Dhaka Day by Day

Pavement Chef

by Fayza Haq

'It is wonderful to be your own master.'

Momen Ali looks like some carefree teenager. He is in fact a 21- year-old owner of a small pavement meal shop at Kamalapur near the Custom Office. He began this project a year ago, with Tk. 10,000 that he saved from his job as a houseboy in the city for over ten years.

He is cheerful and confident about his work and tells you proudly how he employs three other workers and carries on swift business, "I pay Tk. 20 a day to the boys who serve, and Tk. 30 a day to the assistant cook. I give them their meals as well and they are apparently contented."

The menu includes two small pieces of beef for Tk. 10, a piece of chicken for Tk. 12 and fish ranging from Tk. 5 to Tk. 8, depending on whether it is 'hilsa' or 'rui'. The vegetable plates are for Tk.3. "In this way I get a clear income of Tk. 3,500 a month, without having studied at any school of any sort in my life or without having inherited a pie from my family. I don't owe any bank anything either," he informs me.

The tiny cafe caters to the needs of the police and the workers of the custom office, apart from the occasional passers by. "I serve 300 people daily and I enjoy every bit of this entrepreneurial work. I am my own master. I do the shopping from Thatary Bazar and do most of the cooking too," Momen relates.

Evidently Momen's cooking is not that of the standard of chefs in the leading hotels in the city with their "murgh musallam" and "kabab paratha", but he does a good job of putting into use what he has picked up from the kitchens in the houses where he has worked.

His job, however, is no bed of roses. He has to toil from day break to dust."It is difficult to control the workers who steal both money and food. Then there are the 'mastans' who come and eat and refuse to pay. The police too want their cut and have to be paid Tk. 300 per month. There is the rent of the shop to be considered and it is Tk. 600 per month. Yet it is wonderful to be your own master," he says.

Momen comes from a poor family in Chandpur and has five younger brothers and sisters to consider. His parents had their land got washed away by the flood repeatedly. As a teenager he got weary of being hired out for rice threshing, mud tilling and rowing boats. "There was never any money in my pocket. So I decided to try my luck in Dhaka."

"At first I worked as a butcher's boy, and then as a houseboy for years earning Tk. 250 to Tk. 400 as the days went by. Once again there was no saving to talk about, although I was given food and clothes wherever I worked and a bed to sleep in. Today I can send home a remittance of Tk. 2,500 a month, using the expertise I learnt as a houseboy."

A month ago, Momen took upon himself another job — that of a gate-keeper in the evening at a guest house for foreigners in Dhanmondi. Here he gets Tk. 1000 plus tips.

Contented as he is with his lot, he comments: "If I get a chance to go to the Middle East I'll pack my bags and roll up the cafe at Kamalapur. I am not afraid of a possible breakup of another war in the Middle East in the near future. Wars don't repeat themselves so frequently."

Discussing the recent cyclone he remarks: "There is a tremendous task ahead. The people who have lost everything have to be given food, clothes, shelter and means of carrying on life ahead.

Self-immolation

By Staff Correspondent

A teenage girl committed suicide at Rajshahi city Tuesday, police sources said.

Mina (19), daughter of a jamader of Belderpara area of the city sprinkled kerosene on her body and set herself on fire at around 9:30 am, according to sources.

None of her family members was present during the incident, her neighbours said.

Neighbours said that her father married twice and the victim belongs to the second wife who was divorced earlier.

Police took her body to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Scimitar to make statements soon

By Staff Correspondent

The Scimitar Oil Company engaged by the previous government for drilling oil at Sylhet is likely to make some public statements very soon.

During the previous regime the Scimitar Oil Company did not make any statement refuting allegations made by the Public Enquiry Committee as it had been restrained from doing so by the BOGMC and the Ministry of Energy. Scimitar Oil Company sources said that it did not give any reply to the queries made by the Public Enquiry Commission because the then government itself gave it protection for national interests.

Plan to exempt taxes on cargoes hailed

CHITTAGONG, May 14: Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (CCC&I) hailed yesterday the government decision to exempt taxes on cargoes damaged at Chittagong port by the April 29 cyclonic storm.

The CCC&I earlier called upon the National Board of Revenue and the Finance Minister to exempt taxes on the cargoes affected in the cyclone and tidal surge, a chamber press release said.

The Chamber also called for shifting Revenue Board office to Chittagong temporarily for the speedy disposal of all concerned matters.

Body to probe corruption in educational administration

The government has constituted a committee to inquire into different allegations of corruption in educational administration with State Minister for Education Principal Md Eunus Khan as its chairman, an official hand-out said, reports BSS.

The other members of the committee are, Mr Tofael Ahmed MP, Mr Abdul Malek MP, Mr Abdus Sobhan MP, Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan MP, and Secretary, Ministry of Education.

Joint-Secretary (Administration), of the Ministry of Education will work as Member-Secretary of the committee.

PROGRAMME

ROCA

The national conference and elections of Rangpur Old Cadets' Association (ROCA) will be held today at 4 pm at the TSC of Dhaka University.

Rotary Club meet

By Staff Correspondent

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North-West will be held today (Wednesday) at 5.30 pm at Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka.

Development fund may be diverted to rehabilitation

The government may divert unutilised development funds to post-cyclone rehabilitation and reconstruction due to serious financial constraints, reports UNB.

Highly placed sources said Tuesday most external aid was now coming in urgent relief of cyclone victims, while government appeal for funds for reconstruction of important infrastructure had not yet got any concrete response.

Funding agencies including World Bank has reportedly accepted the government proposal for development fund diversion in view of huge money needed immediately for repair and reconstruction of some strategic installations and infrastructure.

Ways of diverting the funds from development projects are being discussed with World Bank.

Official sources said a 25 million US dollar IDA credit, approved for export development but remained unutilised for long, might be spent for rehabilitation of Chittagong Port, battered by the April 29 catastrophic storm in country's coastline.

It was learnt that Japan was appealed on Monday for funds for reconstruction of Chittagong Port, but the response was negative.

Aid pledges, both in cash and kind, amounted to 245.33 million US dollars as of Tuesday cash component being only 26 million dollars.

Moreover, most of the total cash relief, about 22 million dollars, would be channeled to the cyclone victims through NGOs, as most donors prefer distribution of their relief through the Non-Governmental Organisations.

Cash assistance direct to the government is negligible, sources said, while it has to bear a huge cost of helicopter transportation and hosting crew, foreign missionaries and dignitaries.

Fuel cost and maintenance of foreign relief helicopters have posed a tremendous strain on the national exchequer, said a reliable source. "Flying a helicopter costs much more than the value of the relief material it carries."

"The government is no more interested in relief helicopters," said an official on request he not be named.

M. Saifur Rahman, Minister for Finance and Planning, meeting a delegation of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka in his Chamber on May 14 to discuss the post-cyclone rehabilitation measures and budget proposals.

Dainik Sangram sued

The Registrar of Islamic University Kushtia has lodged a case against Dainik Sangram with the Bangladesh Press Council, reports UNB.

Mohammad Araz Ali alleged that the daily had published some fabricated, baseless, objectionable and malafide reports in six issues of the paper last year.

The issues were : October 26, 27 and 29 and November 3,4 and 5 headlined "Islamic University : Spot report — 1,2,3,4 and 6".

By publishing these reports the daily intentionally tried to degrade the University and its authorities, said a press release on Tuesday.

Poetry festival tomorrow

An international poetry festival dedicated to the cyclone-affected people will be held at Shilpakala Academy auditorium in Dhaka at 7 pm Thursday, reports UNB.

The festival entitled "Nature : The poet's vision" will include poems, read in various languages by an international group of poets along with Bangla translation.

The programme is jointly sponsored by the American Centre, the Alliance Francaise, British Council and Geothe Institute.

Rehabilitation plan for Anwara victims sought

Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury, a Parliament Member, Tuesday urged the government to take up an well coordinated plan on an urgent basis for the rehabilitation of the survivors of Anwara upazila on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, badly hit by the recent cyclone and tidal surge.

Addressing a press conference in Dhaka Tuesday Chowdhury placed before the government a 16-point demand including emergency supply of medicines and despatch of medical teams attend to hundreds of diarrhoea patients, making the upazila free from pollution and wreckage, construction of roads and educational institutions and sanctioning agriculture loans to the people in the upazila.

Office-bearers

By Staff Correspondent

Mr. Azizul Huq and A. T. M. Shamiul Amin have been elected President and Secretary General respectively of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission Employees Union for the year 1991. The election was held recently.

Obituary

Alhaj Abdur Rashid Patwari, father of M Tajul Islam, Managing Director of Popular Advertising Limited, died on May 7 at his village home at East Bashikpur under Parshuram upazila of Feni district, says a press release.

Body to examine TV, radio as Corporation

State Minister for Information Mohammad Nurul Huda told the Jatiya Sangsad Tuesday that a committee would be set up soon to recommend what steps could be taken about Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from A K M Jahangir Hossain (Al-Patuakhali) on whether the government has any plan to convert Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh into Corporation, the State Minister said necessary action would be taken in this regard on the basis of the recommendations of the committee.

Answering to a question from Maksud Ibne Aziz Lama (JP-Sylhet) he informed the House that there were 10 television sub-stations in the country.

Nurul Huda said there was no plan to set up television sub-stations in all the district headquarters. He further said that all the upazilas of the country were not brought under television network.

Tk 99 crore needed to put railway on its track

Asian Development Bank (ADB) will extend all possible assistance for rehabilitation of communication network, damaged during the recent cyclone and tidal surge, reports BSS.

This was stated by the visiting ADB Vice-President William R Thomson, when he called on Communications Minister Oli Ahmed at Chittagong Circuit House in Dhaka Tuesday.

Recalling the assistance by concerned ADB agencies in different development projects, the ADB Vice President said, ADB was keen to see Bangladesh develop, over coming the present crisis, created by the cyclone.

Apprising the ADB Vice-President of the damage to the communication sectors, the Communications Minister said the loss in the railway sector was 99 crore alone, he said, to rehabilitate this sector, it would need Taka 16 crore to implement a short term project, and Taka 83 crore would be needed to implement a long term scheme.

Thomson assured the minister that ADB would consider to provide funds to the railway projects on an emergency basis.

Later, the ADB Vice-President visited Pahartali Railway workshop, stores depot, office of the chief of Railway South Zone, Patenga Embankment, Export Processing Zone and Chittagong Port.

Hasina's role in anti-autocracy stir acclaimed

The visiting Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Union (WFTU), Mr Dev Kumar Ganguli, met Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at the latter's Sangsad chamber in Dhaka on Tuesday, reports BSS.

During the meeting hey discussed socio-economic condition of the country and the role of the working people in the struggle against autocracy. The recent cyclonic storm and tidal surge also came up for discussion, according to a Press release.

Mr. Ganguli lauded the role of Sheikh Hasina in improving the lot of the working people in Bangladesh and expressed the hope that her contribution to the anti-autocracy movement would bear fruit.

The Leader of the Opposition said Bangladesh emerged on the world map for the establishment of a democratic society free from exploitation.

CU classes resume: police deployed

CHITTAGONG, May 14 : Classes and the halls of the Chittagong University reopened today after remaining closed for over four months and a half, reports BSS.

The university campus resounded with the presence of a large number of students. About 40 per cent of the students are estimated to have arrived on the campus.

Resident students are coming back to their respective halls.

A total of 150 police was deployed on the campus to ensure security of students.

The situation on the campus was calm today. Vice-Chancellor Alamgir Mohammad Sirajuddin went round all faculties, and CUCSU building and talked to the students. A section of students however, raised slogans against the Vice-Chancellor while he was passing by the Central Cafeteria.

Conservation of energy discussed

A day-long workshop on "Energy and Minerals" was held at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) in Dhaka Tuesday, reports UNB.

Conservation of energy and is proper uses, gas, random cutting of trees, use of improved oven, system loss of electricity and hydro-electricity came up for discussion in the workshop.

Jointly sponsored by the government and National Conservation Strategy (NCS), the workshop was chaired by Dr Shamsuzzaman Talukder, Division Chief (Agriculture) of the Planning Commission.

Energy expert Prof Nurul Islam of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) presented the keynote paper.

Senior Resident Adviser of International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Haroon-or Rashid, Dr Abdullah Al Muti Sharfuddin, National Consultant of NCS Abdul Malek Chowdhury, former State Minister Dr Iqbal Mahmud, Prof Mohammad Ibrahim, Prof Ain-un Nishat and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Environment Risalat Ahmed also spoke.

'Claims of CEPZ units to be settled'

Sadharan Bima Corporation has informed the cyclone affected industries of the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) that their claims have been recognised in principle and those would be settled as expeditiously as possible, reports UNB.

This was disclosed at a meeting held at the instance of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) at the Sadharan Bima Corporation office in the capital Tuesday. The Managing Director of the Sadharan Bima Corporation chaired the meeting.

The meeting was attended by the Managing Director of three other Insurance companies -- Reliance Insurance, Delta Life Insurance and Phoenix Insurance.

The representatives of the five tidal-bore damaged CEPZ industries — Regency Garments, Univogue Garments, Siams Superior, Olympic MI (BD) and Institutional Textile Mills were also present at the meeting.

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority requested the Sadharan Bima Corporation and other private Insurance companies on behalf of the affected industries to settle their claims as early as possible.

Sadharan Bima Corporation has also been urged to made on account payment, if possible, to the tune of 50 per cent of the damage as usual in international practice.

Health check-up of scientists stressed

A condolence meeting at the death of Dr. Shams Uddin Ahmed, a senior physician of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, was held at the auditorium of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, Savar. Dr Shams Uddin Ahmed died on Sunday last at the Suhrawardi Hospital, Dhaka at 9-10 p.m, says a press release.

Presided over by Dr M Serajul Islam, Director General, the meeting was attended among others by Dr M A Wazed Miah, President of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Scientists' Association (BAESA). Speaking on the occasion Dr Wazed and others demanded a periodical six-monthly health check up of all the scientists and others working in hazardous condition all over Bangladesh.

Others who spoke on the occasion were BAESA General Secretary Dr Habibul Ahsan; radiation chemistry scientist Dr M Alamgir, radiation scientist Dr Abdul Jalil ; food and environment scientist Dr Maqbul Hossain; head of administration Anwarul Hoque; Union Savar Unit President Kazi Ismail Hossain; Technical Association General Secretary Mahfuzul Rahman; Diploma Association member Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

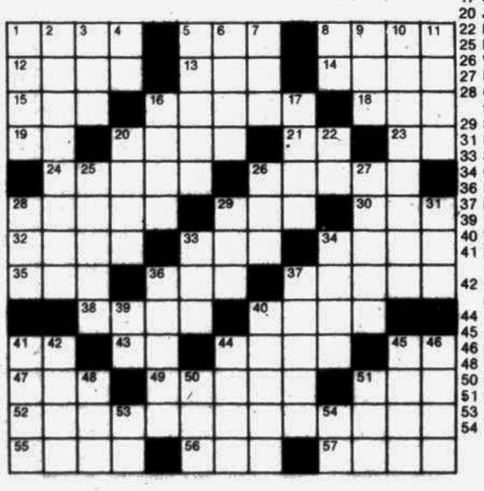
1 Brother of Jacob
5 — Beta Kappa
8 Foolish; idiotic
12 Remainder
13 Ventilate
14 River in Arizona
15 Those holding office
16 "Meet the —"
18 Obstruct
19 Latin conjunction
20 Chapeaus
21 Early morn
23 Myself
24 Heroic events
26 NFL's Dolphins play here
28 Cuts
29 Be ill
30 In addition
32 High cards
33 Building addition
34 Massive
35 Damp
36 Consumed
37 Lawmaker
38 Ivy League university
40 Imitates
41 Helium symbol
43 Roman gods
44 Word of sorrow
45 Note of scale
47 Guido's high note
49 Ardent
51 Young boy
52 Mis-comprehend
55 Weakens
56 N.Y. time
57 Is in debt

DOWN

1 Great Lake
2 Prison term
3 Beast of burden
4 Guido's low note
5 Separates
6 Hastens
7 Fed. agcy.
8 Garroway ID
9 Succor
10 "— Road"
11 Domesticate
16 Moccasins
17 Go by water
20 Joints
22 Mother
25 Devoutness
26 Wire measure
27 Belabors
28 Carpenter's tool
29 Sudsy brew
31 Lair
33 Summer: Fr.
34 Garden tools
36 Foreign
37 Masts
39 Paid notice
40 Wide awake
41 Dress borders
42 Lamb's pen name
44 Matures
45 Path
46 Sums up
48 Viper
50 Fruit drink
51 Ordinance
53 Pronoun
54 As far as

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	H	E		L	A	I	R		B	L	O	T
H	A	M		A	I	D	A		A	E	R	O
A	L	B		P	R	E	S	E	R	V	E	D
G	L	O	W	S		A	P	A	R			
		S	E		I	T	S		E	L	A	N
H	I	S		W	O	E		P	L	A	N	E
A	D		T	A	N		H	A	S		T	A
F	L	O	O	R		M	O	W		W	E	T
T	E	N	T		N	E	W		T	I		
			T	E	A	S		P	O	L	L	S
S	T	R	E	T	C	H	E	R		L	I	T
H	E	A	R		R	E	N	A		E	R	A
Y	E	N	S		E	D	D	Y		T	A	B



Weather

Nor'wester likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower with temporary gusty wind likely to occur at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna divisions. Day temperature likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Nor'wester warning : Temporary nor'wester with speed of 70 to 90 kilometer per hour may occur at a few places over Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions and the regions of Jessore, Khustia, Barisal, Noakhali, Comilla and Sylhet.

Rain or thundershower occurred at many places over the country Tuesday. Amount of rainfall reported are Dhaka : 4 cm, Srimongol : 2 cm, Chandpur, Mymensingh, Dinajpur and Rajshahi : 1 cm each. Day temperature remained nearly unchanged. The maximum temperature of 38.4 degree Celsius was reported from Jessore.

Outlook for subsequent two days : little change.

Extended outlook for another five days : rainfall may increase.

The temperature and humidity of some cities recorded Tuesday :

City	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	30.9	20.4	85	79
Rangpur	30.4	-	91	71
Sylhet	27.5	-	77	-
Khulna	35.5	23.4	79	60
Jessore	38.4	24.3	-	-
Rajshahi	34.4	22.5	82	72
Dinajpur	30.8	22.5	77	-

স্মরণকালের ভয়াবহতম ঘূর্ণিঝড় ও জলোচ্ছ্বাস কবলিত উপকূলীয় অঞ্চলের অসহায় মানুষের সাহায্য ও পুনর্বাসন পরিকল্পনাকে বাস্তবায়নের প্রয়াসে মাননীয়া প্রধানমন্ত্রীর ত্রাণ তহবিলে মুক্ত হস্তে দান করুন।

আপনার নিকটস্থ রূপালী ব্যাংকের যে কোন শাখায় দানের অর্থ জমা দিয়ে আর্তমানবতার সেবায় এগিয়ে আসুন। আপনার দান সম্পূর্ণ আয়কর মুক্ত।

রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

উত্তম সেবার নিশ্চয়তা