

# Dhaka Day by Day

## The Dinghy Ferry Service

by Sabah Choudhury

The early mist drifting over Buriganga is still waist-deep when the river starts waking up to the sounds of the boatmen gathered to ferry people to work or home. As the sun makes its presence felt, the boatmen too raise their voices calling to would-be passengers to their craft.

Where the river ends, the mud banks begin. The grey, murky layers of mud and water lie like a bridge between the river and the dry land. On it the boats lie almost stuck in the mud, their bottoms touching the soft earth. It would seem as if many alligators are lying and sunning themselves, their ash coloured bodies covered with fresh mud.

Those city-dwellers of Dhaka, who stay in new and more posh part, and do not have to travel

frequently to the interior of the country through waterways, are probably unaware of this part of the city. It is actually the place where Dhaka first started taking shape - many many years ago. It was then a city of the Nawabs and the Subedars. Most of that is part of history now, but some still remain alive and active, like the riverine port of Sadarghat.

The entire area which comprises the old town is well-known for being over-crowded with people and shops of all kinds and very narrow lanes. The Sadarghat ferry terminal is part of that scenario, and it has a free wheeling atmosphere about it. It has two types of passenger carriers - the big ones, locally called motor launches, and the simpler ones, the manually rowed boats. They resemble giants and dwarfs sitting side by side.

A flight of half-broken steps led us down to where the boats were. Amidst the chaos created by man and nature, Hashem Ali came forward. He has been in this profession for about a dozen years. Although, guessing that perhaps the intention of

this passenger was not exactly a boat ride, he in all his simplicity was willing to waste his valuable time by talking about his life and work.

Wearing a torn vest and a lungi, not much to protect him from the last onslaught of this winter's chill, he was quite informative.

He makes about 20 trips a day, which brings him something between Taka 120 and 150. His kinds of boats only ferry people across the river and not cargo of any kind. The furthest point he goes is Swarighat.

The maximum number of passengers he takes in a single trip is six. The rate is 50 poisha to Taka 1 (one) per person. Hashem Ali starts early in the morning and continues till about midnight.

Like thousands of landless peasants of Bangladesh, nothing belongs to him. The boat he rows belongs to the 'Mahajan' or the owner. He has to pay Taka 20-25 to the owner per day. Besides, he also has to pay a sum of Taka 20 to the person who has the yearly lease (commonly called 'Daak'), of the ghat. After paying all dues, whatever re-

mains is somehow enough for a living.

In some ways these simple boatmen of Sadarghat represent a kind of courage while providing essential service at a cheap cost to so many.

What made him take this job in particular was a question which naturally comes. "I have tried my hand at a number of jobs, like selling vegetables, fruits etc. But I cannot resist the life on a river, it fascinates me", replied Hashem Ali, a bit sheepishly.

"One day I often dream of having a boat of my own", said 50-year old Hashem Ali, looking far ahead into the horizon. As if he could see the outlines of his boat emerging from the waters of Buriganga.



## Publication ceremony

By Staff Correspondent

The publication ceremony of 'Jiban Srot' (Tide of Life), an autobiography, by national professor Dr Nurul Islam was held on Friday at Jatiya Press Club.

Vice chancellor of Dhaka University Dr Maniruzzaman Mia speaking as the chief guest said the biography reflects the wide perspective of the national professor. The style of writing was frank and helps reading comfortable.

Journalist Md Nastruddin in his presidential speech said the book will promote aspiration to the readers.

Reviewing the book, prof. Mustafa Narul Islam said the book is interesting as one gets a story of a poor village boy who succeeds in climbing up the social ladder. He said the autobiography reflects the flourishing of Bengali Muslims.

Special guest Barrister Mainul Hossain said the book was written with a physician's view.

The speakers also praised Dr Islam's respect for his mother which was reflected in the book.

## Plea to find out social problems

Education Adviser Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqi Thursday laid emphasis on study of sociology at all levels for social development, reports BSS.

People of all professions including politicians and planners should have functional knowledge of sociology for their better performance, he added.

The Education Adviser was speaking as the chief guest at the concluding session of the 5th national conference and seminar on "development of the Third World" held at TSC auditorium of Dhaka University. Organised by Bangladesh Sociological Association, the session was presided over by Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury.

The Education Adviser said the importance of study of sociology is increasing in the context of growing gap between the rich and the poor and social changes and complexity in the country.

He called upon the sociologists to put in their best efforts and expertise in finding out the social problems and their solutions.

## Village doctors seek registration

Bangladesh Gram Doctors Samity Friday demanded registration of their trained members under Medical and Dental Council, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference in Dhaka President of the Samity Dr. Liaqat Ali said there were 1,30,000 gram doctors working in the rural areas all over the country and 42,000 of them where given training and awarded certificates by the Directorate General of Health Services.

Dr. Ali urged the government to re-introduce the training programme, establish a gram doctors training institute, and create opportunities for higher training for the trained doctors.

## Drug addicts increasing

Voluntary Health Services Society (VISS) and the Institute of Rural Journalists organised a seminar on Thursday to commemorate international anti-drugs decade announced by the United Nations.

The Chairman of the Bangladesh Editors' Council and Editor of the Daily Janata Sanaulah Noori inaugurated the seminar which was presided over by Md. Saiful Islam Dildar, Chief Executive of the Institute of Rural Journalists. Principal Dulwar Jahid, President of Comilla Union of Journalists presented keynote paper.

Sanaullah Noori said the addiction to drugs was increasing because of growing frustration among the youths. He said a well thought plan was necessary to free the youths from frustration.

Nurul Islam, Joint Director of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development Azam Khan, Publication Officer of VISS, Ali Akbar Masum of Comilla Adhunik and Salahuddin Ahmed of Seba Manabik Sangha participated in the discussion.

## SIPHSAs lauds steps to recover illegal arms

Chairman of the Smoking and Intoxicant Preventive Human Service Association (SIPHSA) and a Parliamentary poll candidate from Dhaka-6 constituency Khondakar Soleman Ahmed Kamal lauded all steps taken by the Government to recover arms, says a Press release.

While addressing a projection meeting at Mallbagh Biplani Bitan in city on Friday, the SIPHSA chief pledged to work for full growth of democracy in the country.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Md Bahjuddin Ahmed, Hajji Mohammad Selim, M.A. Matin and Muriduddin Ahmed.



Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Maniruzzaman Mia speaking at a function held at the National Press Club auditorium on Friday in connection with the publication ceremony of National Professor Dr. Nurul Islam's autobiography 'Jiban Srot'. On his right were Saogat Editor Mohammad Nasiruddin and the author. On his left was Barrister Mainul Hossain.

## Friendship treaty with Iraq still exists: Soviet envoy

CHITTAGONG, Feb 8: Mr. Vitaly S. Smirnov, Soviet Ambassador in Bangladesh said here today that the cooperation between Bangladesh and the USSR would continue to expand in the coming years, reports BSS.

Citing his government's cooperation in repatriation of stranded Bangladeshis by Aeroflot from Middle East after the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, he said the USSR would also extend cooperation to Bangladesh in its needs. He said as a gesture of cooperation his government despatched over 15,000 metric tons of crude oil to Bangladesh which was unloaded at Chittagong Port from the Soviet ship 'MT Captain Kekulidze' in the latter part of January last.

The Ambassador was speaking to local journalists at the Press Information Centre of Soviet Consulate here this evening. The Consul General Brobyen was also present among other officials.

Refuting recent reports of a section of newspapers in Dhaka, the Ambassador said, the friendship treaty between Iraq and USSR still existed and his country did not support destruction of Iraq, but wanted that Kuwait should be vacated and the foreign forces withdrawn from Gulf region. He said an international conference should be convened to find out ways and means to stop war.

Expressing his sympathy with the victims of the war, he urged the warring countries to end war on the basis of the stand of USSR on the issue.

He called for ensuring security of the foreign diplomats and nationals in Bangladesh. He said the USSR was not a partner of allied forces but it has expressed its own views which should not be misunderstood.

## Ekushey Programme Equal distribution of wealth sought

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting on 'Ekushey' stressed the need for creating consciousness among people to achieve democracy and equal distribution of resources as dream of by language martyrs. Sammilita Sangskritik Jote organised the meeting on the occasion of Amar Ekushey at Central Shaheed Minar on Friday.

Essayist Prof. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Poet Shamsur Rahman, Sayed Samshul Haque and playwright Mamunur Rashid spoke at the meeting.

The Jote presented a colourful programme including drama after the discussion. Meanwhile, Bangla Academy organised a programme Friday featuring two books review, recitation and musical soiree as part of its Ekushey Programme series at Academy premises.

The book reviews were on 'Mymensingh's Gitiika "life and poetry value" written by Sayed Azizul Haq and 'Hundred years of Bangladesh in Bibhu Dhanu's novel'.

Speakers said that the writer of Gitiika tried to recover the real socio-economic condition of Mymensingh area of the distant past.

Messrs. Khagesh Kiron Talikdar, Dr. Muhammad Shajahan Mia, Prof. Rafiq Kaiser and Dr. Sardar Abdus Sattar also reviewed the books.

## Bangla Academy to work for upholding martyrs ideals

By Staff Correspondent

The Presidential Adviser for Culture and Food, Prof Iajuddin Ahmed said, Bangla Academy would have to work for upholding the ideals of the martyrs of democratic movements including the language movement.

He was speaking to the newly-appointed Director General of Bangla Academy and the employees of the academy on Friday. The presidential Adviser paid a surprise visit to the Bangla Academy.

Prof. Iajuddin said the financial difficulties of Bangla Academy, which was created as a result of the great language movement, was a matter of shame for the nation.

Director General of Bangla Academy prof. Harun-ur-Rashid said Bangla Academy will continue to respect the democratic feelings of the people.

## Plea to lift ban on Mansur's book

By Staff Correspondent

Six leading poets in a statement on Friday demanded lifting of ban on a book of verse by poet Mansur. reports BSS.

The book 'El Abaruddha Manchitra' was banned by the ousted Ershad government in April 1983.

The signatories of the statement are: Shamsur Rahman, Harun Habib, Belal Chowdhury, Rafiq Azad, Mahadev Saha and Mostafa Nurul Islam.

## Arms recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Police on Wednesday recovered one country-made gun, ammunition and bombs from different city points.

Tejgon police raided den of a criminal Alauddin in Begunbari and recovered seven live bombs with bomb making instruments. Police also arrested Kaiser Ahmed, and accomplice of Alauddin.

Utara police on Thursday recovered a pipegun and three rounds of ammunition from a damaged baby taxi.

## 'Ershad sent troops to appease donors'

Speakers at a discussion organised by Bangladesh Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Council Thursday, demanded immediate ceasefire in Gulf war for saving mankind and human civilisation, says a Press release.

Held at the TSC Seminar Hall of the Dhaka University, the discussion was presided over by Dr. Anisuzzaman, President of the Council.

Educationist Prof. Kabir Chowdhury, Syed Ahmed Hossain of Bangladesh United Nations Association, Asaduzzaman Noor of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote and Dr. Saidur Rahman, General Secretary of Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Council, took part in the discussion.

In a resolution, adopted in the discussion, the council decided to wage a massive campaign in favour of peace in the Gulf through stopping war. In his speech, Prof. Kabir Chowdhury said excepting the war of independence, all wars were dangerous and harmful to the mankind. Syed Ahmed Hossain alleged that the then government of General Ershad had sent Bangladesh Army to Saudi Arabia to appease the donor countries.

Asaduzzaman Noor pointed out that the Third World countries like Bangladesh would be hard-hit by the war in the oil-rich Gulf region. Dr. Saidur

Rahman gave a detailed account of the losses being faced by Bangladesh for the War. Condemning the war in the Gulf, Dr. Anisuzzaman said the war-mongers were testing their latest weapons causing serious threat to the human civilization. As a precondition to the ceasefire in the Gulf war, he demanded the Iraq should quit Kuwait immediately and at the same time the allied forces under the command of the US forces should also leave the Gulf region.

## 2 Bangladeshi child artists get Nehru gold medal

Masters Md. Iqbal Hossain and Sayeduzzaman Pitu from Bangladesh have won the Jawaharlal Nehru gold medal for painting at the Shankar's International Children's Competition, 1990, reports BSS.

Indian President R. Venkataraman awarded the prizes Thursday evening.

Bangladesh secured 6th position in the medals table of 31 countries. In the Nehru gold medals' tally Bangladesh stood second with Thailand as India topped.

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## Dhaka to negotiate \$ 175m credit with World Bank

A seven-member Bangladesh delegation will leave for Washington on February 11 to negotiate three credits totalling an amount of 175 million US dollars with the World Bank, reports UNB.

Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury will lead the delegation.

The sectors and their respective credit amounts are - Inland Water Transport (IWT) III (US dollar 64 million), Shallow Tubewell and low lift pump (US dollar 75 million) and Agriculture Support Service (US dollar 35 million).

Credit negotiations with the World Bank during the current fiscal year are going slow because of what officials say several "tough" conditionalities.

## Weather

### Dry weather to prevail

By Staff Correspondent

Mainly dry weather with partly cloudy sky is likely to prevail over the country till Sunday morning, Meteorological Department says.

The right temperature on Friday remained nearly unchanged over the country except Dhaka, Faridpur, Jessore and Khulna where the temperature was above normal by two to four degree Celsius. The night temperature today (Saturday) is likely to rise by one to two degree Celsius over the country, Met Office forecasts.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Rainfall possibility may increase. Extended outlook for another five days: Weather may improve last half period.

The lowest temperature in Dhaka was 17.2 degree Celsius while the country's lowest temperature 11.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Dinajpur.

The sun sets today (Saturday) at 5.50 and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6.36.

The temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns of Bangladesh on Friday.

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	maximum	minimum	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	28.6	17.2	78	54
Chittagong	28	14.9	74	62
Rajshahi	28.5	12.7	89	60
Khulna	29.5	16.2	92	66
Rangpur	26.7	12.2	84	67
Dinajpur	27.4	11.6	87	63
Sylhet	26.4	14.4	84	67
Bogra	28.5	14.4	79	64
Comilla	27.6	NA	80	71
Mymensingh	27.8	13.2	89	75
Cox's Bazar	28	NA	NA	62
Barisal	29	13	87	76

The minimum temperature recorded in major cities of the region on Friday:

Calcutta	: 20	degree	Beijing	: -2
New Delhi	: 11		Hong Kong	: 13
Karachi	: 11		Bangkok	: 24
Colombo	: 23			

## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Purple
- Heart, e.g.
- Sample
- control
- Small birds that hoot
- Near
- Escape
- That man
- Magic
- Wander
- Picnic pest
- Killed
- Audience
- Great Lake
- Weird
- Mechanical contrivance
- Fondle
- Tiny
- Paradise
- Leased
- Alight
- Airline info
- Trek

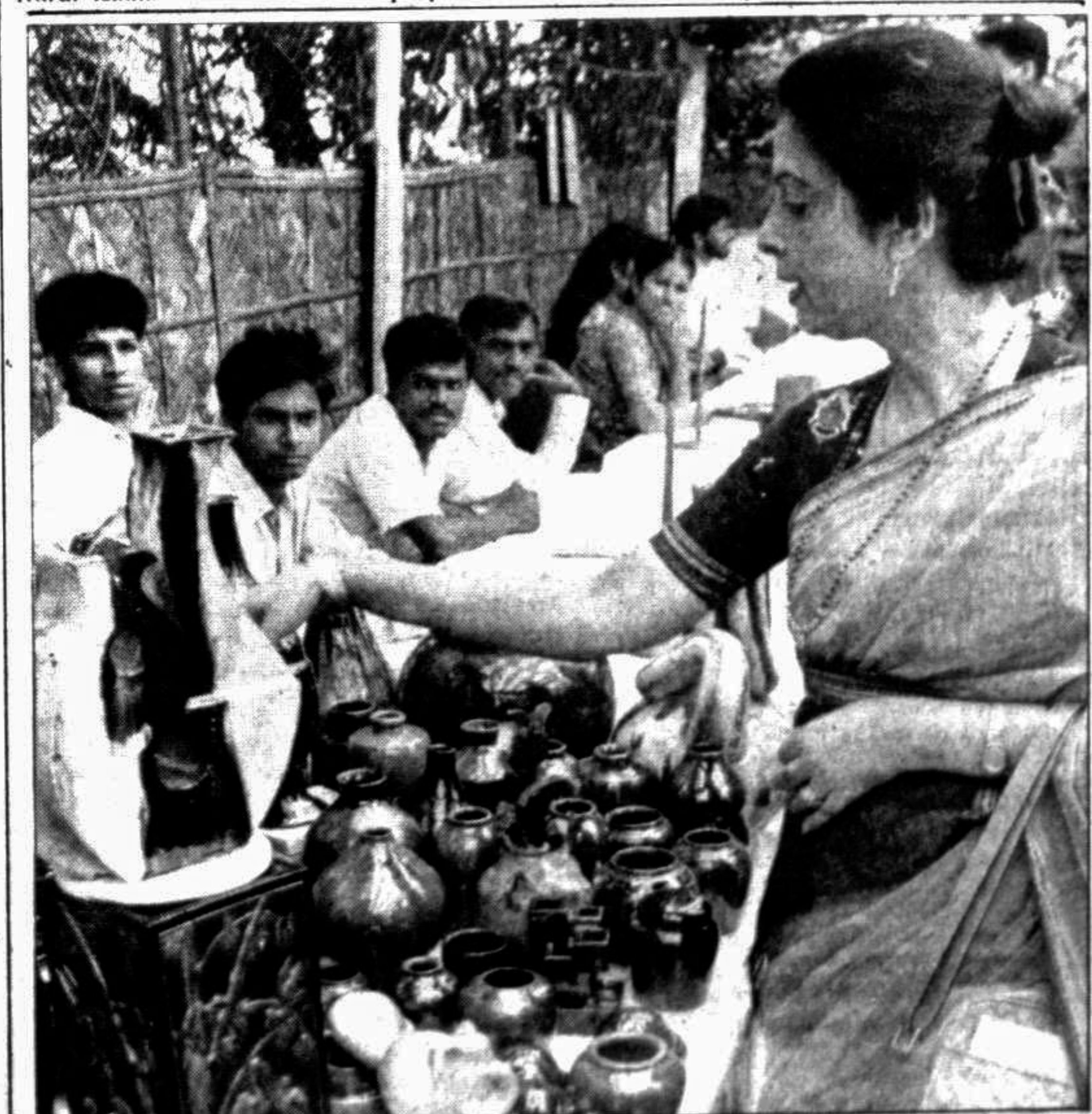
DOWN

- Courage
- Printer's measure
- Canine
- The sweetsop
- Missive
- In direction
- Neither
- Jewish nor Christian
- Off
- Crafty
- Tellurium
- symbol
- Neither
- Jewish nor Christian
- Lift
- Medi-
- terranean vessel
- Macaw
- Snake
- Short opera
- highlight
- Smooths
- Nice season
- Female sheep
- Checkedered cloth
- Merited
- Deprive of office
- Roams
- Simpler
- Garment
- Decimal base
- Barracuda
- Erase
- mother
- printing
- Go astray
- Bright star
- Sodium symbol
- Fulfill

Answer to Previous Puzzle

DE	LA	Y	BL	A	S	T
A	D	O	R	E	L	E
T	I	T	A	R	I	E
E	T	A	R	O	O	S
S	O	L	D	P	O	T
R	A	R	E	F	L	O
R	I	L	E	D	E	N
S	M	E	A	R	S	A
T	I	E	S	R	A	N
E	N	D	F	O	R	M
A	N	A	R	R	I	D
S	E	R	I	E	S	E
E	R	A	S	E	T	A

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60



Mrs Dilruba Ahmed, District Chairman, Innerwheel District 328 having a look at different country-made products on display at its annual charity bazaar held at Hotel Sonargaon on Friday. She inaugurated the function.

## 51 journalists demand release of Kader Siddiky

Fifty-one journalists on Friday demanded immediate release of valiant freedom fighter Kader Siddiky, reports BSS.

The journalists, in a joint statement, regretted that a legendary freedom fighter like Kader Siddiky had to be arrested by the interim government, installed as a result of the mass upsurge.

The arrest of Kader Siddiky had not glorified the neutrality of the present interim government as the self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu had been roaming throughout the country armed with sophisticated weapons, they said.

The signatories to the statement included Santosh Gupta, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Shahed Kamal, Shahjahan Mia, Chowdhury Ghu-lamur Rahman, Haroon Habib, Shawkat Anwar and Ihsanul Karim Hela.

## Jamaat to introduce interest-free economy

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 8: Acting Amcer of Jamaat-e-Islami, Abbas Ali Khan on Friday said free and fair polls could not be held unless illegal arms were recovered.

Addressing a meeting in Khulna Circuit House field, he said the police could not recover arms due to pressure from different parties.

Abbas said his party had been demanding a caretaker government since 1992. As its main duty was to maintain security in the country.

He said if elected, his party would establish a government of Allah. His party would introduce interest free economy and refurbish the defence sector with modern arms and ammunitions.

Abbas said his party would list the riches and realise jakat from them. In order to distribute it among the poor.

## Khaleda inaugurates short film on Zia today

Bangladesh Nationalist Party chief Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate an exhibition of a short film and an audio cassette at the party's Banani office today (Saturday) at 6 P.M. reports BSS.

The short film's 'E Janmer Shesh Nai' of producer-director Amjad Hossain and the cassettes titled 'Zia Zia Khaleda Zia' of lyricist Maniruzzaman Munir.

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