call to gear up pry health care activities

Health and Family Welfare Advisor Professor M A Majed today underscored the need for improvement of quality of services to ensure health care delivery system in hospitals, reports BSS.

The advisor was speaking to doctors while visiting the 50-bed hospital at Tongli.

Prof Majed said the doctor should have to work collectively to ensure hospital services. He urged them to maintain proper care of outdoor patients and ensure record keeping of patients. He also asked the doctors to ensure proper utilization of medicines.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes 'Answer to Previous Puzzle' and a list of words like PALM, IRAN, WAD, ALAI, MERE, OAD, TITLE, NEWSMAN, TEMPTS, LANE, ERIS, FRE, CON, PAC, FIDDLE, TA, IRE, OD, RA, PAN, CE, ELEVEN, LIE, ADD, EA, SALT, AGR, ENMITY, COMMAND, TREAT, HOE, ITEM, ARCA, END, REIDS, YSER.