

Dhaka Day by Day

Bangla Academy a house of cards?

by Fayza Haq

Who would envisage that the Bangladesh Academy, natural consequence of the Language Movement is today in a shambles as regards its financial affairs?

The Bangla Academy was established in 1955 as a consequence of the decision of a united front of three political parties in the then East Pakistan. It was set up as an institution for the specific purpose of the promotion of Bangla language and literature.

Bangla, as a language, dates back more than a thousand years. It has a proud tradition of literature, old, rich and diverse. Linguistically it belongs to the Indo-European group of languages. Contribution of men like the Vaisnavita poets and Alaol of earlier times and of Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and Nazrul Islam would be considered significant by any standard of literature.

The Bangladesh Academy had been ailing for a fairly long time — at least the last six years. It had achieved a desirable height in the mid-1970s under Manzurul Maula but in the following years the Academy has not been able to live up to the necessary standard. The main reason for that is financial. This in turn is partly due to lack of planning as well as lack of dynamism.

Mr. Harunur Rashid, the Director-General speaking about his troubled organisation revealed that the Academy's complete revenue budget is two crore 95 lakh taka. The annual deficit runs to 54 lakh taka. The income side from the government is 1 crore 77 lakhs while the Bangla Academy's own income from the sale of books is 30 lakh takas. "We required 50 lakhs more every year in the revenue budget," Mr. Harunur Rashid said. The earnings from the sale of books is 35 lakhs every year, on average.

The machinery with which Bangla Academy is not compelled to function are 20 years old products of Russian and Polish barter deals. Today they are outdated. Meanwhile there are the latest technologies in printing in many other sections of Dhaka. No efforts have been made to update the machinery, laments Mr. Harunur Rashid. "There is only one offset machine and a few treadle and flat machines. We require 10 to 12 computer terminals, and at least two offset machines. There is also a clear dearth of a plate making unit, a

colour separation machine and a processing unit. The press is in a terrible shape and needs renovation desperately."

It is also reported that the staff members at the Academy do not have staff quarters, and matters such as payment of gas and electrical bills as well as renovation of old parts of the building and furniture remain a chronic worry. There is also the question of pensions which has been callously ignored or put aside.

The purpose of the Academy had been to involve itself in research and promotion of Bangla. When Bangladesh got its freedom, the Academy along with the Ekushey and Shaheed Minar, became symbols of aspirations of democracy.

The function of the Academy is to stress on research "but if the nation wants festivities you cannot deny them that," the Academy DG comments. "Yet you cannot take leave from the function for which the institution was created."

The academy should primarily concentrate on research. It should try and make Bangla an effective tool as an official language, to take the responsibilities of the needs of law or medicine. "You have to try and make the language as suitable as a proper vehicle to meet the needs of an independent nation," Mr. Harunur Rashid insisted.

The Academy should also try and publish as many books as possible as text books for higher education. In the Academy the medium is bilingual. Yet a large number of students cannot follow higher textbooks or classroom lectures in English. "You have no alternative but to embark on a serious programme in preparing books in Bangla."

The Academy plans to draw up a cultural history of each district and have a folklore division with video tapes to present cultures of different aspects of Bangladesh. So far the Academy prints five magazines.

"I am still not thinking of anything big. I want to put the house in order before I embark on any programme focusing on research on language and culture and translation," Mr. Rashid compromises.

The Academy DG has a number of impressive books to his credit which include English essays and translation from French. He has written on Bengali poets too in '76 and '86.



Visitors at an Ekushey Book Fair stall of Bangla Academy. — Star photo

Passengers being made to pay arbitrary fares

By Enamul Haq

The minibuses, plying on different city routes, are not following the chart of fares approved by the Road Transport Authority. Instead they charge fares whimsically.

In some cases, they charge much higher fares than those that have been approved by the authority. In some other cases, the passengers have to pay lesser than the actual fares.

The Road Transport Authority approved a fare of Tk. 0.35 per kilometre for the minibuses plying on the routes of Dhaka metropol-

itan area with effect from October 1 last year. According to the chart on Mohammadpur-Sayedabad route via Seance Laboratory, the distance from Mohammadpur to Shahbagh and Mohammadpur to Press Club are six and seven kilometres respectively. Hence the fare should be Tk. 2.10 and Tk. 2.45 respectively. But the conductors charge Tk. 3 in both cases. On the other hand, the distance from Mohammadpur to Tikatooly is 12 kilometres and the approved fare is Tk. 4.20. But

the conductors charge Tk. 3 only. On Gulistan-Mirpur via Farm Gate route the fare from Press Club to Farm Gate is Tk. 1.40 but the passengers are charged Tk. 1.50.

The owners of the mini-buses do not hang the chart of fares in their minibuses. As a result, alterations over fares occur frequently between the passengers and the employees of the minibuses.

Though the owners of minibuses are required not to carry more passengers than the seat capacity, they often carry even more than double passengers.

Minibuses plying with passengers standing on the footboards is a regular sight in the city. Sometimes it results in accidents. But the owners of the minibuses appear to be indifferent.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes 'Answer to Previous Puzzle' and a list of words like 'Tyrone of Zorro', 'Penpoint', 'Tom Hanks', etc.

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1 through 51 indicating starting points for clues.

One murdered at Uttara

By Staff Correspondent The caretaker of House No 32 at Uttara Sector Seven, Road No 28, was murdered at 7 a.m. on Saturday.

Police said a group of about four people came to caretaker Jamahuddin and said they would rent his house. Jamahuddin, in good faith, took them inside the house where he was stabbed to death.

Police could not still find out the motive of the murder. None was arrested.

Padma water level falls alarmingly

By Staff Correspondent The National Awami League (NAP-Bhasani) Chairman, Prof. Nur Mohammad Kazi in a statement on Saturday urged the government to solve the Farakka problem immediately.

He said the past governments could not solve the problem due to their subservient policies. He said the water level in the river Padma has gone down to an alarming position.

Dhaka Theatre to stage "Chaka" Mar 14

By Staff Correspondent Dhaka Theatre will stage its 19th production drama "Chaka" written by Selim Aldin on March 14 at Mahla Samity Mancha.

The actors of the drama are: Raisul Islam Asad, Shtmul Yusuf, Kamal Bayazid, Sabert Alam, Saifuddin Ahmed Dulal, Koushik Shaha, Faruk Ahmed, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Delwar Hossain, Mustifur Rahman Babu, Shahid Hassan Rinku, Nasrin Nahar, Shimu Chowdhury, Fauzia Yasmin and Shiphi Siddika.

The drama will be directed by Jamil Ahmed.

JP's public meeting Tuesday

By Staff Correspondent Jatjya Party will hold a public meeting at Panthapath on Sunday in observance of "Ershad Release Day".

A party press release said Acting Chairman of the party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury will address the meeting.

Kishoreganj Zilla Jubo Kallyan Samity

The biennial conference of Kishoreganj Zilla Jubo Kallyan Samity (Youth Welfare Society) will be held on March 15 (Friday) at the auditorium of C.M.A. Bhaban at 4 p.m. says a press release.



Bangladesh's lady magician Azra Javcon was accorded a reception by renowned magician P. C. Sircar (Junior) and his wife Jayasree Sircar at the Calcutta Mahajyote Sadan recently.

Weather

Day temperature to remain unchanged

By Staff Correspondent Weather is likely to remain mainly dry all over the country. Day temperature may remain unchanged.

Weather remained dry over the country on Saturday. Day temperature rose by 1 to 2 degree Celsius. Highest maximum temperature was recorded at 32.9 degree Celsius at Bhola and the minimum lowest of 13.2 degree at Srimangal and Dinajpur.

The sun sets today (Sunday) at 6.06 pm and rises on Monday at 6.12 am. Outlook for subsequent two days: Rainfall activity likely. Extended outlook for another five days: No marked change.

Temperature and humidity of some cities on Saturday:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (max, min), Humidity (%). Cities include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Cox's Bazar, Comilla, Sylhet, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Jessore, Barisal, etc.

Maximum temperature of some international cities: Manila 30, Karachi 30, Colombo 32, Bangkok 33, Hong Kong 27, Singapore 33, Beijing 02, Calcutta 31, Delhi 28.

Riyadh denies non-payment of salaries

5 Saudi companies to recruit 5,000 workers

By Staff Correspondent The Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Dhaka has refuted claims of Abbas Ali Khan, Acting Amecr of Jamaat-e-Islami that "hundreds thousands" of Bangladeshi nationals

in the kingdom were not paid their salaries for the last few months. In a Press statement on Saturday, the Saudi Embassy said that issue of non-payment of salaries may apply to a certain company but generally it is not true as the Saudi economy is still strong.

Abbas Ali Khan was reported to have complained to Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed about non-payment of wages. It may be mentioned here that five Saudi companies have offered to recruit 5,000 Bangladeshi skilled labourers.



The BCS candidates came out of their examination hall in Dhaka on Saturday in protest against leakage of question papers. They are seen exhibiting the papers to the onlookers. — Star photo

Habib Chatti's death condoled

Mr. Arshod Uz Zaman former Assistant General Secretary of the OIC has condoled the death of Mr Habib Chatti former Secretary General of the OIC. reports HSS.

He recalled his association with the late Mr Chatti, then Foreign Minister of Tunisia, during his assignment as Ambassador of Bangladesh in Tunis, a press release said.

Mr Zaman who was Deputy to Mr Chatti in the OIC paid tributes to late Chatti for his great contribution to the cause of Islam as the OIC Secretary General.

Saudi donation

Saudi Arabia has donated Tk.1,00,000 (equivalent to Saudi Rial 11800) to Shaheed Imam Hossain Smriti Pathagar at Cox's Bazar. reports UNB.

BCS exam boycotted

The BCS Examination on International Affairs paper was marred on Saturday in several centres in the metropolis as examinees left halls protesting outdated questions, reports UNB.

Public Service Commission (PSC) confirmed the boycott of the fourth day of examination in the capital.

Candidates alleged two questions, one of whether German unification was possible and the other on stability of the VP Singh government in India, put in today's question paper were outdated.

Witnesses said the examinees of the Dhaka College centre first rattled out of the hall and later forced others to stop exam in nearby centres including Teachers Training

College, City College, New Model Degree College and Tejgaon College. When contacted, PSC member Col (Rtd) KM Rahman admitted the questions, set several months earlier, were not updated with political changes in Germany and India. He, however, said the examinees had enough options as they were to answer only three questions out of seven set in the question papers.

Rahman said examinations were held in other places outside the capital without disruption. The first day of examination on Bengali was also boycotted by the candidates at the Titumir College here, alleging leakout of question. PSC, however, denied the leakage.

Taxes in city raised by 30 times

By Staff Correspondent Bangladesh Nagarik Adhikar Parishad (Citizens' Right Committee) urged the authorities to suspend the tax-enhancement by the Dhaka City Corporation in 1989.

A delegation led by M A Mohaimen, President of the Committee, met the Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation, Waitul Islam last week and handed over a memorandum to him. It was stated in the memo that during 25 years of Pakistan, tax had been enhanced only twice. During six years of late President Ziaur Rahman, enhancement was once and only by 50 per cent. But during President H.M. Ershad's rule it has been increased twice and

by almost 30 times higher than the previous rate. The committee members pleaded that during the last 18 to 19 years of the corporation the city expanded greatly and hundreds of thousands of new buildings have been constructed. The huge revenue from these areas and buildings is fattening the corporation's coffer.

Programme The bi-ennial conference of Kishoreganj District Youth Welfare Association in Dhaka will be held at the IVMA auditorium in the city on March 15.

DU M.A. (Preliminary) interview Mar 16

By Staff Correspondent Results of the Admission Test for M.A. first part (Bengali) of Dhaka University has been published. Interview of the successful candidates for filling 120 seats of the Bengali Department will be held on Saturday, 16th March at 9 a.m.

Candidates are required to bring with them original mark sheets and certificates of S.S.C, H.S.C. and Degree examinations while appearing for the interview.

TV programme Sunday

- 5-00 Opening and recitation from Al Quran
5-20 News in Bengali
5-30 Ntrjhar
5-55 Perspective: (Documentary Film)
6-20 Sports programme
7-05 Tagore Songs
8-00 News in Bengali
9-00 Drama Serial: Ossin
10-00 News in English
10-30 Shatarupa: Magazine programme
11-30 News
11-45 Closing

BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, DHAKA

TENDER NOTICE

NO. P&D/L-P-1 (217&218)/90-91/d-2336(2) Dated: 9.3.91

SEALED TENDERS are hereby invited from the bonafide suppliers for supply of Plain Paper Copier.

Intending tenderers shall have to obtain permission for purchasing tender papers etc. on application to the undersigned. Application must accompany G.I.R certificate, Trade licence and certificate of experience about works/supplies etc. from reputed organisations. Tender papers and other terms & conditions will be available from the office of the undersigned on payment of Tk. 150/- (non-refundable) to the Sonali Bank, B.U.E.T. branch, Dhaka. Each tender must accompany a bank draft or Pay order from Nationalised Bank amounting to 5% of the quoted amount as earnest money deposited in favour of the Comptroller of this University without which no tender will be considered. Tenders must be put into the Tender box kept for this purpose in this office upto 2-30 P.M. of 19.3.91 and will be opened on the same day at 2-45 P.M. before the tenderers present.

The University Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders or one or more items of any tender without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

No tender papers will be sold on the opening day of the tender.

Deputy Director, Planning & Development D-05