# Dhaka Day by Day

# Repairing Wheels through the Rain

by Fayza Haq

DHAKA is a city of thousands of rickshaws with their gaudy hoods and eye-catching paintings at the back, just above the wheels. It requires quite a handful of repair workers to keep the rickshaws on the street. With no prospects in the near future of better means of transportation the rickshaws will have to ply If I take a holiday there is no food that day. the roads as people go about their work.

the many repair workers who keep the rickshaws fit and road worthy. Saleha, who has been working for nine years at Shahbagh, opposite the National Museum, can fix tyre leaks, repair broken wheels, and tighten loose machine parts of rickshaws. She has learnt the repair work from her husband and now controls the business herself.

normally done by men in Dhaka? She admits she would have preferred a job in the garment factory, or an easy task of minding children as a house-maid, or working in the kitchen of the well-to do in the city. But her husband is eccentric and cannot either do the is past midnight, and no buses ply.

Saleha's main concern at the moment is her eldest daughter. "To get her married I need Tk. 5,000. While she remains as she is, I get more and more worried about her chastity and her chances of a good marriage. I burn in the sun and get wet in the rain seven days a week.

There is no question of money sitting in a bank Saleha Begum, 36, born at Jessore, is one of . We live day to day. I am not aware of any cooperative that I could avail of either. Apart from the 'sari' I am wearing I have one other set. My children are no better off. Our existence simply staggers along," She elaborates about her plight, with tears flowing from her eyes, all the Nizami urged the Indian

time that she spoke to me. Saleha, together with her demented husband and her tiny son earn on average Tk 50 a day. Why does she choose to do a job which is Out of that Tk 25 goes to feed the three throughout the day. It takes them Tk 4 to reach Mohakhali and Tk 6 more to reach anywhere near Tongi Bastohara colony, where Saleha has her shack. She pays Tk 3 in addition to take a rickshaw to reach home as by then it



Saleha Begum: Life's like that.

work worth Tk 10 from him and pay him Tk. 2 and get away with it unless I watch the procedure like a hawk. Again, he picks up brawls and fights with customers and I must calm him down. He is also not a regular worker and does not bring in a steady flow of income unless I am there to assist him and keep an eye on him", Saleha explains.

The neighbouring workers brand her husband as not only mad and irresponsible but also wayward. While he cannot provide for his wife and children, he carries on polygamous associations with other women. If he does indulge in loose morality, and shows serious interest in other women in the neighbourhood why should Saleha tolerate it?

She has no choice, she says. She has six children to feed and fend for. She cannot win herself a new husband with l.er passel of hungry, barely clad brats. She is afraid that if she resorts to something like a divorce the children will not only starve but end up as hooligans and thugs on the road. Other workers call her 'bhabi' and keep her company and she is grateful for that.

Why does she not get her children to earn? Some are too young and have to be left at home, Saleha explains. The eldest daughter, who is of marriageable age, tends to the little ones. One of the daughters sells garlands at the traffic lights. Her son, Yunus, helps with the rickshaw repair work but he too is a tiny might. She cannot dream of the luxury of sending her children to a free school. All the money they bring in is required to make ends meet. She herself appears a lean, scrawny bag of bones with sunken eyes.

meals. Saleha pays a rent of Tk 150 a month. "Even on occasions like Eid we cannot afford luxuries like sweetmeats or fruit. Something like meat and fish is also beyond our means ."

Saleha who had voted for "Dhaner sheesh" had believed at that time that the symbol represented security of food. Her neighbours and companions voted otherwise. But they all want peace and stability of job so that their income is steady.

There is constant trouble at the Dhaka University and the traffic where I operate is held up so that I get little work. I would have preferred it if there was not so much of political trouble", Saleha comments .

She would have liked to have taken a loan and to have established a proper shop but she sees no prospects of that in the near future. There are eight repair centres like hers at Shahbagh alone and so she has stiff competition. Her finances are so limited that her neighbours inform me that two of her children were born near the Shahbagh bus

Saleha who comes from Barisal had met her husband, when he came from Jessore to work for his "khalu" as a day labourer. The future prospects seemed rosy enough for her at that time. She was fascinated with the ideas of coming to the vast city of Dhaka. She had no idea that she might get less to eat than a farmer's wife, and have more labour to put in to justify her existence.

But then, life is like that for the average bread-earner in Dhaka city.

### Hasina visits Waziuddin

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition at the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina Thursday visited Waziuddin Khan. President of Pabna district Awami League. at Dhaka Medical College Hos-

She stayed there for some time and inquired about the treatment of Khan.

40 Dined

41 Stalemate

pital, reports BSS.

ACROSS

1 Word of

sorrow

# First Haj flight arrives today

The first return Haj flight of Biman leaves Jeddha for Dhaka Thursday night with ballotee Hajis, reports BSS.

It will reach in Dhaka at 3.45 am Friday, according to an official handout.

All the ballotee Hajis will return home by four flights of the Biman by June 30.

**Answer to Previous Puzzle** 

# **CROSSWORD PUZZLER**



# Woman snatcher arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Tejgaon police on Thursday morning arrested one woman snatcher from Old Airport Bus

Monwara (23) snatched the handbag of a college going copassenger and tried to run away. But patrol police caught the woman snatcher as the college girl raised hue and cry. The handbag was recovered.

A case was filed with Tejgaon thana



Friday

# **Morning Session**

Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary News in Bengali 8:15 Documentary Film: Zoo

Natun Kuri - '97 10:00 News in English 10:05 Animation special Mokure: 11:15 Moner

'Sukher Chharpatra'

12:30 Closing down

**Evening Session** 3:00 Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary Recitation from

Tripitak Alor Dishari 3:15 3:40 Health programme Drama series

Chronicles of Narniya Perspective News in Bengali 5:20 Sports programme 5:30 6:30 Shikkhagan Education programme Madhu Chhanda

8:00 News in Bengali Drama: Swapner Simana 10:00 News in English 10:30 Drama serial: L A Law

11:30 Khabar/The News 11:40 Saturday's programme Verses from Al-Quran National Flag and National Anthem 11:45 Close down

reiteration of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to construct Ram Mandir (temple Ram) on the site of Babri Mosque. In a press release on

Thursday Secretary General and Parliamentary Party Leader of Jamaat Mowlana Motiur Rahman Nizami said that by the reiteration of BJP decision has challenged the faith and belief of the muslim all over the world.

Jamaat blasts

BJP decision

By Staff Correspondent

Jamaat flayed the

BJP is trying to ignite "communal fire" in India by this announcement, he said. government to prevent BJP from any attempt of constructing Ram Mandir in place of Babri Mosque and to stop repression on the Muslims of Kashmir by accepting their demand of independence.

### CPB

Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Secretary General of communist party, on Thursday condemned the Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party's reiterated promise to replace Babri mosque with a Hindu temple in a town of Uttar Pradesh:

In a statement Manik said a communal riot might be occurred for this. He also hoped that democratic forces of India would come forward to tackle the situation.

### Rubber output to fall by 500 tons

The rural electrification programme sustained a great loss as the infrastructures of the power system in 65 upazilas of 11 coastal districts were badly affected by the recent cyclone, according to official sources.

The sources said the system was severely affected in 20 upazilas and partially in the rest of the areas. The maximum damage to the system was in the districts of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Noakhaki, Barisal and Barguna.

A total of Take 25 crore would be needed for immediate and long-term repair and rehabilitation of the system. Taka 15 crore would be needed for immediate Forest is another sector

which also sustained severe damage due to the cyclone. The total loss in the forest sector had been estimated at Taka 97 crore. Giving breakup of the damage, the sources said 70,000 acres of forest were fully and another 85,000 acres partially damaged. They said the Forest Department lost 250 buildings. 12 trawlers, eight speed boats and 20 ordinary boats, while it sustained partial loss to 400 houses, three motor launches, five trawlers, five speed boats and 25 ordinary boats.

Besides forestry and its facilities. Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation sustained loss as its rubber plantations were badly damaged. It is feared that rubber production will go down by about five hundred tons and the loss in this sector was estimated at Taka eight crore. The Forest Research Institute suffered a big loss as many rare species of trees the last 30 years.

### for cyclone victims Hazrat Mirza Taher Ahmad. fourth Calipha and present Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat being deeply socked has expressed his profound sympathy for the recent cyclone stricken people of Bangladesh. He has donated £ 10,000 (more than

Fund, says a press release. Earlier Hazrat Mirza Taher

Ahmad wrote a letter to the Prime Minister and Acting President of Bangladesh expressing deep sympathy and were lost which were grown in grief for the cyclone victims and prayed for them.

# Ctg TV sub-centre resumes operation tomorrow

CHITTAGONG, June 27: After long wait Chittagong subcentre of Bangladesh Television will broadcast its programmes again from Saturday next, reports BSS.

The microwave system between Dhaka-Chittagong was completely snapped when T grammes are seen partially in and T tower along with TV other parts of the Chittagong antenna were totally destroyed during the devastating cyclone and high powered antenna and tidal surge of April 29.

Since than the people of the port city, greater Chittagong and elsewhere of the district were deprived of enjoying the BTV programmes. the last two months. The pro-

Room sources said two engi- watched in the television neers from India came to screen from Chittagong sub Chittagong-sub-centre with centre including: Live telecast new TV antenna yesterday to of sacred Haj performance, ilreconstruct the microwave lustrated news of the assassi-

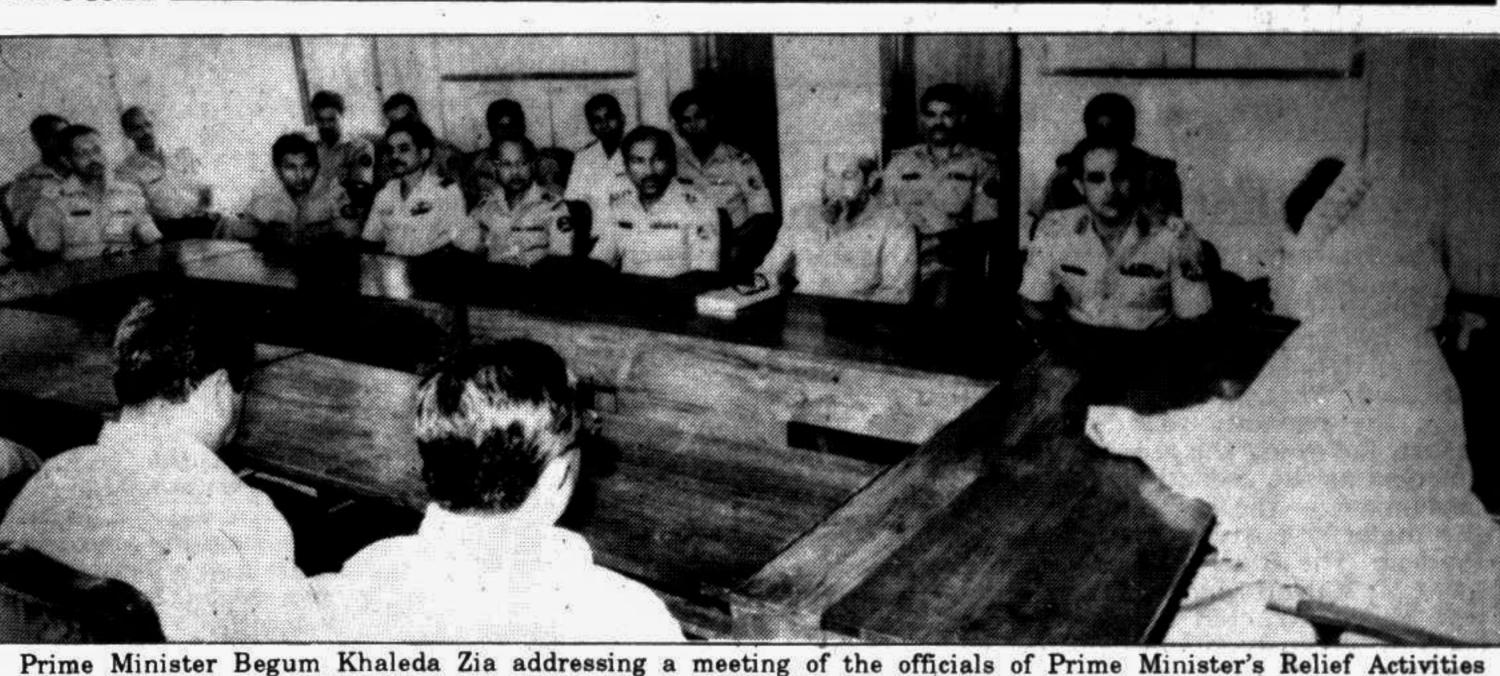
works today and it is expected that the reconstruction work nament between Bangladesh would be completed within and India, three-day long spe-Saturday next.

was impossible for setting up present imported antenna atop the 275 feet high and sky touching T and T tower due to its structural weakness, it will have to be put up over a 33feet high newly built tower.

however, can only be enjoyed within the port city under this alternate system, TV engineers Meanwhile, the pro-

and greater Chittagong were deprived of enjoying some rare and attractive programmes for Chittagong TV Control grammes which were not nation and the cremation cer-They begin reconstruction emony of former Premier Rajiv Gandhi, BTG cub football tourcial programmes on Eid-ul-

> Macgyver'. The people of Chittagong



Coordination Cell on her visit to the cell on Thursday.

# Permanent facilities to be set up in cyclone-hit areas: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Thursday reiterated that permanent facilities would be established in the cyclone-prone areas to save people from the fury of natural calamities, reports BSS.

"We have to build up our own permanent establishments to face the challenge of natural disasters which are more or less regular phenomena," she said while talking to officials at the Prime Minister's Relief Activities Monitoring and Coordination Cell in Dhaka.

Begum Zia said the natural calamities had been there in the past and they might strike

# 68 held in city

Dhaka Metropolitan Police have arrested 68 persons on different charges during the last 24 hours and sent them to court, a DMP press release said in Dhaka Thursday night, reports BSS.

Besides. DMP's traffic police filed 50 cases for violation of traffic rules in the city, the press release said.



# Ahmadiyya relief

7 lakh Taka) to the Bangladesh High Commission in UK for the Prime Minister's Relief

# However, there will be no difficulty to broadcast the programmes. The programmes,

told BSS.

district by putting up special atop the buildings. The people of the port city

Official sources said as it Azha, most favourite drama series 'Ayomoy'

> meanwhile demanded rebroadcasting the important programmes which they had

again in future. "We have to quarters. face them with a united effort

had supported us in the hour With combined effort any of our need. The amount of re- problem can be solved, she lief materials and other assis- pointed out. tance from foreign countries has been much more what had been received previously and this is due to their trust in the newly-elected democratic gov-

ernment, she said. Begum Zia said there had been no report of corruption in the distribution of relief materials and all the affected people got relief. She said this was another reason for which the donor countries had come spontaneously with relief

The Prime Minister said the roles of the armed forces, the administration, political leaders, NGOs and people in general would be remembered by all for tackling the aftermath of the worst-ever cvclone. She said the relief operations, carried out by volunteers from foreign countries. had won appreciation from all

The Prime Minister lauded as we did in the recent cy- the role of the armed forces and said their untiring service She said the whole world would be remembered by all.

Earlier the Acting PSO to the Supreme Commander and chief of the cell, Brigadier MSA Bhuiyan, gave a resume of the activities of the cell. He said the army, the navy and the airforce were engaged in relief activities during the disaster period.

The Chief Coordinator said that they had carried out the relief operations under the directive of the Prime Minister. He observed that the members of public had also joined them spontaneously in carrying out the operation.

Brigadier Bhuiyan said the credit of smooth relief operations should go to the Prime Minister as they did everything on her directives and advice.

Begum Khaleda Zia thanked them for smoothly carrying out the operation and reaching succour to the affected people.

Three Vice-Presidents of

BCSA Syed Mohsin Ali, Sham-

suddoha and Munshi Akteruz-

zaman were also present at the

Brunei minister

with relief

due today

Munap, Deputy Minister of Cul-

ture. Youth and Sports of the

Government of Brunei Darus-

salam, arrives in Dhaka today

(Friday) to hand over relief

goods and cash donations for

accompanied by a 17-member

delegation comprising gov-

ernment officials, representa-

tives from Brunei Red Cross

and scout associations and

donated by the people of

Brunei, were collected by the

Relief of the Bangladesh Cy-

His Majesty the Sultan Has-

san Al Bolkiah directed the

setting up of the committee

soon after the catastrophic cy-

clone and tidal surge swept

through the coastal region of

the capital, the Brunei Deputy

Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Foreign Minister ASM

Mostafizur Rahman, State

Minister for Relief Lutfor

Rahman and State Minister for

Minister will call on Prime

During his two-day stay in

He is also likely to meet

Bangladesh on April 29.

The relief goods and cash

journalists.

clone Disaster.

The Deputy Minister will be

Datuk Haji Selamat Bin Haji

press conference.

# Imposition of VAT to hit potato farmers

Star Economic Report

Bangladesh Cold Storage Association (BCSA) urged the government to exempt cold storages from Value Added Tax (VAT) In a press conference on

Thursday at National Press Club, Chairman of the BCSA Nurul Islam said that potato has been exempted from VAT but the fresh imposition of VAT on the services of cold storage would indirectly affect the potato farmers as well as common people.

It will also affect the government's programme to introduce potato as principal food, he said.

Islam said that the cold storage owners would demand extra charges for VAT from the UNB. farmers and businessmen who stored their potatoes in the storages which would lead to confrontation.

He also said that the decision will hamper the cultivation and production of potato and further weaken the sick cold storage sector. "Probably the policy makers

generalised the cold storage

and as such they have taken this contradictory decision that potatoes either cold or normal are out of VAT but it has been imposed on the storage services," Islam said. He refuted a question that

the storage owners are charging high rate of rent at their will from the farmers as the production was huge in this

He said that 16 lakh tons of potato have been produced in the country during the season out of which three lakh 60 thousand tons have so far been stored.

The capacity of country's 168 vegetable and potato cold storages is 4,25,000 tons, he pointed out.

### PROGRAMME Workshop for anti-drug workers

Bangladesh Anti-Drug. Smoking and Alcohol Society (BADSAS), in observance of the World Anti-Drug Day, will organise a workshop for the antidrug workers today (Friday) from 4.30 pm to 7 pm at the auditorium of the United Nations Information Centre in the city.

### **Training on Human** resource management'

A senior and mid level training programme on 'Human resource management' will be held today (Friday) at 9 pm at hotel Purbani International in the city. Fifteen senior and mid level executives from sector corporations, banks, multinational companies and others volunteers and business organisations will participate, a press release said.

### Anniversary of Abul Kashem's birth today

By Staff Correspondent

Different cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the 71th birth anniversary of Principal Abul Kashem. a leader of the historic language movement today (Friday).

Bangladesh Language Movement Museum (BLMM) will hold a discussion meeting on the day at 4 pm at Public Library auditorium. The other programmes of the BLMM include prize-giving ceremony for essay competition among the students of different educational institutions in the city and milad mahfil in different city mosques.

Principal Abul Kashem Swarnapadak Parishad will also arrange a day-long Quran Khwani at his mazar premises at Mirpur Bangla College in the

### Retired CSP officer dead Helaluddin Chowdhury, a

retired CSP officer, died at his Asad Avenue residence in Dhaka Thursday afternoon. He was 66, reports UNB.

Chowdhury was suffering from different old-age ailments, family sources said.

His body will be buried in Ronokeli in Gopalganj upazila of Sylhet district today after Jumma prayer.

He joined the Civil Service

tired in 1970. He is survived by his wife. two sons, a daughter and a

host of relations and well-

of Pakistan in 1953 and re-

# wishers.

Obituary Moziruddin Ahmed, retired deputy chief conservator of forest, died of old age complications on Monday at his residence in Siddeswari. He was

the cyclone victims, reports He was buried at Banani gravevard. He left behind his wife.

three sons, grandchildren and relatives.

### Death anniversary

The sixth anniversary of death of Mubar Uddin Ahmed. ex-Chairman of First Labour Court will be observed today (Friday). Brunei National Committee for

A milad mahfil has been arranged on the occasion after Jumma prayer at Rampura WAPDA road mosque.

### Chehlum

The chehlum of M Tofazzal Hossain, former Resident Director of Daffodils Garments. will be held today (Friday) at his residence at 485/C Khilgaon in city, reports BSS.

A day-long programme includes Quran Khwani and milad mahfil on the occasion.

Hossain died of a heart attack in Dhaka on May 16 at the age of 59.

# Weather

Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka.

# Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

The sky will remain mainly cloudy over the country. Rain or thundershower likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi. Dhaka and Chittagong divisions and weather is likely to be mainly dry over Dhaka and Khulna divisions. Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Meanwhile, rain or thundershower occurred at one or two places at Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi divisions on Thursday. The rainfall was recorded at Rajshahi 36 mm. Sylhet 25 mm and Rangpur 4 mm. The maximum temperature of 35 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi. Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change.

Extended outlook for another five days: Rainfall activity likely to increase. The temperature and humidity of some cities on Thursday

Temperature in Celsius City Humidity 79 27.6 33.6 Dhaka Chittagong 30.8 26.5 32.2 Rangpur 78 79 100 78 34.8 27.8 Khulna Cox's Bazar Rajshahi Sylhet 34.5