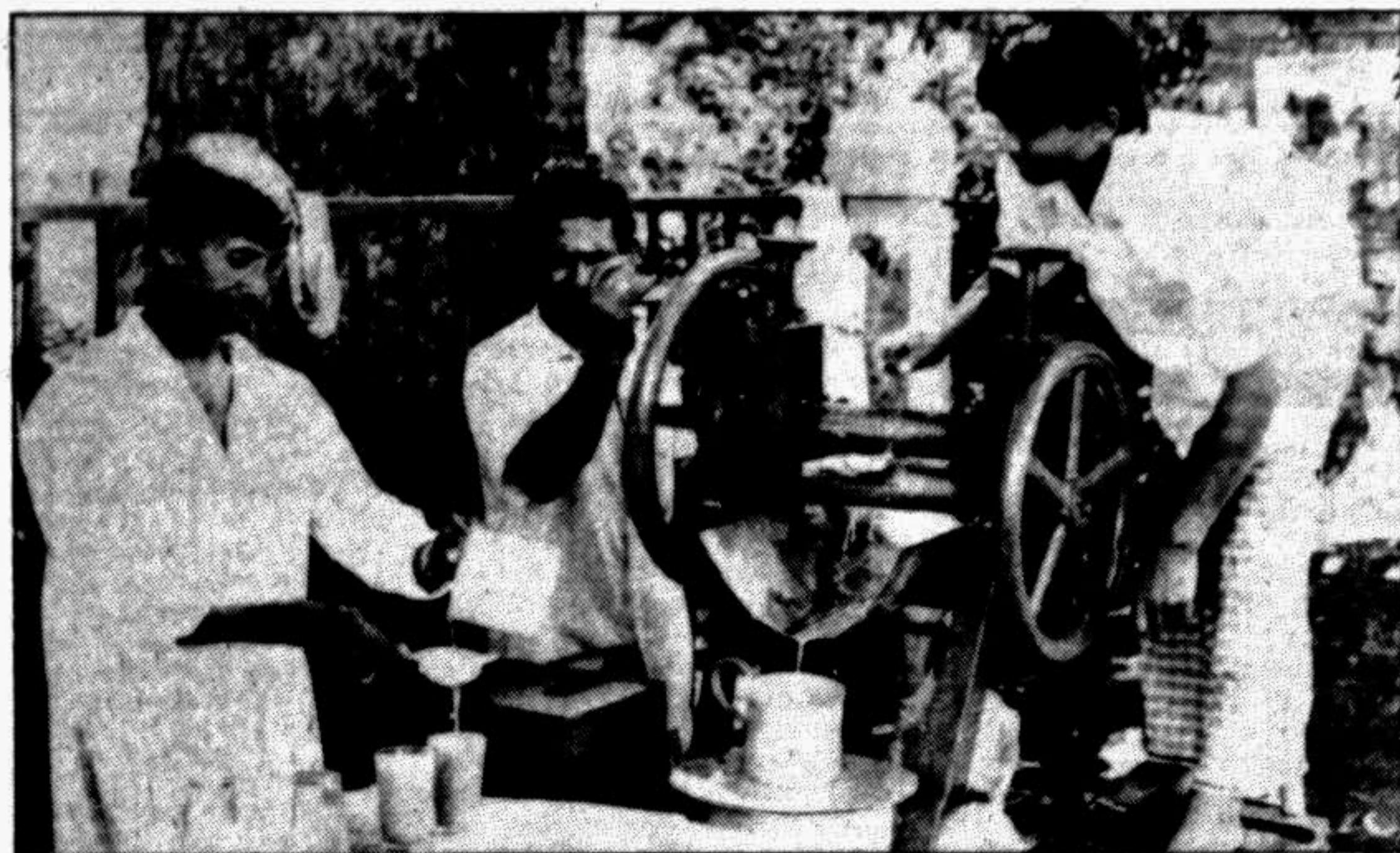


Dhaka Day by Day

Sugarcane — the Real Thing

by Sabir Mustafa



Squeezing the last drop out

—Star Photo

"The sight is not exactly what you would call appetising," said Ashraf Hui while staring at machines crushing juice out of sugarcane by the roadside, "but it's still just about the best drink around."

Not only that, it's indigenous to the region, comes without any brand name patented somewhere in the northern hemisphere, and it's never advertised on television.

Sugarcane juice, sold by vendors manually operating simple, two-roller machines, is one of the few juices available in Dhaka that comes without any additives, preservatives or any other "actives" injected into it. (This supposedly healthy situation may change dramatically once some company decides to put the stuff in a bottle, wrap a flashy label around it and push it through TV ads as if it were a brand new product.) But what's more, you don't have to go to Gulshan and pay through your nose to enjoy it.

Vendors, with their somewhat obsolete-looking machines and stacks of cane, are all over the city, on pavements and street-corners, particularly in busy areas.

It's not easy selling a product that does not scream at potential buyers out of billboards or TV screens. Competition is tough, what with aggressive marketing of fizzy substances whose only natural ingredient may well be water. Sugarcane juice, unlike this or that cola, maybe high on sweetness, but it is decidedly low on street-appeal.

"Akher rosh — the choice of a new generation", is not a slogan that is likely to set the average 18-year-old trembling with anticipation.

Besides, the roadside stalls without covers, seats or any contraption other than the machine itself, give a pretty bare and unhygienic impression of themselves. But despite all that, business is brisk.

"It's this jaundice, you see," Ashraf Hui said, "many people in the city are suffering from, or are scared stiff of getting jaundice."

So they go to all the places where juice sellers congregate and drink."

Funnily enough, there is no medical evidence, based on research, which proves sugarcane helps resist jaundice. But doctors swear by it and advise patients to drink it without hesitation.

"Sugarcane does not harm you, it is in fact good for you, so why not drink it anyway?" said a doctor.

The jaundice theory is supported by the juice-sellers themselves.

"Many of our customers are recovering from jaundice," Azam Miah from Noakhali said, "that's one good reason why they come regularly."

Azam frequently sells cane juice in bulk to offices, clubs, even hospitals. Sugarcane is the least harmful of all sweetening agents, and by far the most beneficial. (But the real irony is that once sugarcane is refined into white sugar, it becomes poisonous and a destroyer of proteins; but molasses and brown sugar do retain some good attributes of the original.)

Azam bought his crushing machine from the Nayabazar market for 4,000 Taka and works with two partners. One cuts the skin off the cane, Azam does the crushing while the third deals with the customer.

"Good thing about sugarcane is that you can find it all year round," one of Azam's partners said, "and everyday we sell over 400 glasses of juice."

At three Taka per glass, that's not bad going at all. But they do have to put up with all that working in the open entails: rain, burning hot sun, traffic noise, and the dust.

Nothing is wasted. At the end of the day — on average 15 hours — all the bagasse is taken home by Azam and others to be used as fuel (beats chopping mango trees for firewood any day).

"This hot-and-cold weather is particularly bad for jaundice," said Azam who seemed to have built-up a rudimentary knowledge about the disease, "besides, it's a good, refreshing drink."

The very best there is.

What's on today . . .

World Population Day programmes

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate a seminar on 'Environment and Population' at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city today (Thursday) at 10.30 am. Health Minister Kamal Ibne Yousuf will attend the function as special guest.

Family Planning Directorate will bring out a colourful procession in observance of the Population Day. Health Minister will lead the procession to be participated by the officers and employees of the directorate.

The Family Planning Directorate will also hold a seminar 'Family Planning for Ecological Balance and Protection of Environment' at the directorate today (Thursday) at 3 pm at the NIPORT auditorium in the city to mark the day.

Freedom Fighters' rally

Freedom fighters from the remote areas of the country will stage a demonstration today (Thursday) at 11 am in front of the office of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Kendrio Command Council in the city.

The demonstration to be followed by a procession has been convened to protest against various undemocratic activities of the Sangsad leaders.

Jute goods display and sales centre

State Minister for Jute, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, will inaugurate a permanent display and sales centre of jute goods produced by the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) at the Amin Court building of Motijheel Commercial Area today (Thursday) at 10 am.

Certificate-giving ceremony

The certificate-giving ceremony of a workshop on television drama performance will take place today (Thursday) at 11.30 pm at the National Institute of Mass Communication.

Information Secretary Nuruddin Ahmed Al-Masud will distribute certificates among the participants of the six-week workshop. Director General of the Institute Abdullah Al-Mamun will chair the function.

Photo exhibition of Pavel Rahman

A solo exhibition of photographs taken by photo journalist Pavel Rahman will be held at the Sir Salimullah Medical College today (Thursday) at 12 noon.

Organised by Rotaract Club of the College, the exhibition will be followed by inauguration of 'Dr Ibrahim Memorial Newspaper Stand' at the college campus.

Rotarian Iftekharul Alam will open the exhibition and the newspaper stand.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of 10 books published by the Dhaka City Museum Authority will be held today (Thursday) at 5 pm at the Institute of Arts of the Dhaka University. Majharul Islam, Prof Anisuzzaman and Poet Asad Choudhury will speak on the books.

The newly-published books will be sold during the ceremony at reduced prices.

JSD (Rab) meeting

A general meeting of JSD (Rab) will be held today (Thursday) at 3 pm at the Buriganga Bhaban at Wischhat in the city. The two-day meeting is expected to be attended by the district and upazila level leaders of the party.

Seminar on 'bleeding peptic ulcer'

A seminar on 'bleeding peptic ulcer' will be held today (Thursday) at 10 am at the Sir Salimullah Medical College Gallery No 1.

Organised by the Medical Club of the College, the seminar will be presided over by Prof MA Majid and conducted by Hossain Imam Al-Hadi.

The speakers of the seminar include: Prof Shah Munir Hossain, Dr JC Shaha and Dr M Muhibur Rahman.

Anti-nuclear war film show

A show of films based on 'anti-nuclear war and apartheid' will take place today (Thursday) at the central auditorium of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

Arranged by the students chapter of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), the film show is being sponsored by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC). Three films titled 'Boom', 'Human Rights and Concert' and 'Apartheid: 20th Century Slavery' will be screened during the film show.

DU Islamic History re-union

An Eid re-union of the ex-students of the Islamic History and Culture Department of the Dhaka University will be held today (Thursday) at 6 pm at the Hotel Sundarban in the city.

Rotary Club meeting

The 22nd regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Uttara will be held today (Thursday) at 5.15 pm at Chiling Restaurant, Sector-4, Uttara in the city.

Anniversary of Dr Shahidullah's birth

Shahidullah College will observe 107th birth anniversary of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah today (Thursday) at the college auditorium at 4 pm. State Minister for Information Nurul Huda will be the chief guest.

. . . and tomorrow

Birth anniversary of Dr Shahidullah

The 107th birth anniversary of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah will be observed tomorrow (Friday). A discussion meeting on 'Dr Shahidullah's teachings and philosophy of life' will be held at the Vidyapath auditorium, Mirpur at 4 pm on the day under the auspices of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Adarsha Vidyapath.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of BSS and recipient of 'Gyantapash Shahidullah Gold Medal' Dr Ashraf Siddiqi will attend the discussion as the chief guest while Dr Anisuzzaman of the Dhaka University will be the special guest.

Principal Razia Hossain, Principal Choudhury Shahid Hossain, Abul Hossain and Kazi Salahuddin will participate in the discussion.

Rapport workshop on VAT

A one-day workshop on Value Added Tax (VAT) will be inaugurated tomorrow (Friday) by the Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas at the Hotel Sonargaon at 9.30 am. Sponsored by Rapport Bangladesh Limited, the workshop will be participated by 40 senior executives from private and public sectors. M Lutfozzaman, MP, will be the special guest in the inaugural session which will be chaired by Nurul Hussain Khan, Secretary, Internal Resources Division and Chairman of National Board of Revenue. Dr Sheikh Moqsd Ali, Member of Planning Commission will present the key-note paper while M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport, will offer the address of welcome.

Inauguration of anti-terrorism film

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof M Moniruzzaman Miah will inaugurate the rehearsal of a short film titled 'Thikana' at the Teacher-Student Centre of the University tomorrow (Friday) at 10 am.

The short film against violence in educational institutions will be directed by Rezanur Rahman, a writer of short stories. Sarak, a cultural organisation, will sponsor the film.

DU Pro-VC Prof Wakil Ahmed, former DU Pro-VC Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, Prof Yeazuddin Ahmed of DU, writer Imdadul Huq Milon, ex-producer of BTV Atiqul Huq Choudhury, DUCSU General Secretary Khairul Kabir Khokon, Chhatra League (S-A) President Shahe Alam, Chhatra League (N-S) President Nazmul Huq Prodhan, Chhatra Motril leader Nur Ahmed Bakul and Chhatra Union leader Nasir-ud-Doha are expected to speak on the occasion.

RU Economics Dept re-union

The Economics Department Alumni Association of Rajshahi University will hold a Eid re-union at the auditorium of National Academy for Educational Management (NEAM) near the government New Market in the Dhaka city tomorrow (Friday) at 3.30 pm.

Open University starts functioning next year

The country's first ever Open University will go into academic session early next year, reports UNB.

This was disclosed at a meeting between Education and Cultural Affairs Minister AQM Badruddozza Chowdhury and a delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Dhaka on Wednesday.

ADB's manager of education and population sector Vander Linden led the delegation at the meeting which was also attended by education secretary ANM Yousuf and ADB resident representative Basu Dev Sharma.

The delegation members said the Open University will particularly enable the

people living in the rural areas to pursue higher education.

One dies after falling from roof of bus

Our SSMCH Correspondent

One person died after falling off a passenger bus near Shyampur Bazar and Demra police recovered an unidentified body from Konapara.

Police said, Abdus Samad (60) was seriously injured after falling from a over-crowded minibus on Tuesday night. He was taken to the Sir Salimullah Medical Hospital where he succumbed to the injuries.

The technical and other related matters about the Open University will be discussed at a national workshop on August 3-4.

The workshop will be held with the coordination of the Manila based Asian Development Bank.

Different projects of education sector under financial assistance of ADB including the development of primary education in Chittagong division and secondary science education project also came up for discussions at the meeting.

ADB will provide about 68 million dollars for development of primary education in Chittagong division, the meeting was informed, says an official handout.



Members of Rishiz Shilpi Gosthi seen rendering songs in memory of writer Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah in front of National Press Club on Wednesday. —Star photo.

BCL activists threaten to kill me, says expelled leader

Former President of the Jahangirnagar University unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on Wednesday protested the decision of his expulsion from the party and said a section of the party has threatened his life, reports UNB.

"A section of BCL (A-A) workers have threatened to kill me if I don't leave the campus," Mohammed Ruhul Amin told a press conference in the campus on Wednesday.

The BCL leader was ousted from the party Monday by the Central Committee on charges of anti-party activities.

The decision of his expulsion order came when the BCL nominee from JU Students Action Committee panel for the VP post, Mohammed Jahangir Alam was defeated by a margin of 10 votes in the recent JUCSU polls.

Condemning the expulsion order, Amin said BCL Central committee neither had any specific charges against him nor could they provide any evidence.

He alleged that he was not served with any show-cause notice and said he learnt about his expulsion from newspaper reports.

"My expulsion order was made for vengeance and personal gratification of former

JUCSU VP Enamul Huq Shamim," he complained.

Meanwhile the present Vice President of the BCL Mohammad Belayet Hossain Khan and other activists today condemned the "unilateral decision" of the BCL Central Committee and termed the decision "undemocratic" and the changes brought against Amin as "baseless".

The other faction of the BCL, however, hailed the Central Committee's decision.

Meet in memory of Rudra Shahidullah

By Staff Correspondent

Rishiz Shilpi Gosthi, a cultural organisation, held a discussion meeting in memory of late poet Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah in front of the National Press Club in the city Wednesday afternoon.

Chaired by singer Fakir Alamgir, chief of the organisation, the meeting was addressed, by Fayz Ahmed as chief guest, poets Nirmalendu Goon, Ashim Saha, Mohan Raihan and Istekbal Hossain and poetry recitist Mariam Mannan.

The memorial discussion was followed by a cultural function.

Weather

Rain likely over Ctg, Rajshahi

By Staff Correspondent

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change.

Extended outlook for another five days: No marked change.

The temperature and humidity of some cities on Wednesday are:

	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.8	27	80	84
Chittagong	31	26.2	85	80
Rangpur	32.3	26.5	95	98
Khulna	32.5	26.7	75	92
Rajshahi	30	26.6	85	85
Sylhet	32.5	24.7	83	82
Jessore	32	26.7	—	91
Cox's Bazar	31.2	25.2	85	—
Khepupara	31	26.2	78	85

BTV earns Tk 15.48 cr

Bangladesh Television (BTV) earned a revenue of more than Taka 15.48 crore from commercial advertisements during the last fiscal year, reports UNB.

The revenue of Taka 15 crore 48 lakh 57 thousand 686 earned during the fiscal was the highest since 1971, a PID handout said in city Wednesday.

The amount shows an increase of Taka 37 lakh 72 thousand 624 which is 2.49 per cent more than the previous fiscal year.

Despite Gulf crisis, recent cyclonic devastations and other economic odds, the remarkable earning has been possible through sincere efforts of the BTV's Sales (Commercial) Department, the handout said.

Besides, over Taka four lakh additional revenue has also been earned by the department as enlistment fee from advertising agencies.

Absconding prisoner arrested

By Staff Correspondent

An absconding prisoner accused in three separate cases was arrested by police from Khilgaon and Gulshan police also arrested an accused criminal on Wednesday.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested 86 persons in connection with various crimes from the city on the day.

Demra Police, upon receiving secret information, raided a slum in Hajipara and arrested Lutfur Rahman alias Arju, an absconding prisoner from Central Jail.

Police said, he is an accused involved in three separate cases with Demra, Lalbagh and Ramna police stations. He was also allegedly involved in two separate cases at the Dhaka University campus, including a illegal explosive possession case, police added. He fled from the Central Jail recently and resumed his alleged criminal activities in the city, police said.

Gulshan Police raided a house in Nayapara and arrested Md Shahjahan Kazi, an accused wanted in connection with a case. Police also recovered a pipe-gun from his possession.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

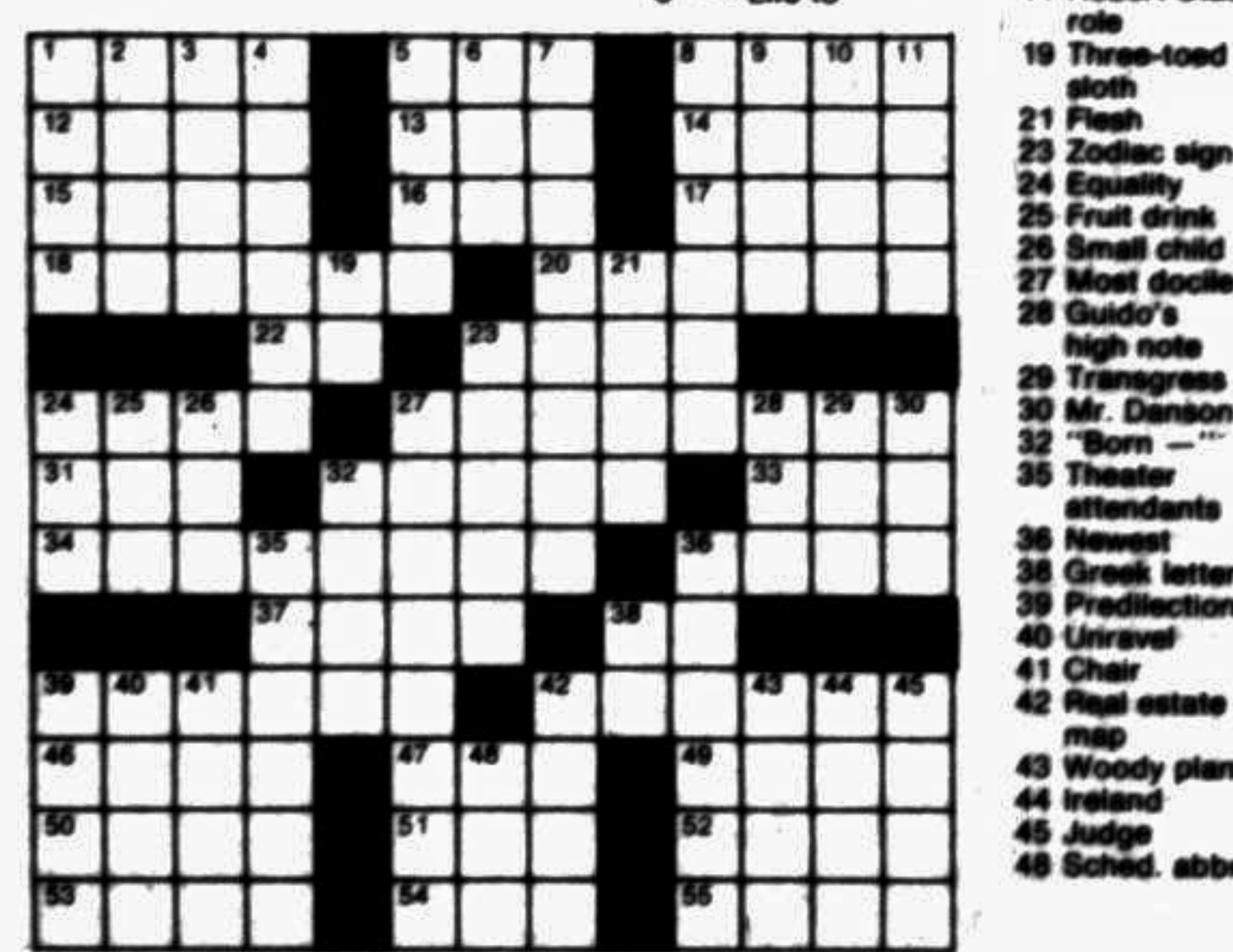
- Health resorts
- Brick-carrying device
- Scheme
- Chill injury
- Southern blackbird
- Solitary
- Armadio
- Unit of Bulgarian currency
- Hostelries
- Cheerful and cheering
- Likenesses
- Green letter
- Arabian seaport
- Butter squares
- "The American Hero"

Answer to Previous Puzzle

MOOSE WHALE
 RENDER AUGERS
 AT DERANGE ME
 TIP PORTS VITE
 EELS REE LEND
 DRAPES DRONES
 TOO OUT
 AVERSE RESUME
 NEAT ANI ERIA
 GNU PRODS ERG
 ED CANTEN RE
 REDUCE RANCOR
 ROPED STEER

DOWN

- Antlered animal
- Head of Catholic
- Church
- Island off Ireland
- Demises
- Meeting room
- "Life to"
- Live
- Stock earning
- Supple
- Lengthy
- Misere
- Robert Stock role
- Three-toed sloth
- Flesh
- Zodiac sign
- Equality
- Fruit drink
- Small child
- Most docile
- Guido's high note
- Transgress
- Mr. Dawson
- "Born —"
- Threat
- Attendants
- Newest
- Green letter
- Production
- Unravel
- Chair
- Rural estate map
- Woody plant
- Island
- Judge
- Sched. abbr.



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