

# Dhaka Day by Day

## A Glory Fading Out

by Fayza Haq

Ragged, faded and torn in the folds are the fragments of Jamdane saris that hang in Is-lampur shops, which a few decades ago housed the Muslim of international fame. From the folds of grubby covering cloth, the shopkeepers bring out bits and pieces of plain imitation Muslim, sold as curios to foreigners for Tk. 250 at tourist centres.

Just as the spirits are dampened at the Is-lampur sales centres due to many told and untold reasons, the Jamdane workers at Demra are far from being enthusiastic about their work. Struggling 14 hours a day, proceeding at the rate of six inches of stitches in two hours. They earn only Tk 250 per week.

They complain that their saris which used to sell at Tk 210 now go for Tk 160 only. The price barely covers the cost of production it is reported, and with lack of patronage of co-operatives and go-betweens that sell the sari in Dhaka, the number of looms in a village like Shiddhirganj has dwindled from 500 to 250.

Out of the 950 workers in the village most of them belong to the older generation, the younger ones not being inclined to join their parents due to poor remuneration.

Despite working from early hours till late at night the Jamdane workers are discouraged and hampered in their work. They have even the problem of cotton yarn which they once obtained at Tk. 20 and which they now get at Tk. 80.

Yet Muslim is a fabric known even in Europe in the first century of Christian era. It was highly prized by the ladies of the court of Imperial Rome in the days of luxury and refinement in the form of "sario vestes."

Empress Noor Jehan greatly encouraged the manufacture of Muslim in the country, and under her patronage the fabric from Dhaka acquired great celebrity. This became at times, the fashionable dress of the Omrah at the imperial and viceregal courts of India.

The fine fabrics, exquisitely delicate, were styled in the figurative language of

the east. They were known as the webs of woven wind "Aberaan", running water, and "Shabnam" or morning dew. Jamdane remained the chef d'oeuvre of the celebrated Bengal weaver. There was the "Dorea" or the one with the double thread and the "Charkonna" with the chequered design.

Seen under the microscope the Muslim thread is one part of fifteen thousand parts of an inch.

It is flat and ribbon shaped and looks like a roughly made hair bristle. The transparent effect goes opaque when many threads are collected together.

With the decline of the Moghul rule came the decline of Muslim. This was although in 1836 it was acknowledged to be superior to productions of the textile mills in any country by the British themselves who described it as "the finest thread that is used at Dhaka for weaving is spun here and woven into Muslim which is in proportion to 7200 yards to one tola of 180 grains of weight of cotton."

Despite the dedicated workmanship and fa-

vourable patronage of the well-to-do, at a time, as early as 1844 the Muslim industry was predicted as a dying one in the report on the "Decline of Dacca Muslim Industry" by then Dhaka Commissioner, Mr DuBar.

The fall of foreign trade in Dhaka was attributed to modern inventions in steam and machinery, introduced in the manufactures in England, whereby the spinning of thread and weaving of cloth was obtained at a cheaper rate than could be done by the Dhakahandloom. This was notwithstanding the extreme cheapness of manual labour of this kind in this part of Bengal.

Spinning which afforded employment to a large section of the population was now almost entirely superseded at Dhaka at a cheaper rate than the local thread of the same quality.

Weaving had been less affected than spinning but it had nevertheless been "much affected by the comparative cheapness of the English clothes and the ready markets they met all over India at that time."

It was estimated that one and a half lakh rupees value of English cotton clothes were annually imported to Dhaka in the mid-nineteenth century.

Imposition of heavy duty on importation of Indian Muslim into Britain whilst English cotton manufacturing was yet in its infancy, had unfavourable effect on export.

After 1947, Muslim Bengal remained under the domination of then West Pakistan where Dhaka and its sister towns were regarded as dumping grounds of manufacture of goods of the then West Pakistan.

It was natural that there would be little sympathetic patronage of the Jamdane and other imitation Muslim material. Women preferred and still go in for less expensive and more washable and synthetic saris. The quality of the sari in Demra and Tangal have not improved over the years and there is little hope of their improvement with time, as they are bound to be superseded by wash-and-wear fabrics which last longer and are both easier to wear and keep clean.

The total number of the implements used in converting the raw material into thread and weaving the latter into exquisite Jamdane is said to be 126. They are principally composed of bamboo and reed and are very simple.

The thread is dressed with starch made of parched rice, and after exposure to the sun for some time is wound off upon two small wheels which are held by the weaver, one in each hand, as he forms the warp. The latter operation is done between four bamboo sticks.

An instrument like a comb is used to separate the threads of the warp, every alternate thread of which passes through the corresponding loop or ring of thread chain which is connected with the gear above the threadles below.

The most favourable time for weaving the fine Muslims is during the rains, at which season the moisture in the atmosphere prevents the thread from breaking.

Jamdane carries the legacy of Muslim, the glory that was.



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## Farakka Barrage spells disaster Riverine routes shrink by 300 kilometres

The country's riverine routes were shrunk by nearly 300 kilometres in last 14 years due to the impact of Farakka Barrage, reports UNB.

Shipping and IWTA Minister MK Anwar stated this in parliament on Monday replying to a question from Prof. Rafiqul Islam of Awami League.

The length of the riverine routes was 6,310 km in 1975 and was reduced to 5,968 km at present.

Replying to another question from Sardar Shakwat Hossain Bakul (BNP), Anwar said the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation incurred a loss of Tk. about 80 crore last year.

There are 39 sea-going vessels under the Shipping Corporation and 18 belonging to private owners, the minister said.

BSS adds: MK Anwar told the Jatiya Sangsad that Bangladesh had 30 merchant ships, 21 owned

by Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) and 18 under private ownerships plying in the international routes.

Replying to a question from Sardar Sakhawat Hossain (BNP-Narsinghdi) the Shipping Minister said that ships owned by the BSC had earned Taka 146.96 crore during 1989-90 financial year while the earnings by ships under private ownership amounted to Taka 41.63 crore during the same period.

In reply to a supplementary question from Mr AKM Jahangir Hossain (AL-Patakhali), the Minister said during the same period BSC had spent Taka 228 crore.

Replying to a question from Prof. Rafiqul Islam (AL-Jessore), the Shipping Minister said Bangladesh had 5,968 kilometers of land water ways. He said during 1976, the navigable inland water way was 6,310 kilometers.

In reply to a supplementary question, the Minister said the navigability of the inland water ways was reducing due to the effect of the Farakka. He said flows in the rivers had declined and they were silted because of the effect of the Farakka.

### 20 films on Liberation War so far

A total of 14 full-length films and six short films have been made on the War of Liberation so far. Education and Cultural Affairs Minister Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury told the Jatiya Sangsad Monday, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Mohammod Asaduzzaman (AL-Magura), the minister said some documentaries were also made on the liberation.

Four of these films were sent to international competitions and two were awarded prizes, the Minister said.

### JSD demands release of Abdur Rab

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) on Monday demanded immediate release of A S M Abdur Rab, Secretary General of the standing committee of JSD, and withdrawal of what it said 'false cases' against him.

The JSD on Monday ended its adjourned standing committee meeting at Fakirapal in the city with Mohammad Shahjahan in the chair, a press release said.

The meeting at a resolution also demanded repeal of all black laws including special power acts and publication of pay commission report and its implementation.

## What's on today . . .

### Birth anniversary of Jadu Miah

Mashtur Rahman (Jadu Miah) Smriti Sangsad starts its programmes chalked out in celebration of Jadu Miah's 68th anniversary of birth today (Tuesday).

The Sangsad members will visit the grave of Jadu Miah, lay wreaths and hold Quran Khwant there in the morning while hold a Milad Mahfil at the Sangsad's Office at 80, Naya Paltan in the afternoon.

The Sangsad has also decided to arrange a discussion meeting on Jadu Miah's role in democratic and political trend in the country at the Jatiya Press Club on July 14.

### Small industries' press conference

National Association of Small and Cottage Industries of Bangladesh (NASCIIB) will hold a press conference today (Tuesday) at 11 am at the Jatiya Press Club. The press conference has been convened to deliver NASCIIB reactions against imposition of Value Added Tax (VAT) and create public opinion in favour of its withdrawal.

### BCL (N-S) protest rally

JSD (Inu)'s student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (N-S) will hold a rally today (Tuesday) at 10 am at the Curzon Hall premises of the Dhaka University demanding trial of the killers of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon and a BCL (N-S) leader Mahbubur Rahman and protesting on-going terrorism on the campus.

BCL (N-S) leaders will address the rally, to be held as part of a 16-day programme of the organisation.

### Dinner and dance at Sheraton

A "Black and White" Theme Dinner and Dance will be held at the Sheraton Hotel tonight (Tuesday) from 7 pm to 1 am. Tickets are Taka 700 per person. Proceeds will go to Mother Teresa's Home for Children orphaned by the cyclone.

An auction will be held during the dinner and dance. Among the prizes to bid for is a free night at the Sheraton for two.

### Rotary Club meeting

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held today (Tuesday) at 5 pm at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel in the city. Mufawez Khan, Executive Director of Concerned Women for Family Planning, will speak on "Women's role in development" at the meeting as guest speaker.

## . . . and tomorrow

### JCD victory procession

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) workers of the Jahangirnagar University will bring out a victory procession on the campus tomorrow (Wednesday) morning to rejoice JCD victory in the JUCSU and hall union polls. JCD candidates swept the JUCSU and hall union elections.

### Seminar on 'Budget '91'

A two-day seminar on "Budget '91" will begin tomorrow (Wednesday) at the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of the Dhaka University.

Organised by Jatiya Bitarka Mancha (National Debate Forum), the seminar will participate by Rehman Sobhan, Dr Mozaffar Ahmed, Dr Omar Haider Choudhury, Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Dr Mahbub Hossain, Lt Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain, Rashed Khan Menon, Suranjit Sengupta, Hasanul Haq Inu, Abdus Samad Azad and M M Akash. Barrister Amirul Islam, Dr Selim Jahan, Dr Devaprio Bhattacharjee and Najmuddin Mostan will present papers. Sessions of both the days will commence in the afternoon.

### Lion Governor leaves for Sylhet

Ln Jalal Ahmed, District Governor of Lions Clubs International (District-315B) leaves Dhaka tomorrow (Wednesday) morning to instal the newly-elected office-bearers (1991-92) of the Sylhet Lions Club in a ceremonious function on the same day evening. Chairman of the Ittefaq Group of Publications Barrister Motnul Husseini will attend the function as chief guest. All members of the Sylhet Lions Club have been asked to attend the meeting.

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### ICTVTR Board meets July 10

The 17th meeting of the Board of Directors of Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research (ICTVTR), Dhaka, a subsidiary organ of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), will be held in Dhaka from July 10 to 13, an ICTVTR press release said on Monday, reports BSS.

Twelve member-states of the OIC — Bangladesh, Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Oman and UAE, the representative of the General Secretariat of the OIC and Director General of the Centre, who are members of the Board will participate in the meeting.

## Weather

### Thundershower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast valid till 6 pm of Tuesday says rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind likely to occur at many places over Chittagong and Rajshahi divisions and a few places over Khulna and Dhaka divisions. Day temperature is likely to remain unchanged over the country.

Outlook for subsequent two days: No appreciable change. Extended outlook for another five days: Little change. The temperature and humidity of some cities on Monday were:

City	Temperature in		Humidity	
	Max	Celshu Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	31.7	26.7	82	79
Chittagong	32.8	26.4	78	71
Rangpur	29.6	25.5	93	88
Khulna	33.8	27.2	79	74
Rajshahi	33.4	27.4	72	83
Sylhet	30.6	25.2	77	86
Jessore	33.6	27.2	—	—
Cox's Bazar	31.6	27.6	78	78

## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Being
- Chasing
- Harbinger
- Strained
- for breath
- Spanish
- Game fishes
- Are the World
- Demon
- Loop
- Vigor
- Paper
- measure
- Greek letter
- Deposit of sediment
- The Kingston
- Public
- storehouses
- Sicilian
- volcano
- Blunt end

DOWN

- Possessive pronoun
- Headgear
- Tectonic
- Stairposts
- Proficient
- Let fall
- Sets firmly
- Attitude
- Father and mother
- Mottled
- Small amounts
- McKenzie (the dog)
- Life to Live
- Consumed
- Blood carrier
- Heftiness
- Leadi
- Scorch
- Young unmarried woman
- War and
- Fat in drops
- Blood, sweet and
- Challenge
- Originally, a slave
- Leadi
- Bishopric
- Bond
- French: abbr.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

HEIR STOW TAB  
ALOE TOPE ONE  
TANGLE TE RED  
READ KNOWS  
STREAMER OS  
POETS WAD EEL  
ON SEW GET PA  
TED SAW PATEN  
OD REWARDED  
BELOW TART  
ELL AU STAYES  
ABA SLOT RETE  
MAR HERE SEAT

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

## 'VAT' makes sweetmeat trade sour'

Dhaka Mohanagar Mitannya Byaboshayee Kalyan Samity on Monday urged the Government to exempt the sweetmeat business from the VAT system considering the interest of the raw material suppliers as well as large number of people employed in this trade, reports BSS.

Addressing a Press conference at the National Press Club, Samity's President Alhaj Harun-ur-Rashid said that enforcement of VAT system on sweetmeat business would invite a drastic fall in the number of consumers resulting in sharp effect on the milk supplier. "If we close our business houses, at least 200,000 people will be jobless," he said urging the government to give a second thought over this vital business in case of imposing VAT system on it.

## Ultimatum not to dissolve Upazila Parishad

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Upazila Parishad Chairman Association in a statement to the press on Monday said the government would be responsible for any consequences if it dissolves the Upazila Parishad.

It said if the government dissolves the post of the chairman with political motive that would be against people's interest.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Police Super  
Chandpur

## TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from bonafide medicine traders of Chandpur town for supply of medicine to Chandpur District Police Hospital. Bank Draft of Tk 5,000/= (five thousand) in favour of Police Super, Chandpur should be deposited with the tender. Tender should be dropped in the tender box kept at the Police Office on 21-7-91 within or before 12.00 hours. Rules and regulations of the tender in full can be obtained through the schedule kept with the Chief Assistant of the Police Office. Price of each schedule is Tk 25 (twentyfive) only (which is non-refundable).

DFP (C) 7787-4/7  
G-293

Sd/-  
Police Super  
Chandpur

## KOHINOOR CHEMICAL COMPANY (BD) LIMITED TENDER NOTICE

Sealed quotations are hereby invited by the Managing Director, Kohinoor Chemical Co. (BD) Ltd., Tejgaon Ind. Area, Dhaka against Tender Enquiry No. PD-III/KCC/02 from the Genuine Glass Bottle Manufacturers for supply of (a) 23,20,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Snow/Cold Cream, (b) 45,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Medicated Hair Oil (Large), (c) 60,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Medicated Hair Oil (Std.), (d) 10,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Medicated Hair Oil (Family), (e) 85,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Bathgate Hair Oil and (f) 3,50,000 Pcs. Empty Glass Bottle for Pomade Flower. Tender documents will be available against payment of Tk. 300/- (Non-refundable) Per Set from the Office of (1) Kohinoor Chemical Co. (BD) Ltd., 349-350, Tejgaon Ind. Area, Dhaka, (2) BCIC., 30-31, Dilkusha, Dhaka and (3) BCIC Branch Office, 6, Agrabad, Chittagong. The quotation will be received up to 11:00 A. M. on 30-7-91 and opened immediately thereafter. No Tender documents will be sold on the date of opening. D-62

## Glaxo

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Candidates should be keen and willing to make a career in marketing and be prepared to work hard.

The compensation package includes basic salary, house rent, bonuses and other permissible fringe benefits. Please apply in confidence with full bio-data and a recent passport size photograph by 18th July 1991

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## Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders in local currency are invited from bonafide suppliers for supply of:

a. One heavy duty self contained pitmouting platform scale with digital indicators and with option for interface with a computer - having all modern features.

Capacity : 10,000 Kgs. Platform : 2000 mm x 1500 mm.

b. One heavy duty self contained portable platform scale with digital indicators and with an option for interface with a computer - having all modern features.

Capacity : 500 Kgs. Platform : 1000 mm x 750 mm.

c. Three heavy duty self contained portable platform scale with digital indicators with anoption for interface with a computer - having all modern features.

Capacity : 100 Kgs. Platform : 750 mm x 750 mm.

2. The tender schedule with detail specifications and terms and conditions will be available on payment of Tk. 250 00 (Non-refundable) from the office of the undersigned on or before 30th July 1991 between 0900 hours and 1300 hours. The tenders will be opened on 30th July in the presence (if any) of the bidders or their representatives at 1500 hours.

3. The Company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Manager  
Marketing and Procurement