

Dhaka Day by Day

Bracing for the Drawbacks of Women's Development

by Rahat Fahmida

Wanting to be a journalist all her life, Ms Farida Akhter ended up being a researcher and one of the most dedicated development workers. Her career took a different turn and her dream has remained a mirage. Though she admits that she envies women journalists, she has established her name and fame in her own field. A lady with remarkable stamina and zeal, she is one of the most successful researchers and development workers, working as an Executive Director of 'Ubinig', which is a non-governmental organisation based in Dhaka.

It is rather stunning to see a woman in her late 30s, to work dedicatedly on the policy issues related to development, its ideologies and its applications in our country that have far reaching consequences on the lives of our people.



Farida Akhter (right) at a project site.

Ms Akhter, having completed her Masters in Economics from the University of Chittagong in the year 1978, with the urge and enthusiasm of beginning her career in journalism started working for 'The Daily Life', an English daily in Chittagong.

Slowly and sadly enough, she became aware of all the constraints in investigative reporting and press censorship which depressed her a great deal. And then she switched on to research, by the end of the same year. She started extensive research in women's issues, health, agriculture and fisheries.

"I wanted to know about our villages. What we learnt at the university were barely theories. And to know the people and their problems, field research is essential." Hence she dedicated five years to extensive research with a group which was equally interested in intense study. This was in collaboration with different national and international organisations. The research was a total learning process on its own. Farida said that from 1981 they were slowly aware of the problems and drawbacks of development. That is when the urgency and essentiality for intensive study was distinct. And thus the informal study circle was formed.

This continued till 1983, and through this study circle, Farida Akhter and the others in

the study group felt that it was essential to form an organisation. And that is how 'Ubinig' was born.

The name 'Ubinig' is the abbreviation of their Bengali name 'Ubnayan Bikalper Niti Nirdharon Gobeshona', which in English is - policy research for development alternative.

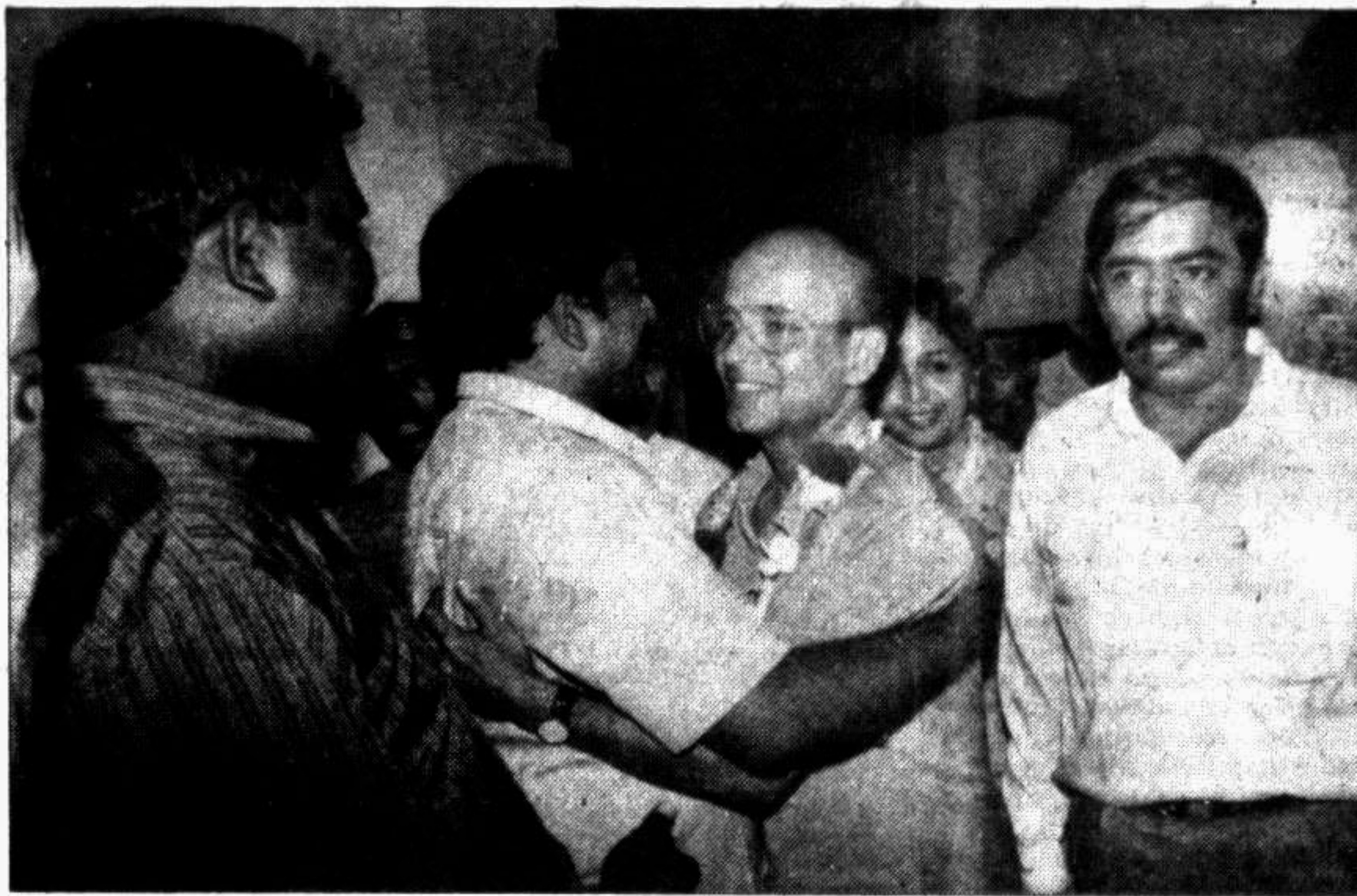
The organisation strongly advocates their views based on what they learn from research. But of course, without any hesitation embraces and appreciates the wisdom of others too. As Farida said, 'Research is not an end in itself to us. We study reality not merely to know, but also to change wherever possible, and the change we aspire draws its content from the democratic will of the people of Bangladesh'.

The work of 'Ubinig' as was learnt from its Executive Director, aims to resolve the debates of development from class as well as gender perspective. They have five main projects: health, women's development issues, industrialisation, population control and family planning and education.

Their main project areas are Dhaka, Tangail, Cox's Bazar and Noakhali. But research is carried throughout the country.

Working in full swing on all the above mentioned projects, one of Farida Akhter's most recent progressive project was to have opened the first and the only feminist bookshop in Bangladesh. The shop, 'Probortona', located at one of the busiest roads of Dhaka city, provides a reading space and a place for informal discussion between women writers and readers. Added to it very recently they have a feminist publishing house, encouraging women writers and helping to promote their work.

Farida Akhter has earned a name not only amongst the development workers in the country alone, but her courage and promising work, along with progressive attitude is also appreciated internationally. In one context, she is working to bring into focus the drawbacks of our womenfolk and how they are exploited and deprived. In many international conferences and seminars she was rewarded a number of times.



Former Minister Anwar Hossain Manju was released from Dhaka Central Jail on Wednesday. Story on Page-1

Policy to halt environmental degradation soon

A national environment policy is being designed to halt environmental degradation in the country.

Officials Wednesday said a National Conservation Strategy (NCS), to be the basis of the environment policy and no awaiting approval of the government, will be announced soon.

The project to prepare the Conservation Strategy, aimed

at sustainable development, was funded by International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the Norwegian development agency NORAD.

IUCN Resident Adviser in Dhaka Haroun Er Rashid told UMB the NCS is featured by 31 areas of environmental concern, including in Mahananda, Muhuri and Atrai-Hurasagar drainage basins, haor areas in Sylhet and Chalan Beel area.

In capital Dhaka, the main concern is industrial and traffic pollution which cause serious health hazards. Another major area of concern is growing urbanisation destroying agricultural and some of the best horticultural lands in the country, he said.

Madhupur tract, Lalmai range, Sandwip, Sitakunda region, Chittagong city and port areas also featured in the study. "It is the rich people who are mainly responsible for deforestation and industrial pollution", Rashid said. "Poverty has nothing to do with environmental degradation."

He stressed the need for modification of the Fourth Five Year Plan (FFYP) in view of the National Conservation Strategy under which 18 sectorial issues had been analysed. The NCS recommended several measures for implementation

to achieve its objective.

The 18 sectors are: land, water, energy and mineral resources, human resources, agriculture, forestry, wildlife, fishery, livestock, genetic diversity, human settlements, health and sanitation, industry, rural development, transportation, natural hazards, environmental education and awareness, and international dimensions.

The NSC recommendations for sustainable development include battery operated vehicles, evaluation of NGO activities, mandatory environmental impact assessment for new industrial units, regional distribution of energy resources and monitoring effects of pesticide use.

It has also listed 66 endangered and threatened wildlife in the country. Among the endangered species are tiger, salt water crocodile, gharial, olive ridley turtle, loggerhead and green turtles, rock python, king cobra, white-necked stork and land tortoise.

The threatened wildlife includes leopard, batagur turtle, yellow and ring lizard, green and bull frog, banded sea snake, and jungle cat.

A tentative list of 25 vascular plants now threatened in the country have also been included in the NCS.

Detained JP MPs fail to avail parole

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Party did not, at last, avail the opportunity to bring its three detained MPs on parole to take part in the voting on the Constitution Amendment Bills due to reasons known only to it.

According to a Home Ministry source, the three MPs, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Anwar Hossain Manju and Sardar Anjad Hossain were offered parole to attend the session while the appeal to grant parole to Ershad, now suffering a ten-year sentence, was ignored.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed in his statement in the House said that "due to some difficulties" the three MPs could not attend the session. However, the rest of them would vote for the passage of 12th Amendment Bill. However they abstained from voting for 11th Amendment Bill.

Before the vote, General Secretary of the Jatiya Party Monirul Haque Chowdhury said that the three MPs would attend the session on parole.

But later it was seen that none of them was present during the passage of the bill.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed however in an instant decision declared that they would vote

for the 12th Amendment Bill. In the morning, Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed raised questions on newspaper reports that Ershad and three other MPs of the Jatiya Party may attend the session on parole.

He accused the government of making an unholy alliance with Ershad and the Jatiya Party.

Replying to a query on this, Moudud Ahmed replied that there was no harm in bringing the Jatiya Party MPs on parole so long as they would remain MPs.

He said that the Jatiya Party made an appeal to the government that the detained MPs of the Jatiya Party be allowed to take part in the passage of the Constitution amendment bills.

He said that the government responded to its demand and it was a right of the MPs to take part in the proceedings of the House.

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the House said that the government wanted to pass the Constitution amendment bills unanimously with the support of all the Members of Parliament.

But why the Jatiya Party did not avail the opportunity could not be ascertained till the writing of this report.

ECNEC okays four projects

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) Wednesday approved four projects involving a total expenditure of Taka 330 crore 90 lakh with a foreign exchange component of Taka 32 crore 82 lakh, an official handout said in Dhaka, reports BSS.

The approval was given at a meeting of the ECNEC held at NEC Bhaban with Finance and Planning Minister M. Saifur Rahman in the chair.

The approved projects are: Integrated Maize Development Project, Integrated Soil Fertility and Fertilizer Management Project, Service Project for Development of Small and Cottage Industry and Rural Development Project-16.

Agriculture Minister M. Majid-Ul-Huq, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister M. Abdus Salam Talukder and Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, among others, attended the meeting, the handout said.

Plea to help disabled scouts

Rafiqul Islam Mia, Minister of State for Labour and Manpower urged the people of all walks of life to come forward and contribute their best for the welfare of the disabled and handicapped scouts of the country, reports BSS.

The Minister was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural workshop of the second national disabled leader of Bangladesh Scouts at the Scout Bhaban in Dhaka Wednesday morning.

The function was addressed, among others, Moonzur-ul-Karim, Chief National Commissioner and the Secretary Ministry of Labour and Manpower and ABM Masudur Rahman, National Commissioner (disabled).

The Minister said disabled scouts of the country were not the burden of the society.

JU reception to founder-members of Pharmacy Deptt

JU Correspondent

The Department of Pharmacy of Jahangirnagar University (JU) accorded a reception to its founder-members Wednesday morning with Prof Abdul Ghani in the chair.

The Vice Chancellor of the University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed attended the function as chief guest, while Dr Jafrullah Chowdhury was the special guest.

In his inaugural speech Prof Ghani appreciated the role of the founder members for their contribution to the development of the Pharmacy Department.

Later, Dr Jafrullah Chowdhury laid down a foundation stone for a modern laboratory of the department.

Department of History of JU accorded farewell reception to its outgoing students Tuesday.

Organised by the History Department Association, the function was presided over by the Dean of Arts Faculty and JUCSU Treasurer Prof Enamul Huq Khan.

A colourful cultural programme was presented by the students of History Department.

Another report adds: The Hindu Welfare Association of JU held a general meeting on Wednesday.

The meeting decided to arrange a seminar on the 'Importance and planning of plantation' on the campus and to take plantation programme through out the country.

Women police's drive to prevent crimes

By Staff Correspondent

Women police officers of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police will visit homes in Dhanmondi and Lalmitia area from Friday in a special drive to prevent crime in residential neighbourhoods, says a DMP press release on Wednesday.

Hasina urges united efforts to stop campus violence

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday expressed deep concern at the closure of Dhaka University for an indefinite period following continued clashes on campus.

Demanding the immediate re-opening of all closed educational institutions including the Dhaka and Rajshahi Universities, Sheikh Hasina in a statement said that the closure of any university or educational institution cannot solve the problem of terrorism.

She held the government responsible for violence in campuses.

"Acts of terrorism are not confined only in the campuses, but has spread to other spheres of the society and the country is facing an acute social unrest," she said.

Sheikh Hasina pointed out that education and terrorism cannot go together.

This was decided in a meeting of senior DMP officials presided over by Police Commissioner A S M Shahjahan on Wednesday at the DMP headquarters.

The special drive is geared to preventing thefts in homes, increase public awareness about crime and encourage people's participation in prevention of crime and to inform mothers about the abuse of drugs, the statement noted.

Women police officers will visit homes and collect photographs and addresses of household help present. They will also advise house-wives about ways to protect themselves from outsiders and criminals.

The meeting of the DMP officials also reviewed the special drive to recover illegal arms, arrest musclemen, muggers and accused criminals conducted between July 28 and August 4, the statement added.

During the period 11 firearms, crackers and ammunition were recovered, 288 musclemen and muggers were arrested, 118 absconding prisoners held and another 893 persons arrested in connection with various crimes in the city.

The recovered arms include one sten-gun, 9 pipe-guns, one revolver, 14 crackers, 11 knives, 10 rounds of rifle ammunition and another 10 rounds of cartridges.

Mobile court penalises 48 vehicles

By Staff Correspondent

A mobile court identified 48 motor vehicles being driven without proper fitness certificate or causing pollution by emitting excessive smoke on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The court led by Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Faruq Ahmed Khan was jointly organised by the Department of Environment, Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority at Sayedabad bridge and Manik Mia Avenue areas.

The court collected Taka 2,400 from owners or operators of vehicles as fine. Eighteen of the motor vehicles were found to cause pollution by emitting excessive smoke.

The court ordered that fresh fitness certificates for the motor vehicles emitting excessive smoke be collected within two weeks. Otherwise plying of these vehicles on roads would not be allowed.

The authorities concerned expressed the hope that owners or operators would refrain from playing vehicles not having fitness certificate or emitting excessive smoke.



Obituary

Alhaj Syeda Shamsunnahar wife of Alhaj Syed Abdul Latif Jami, retired DSP and mother of Syed ASM Ashrafuzzaman, Assistant General Manager of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, died in Dhaka recently. She was 63.

She was buried in Banani graveyard, Dhaka. She left behind her husband, one son, two daughters, relatives and friends to mourn her death.

Law students demand results

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Law Students Federation on Wednesday handed over a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University demanding immediate publication of LLB-1989 results and not to hold the examination of 1990 before its publication.

The federation, before handing over the memo, held a rally in front of National Press Club in support of their demand with federation president Ali Akhtar Babul in the chair.

General Secretary of the organisation Shafi Mahmud Pintu and other leaders including Jahangir Alam, Anisuzzaman, Shah Alam addressed the rally.

The federation leaders said that 60 per cent of the country's 56 thousand law students would suffer and lose years if the examination of 1990 is held before publication of the results of previous year. They said due to the session jam, valuable time have already been lost from the lifespan of the students.

The leaders condemned the authorities for failing to publish the result of LLB-1989 even after six months of holding the examination and expressed surprise over the hastiness to hold the examination of next year (1990).

They urged the authorities to take steps for publishing the result within 15 days.



The Sonargaon Hotel accorded the Kuwaiti Airways a reception Tuesday night on the resumption of their flight to Bangladesh. Seen in the picture are Mr Andrew J McBurnie, General Manager of Sonargaon Hotel, Mr Abdullah Al-Dubaidi, Area Manager and Mr Mohammed Al-Shatti, Station Manager of Kuwait Airways along with the airways crew.

Weather

Rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower likely to occur at many places over Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Dhaka and Khulna divisions.

The day temperature is likely to remain unchanged over the country.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change.

Extended outlook for another five days: Rainfall likely to increase.

The temperature and humidity of some cities recorded on Wednesday were:

City	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity (%)	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.6	26.5	81	73
Chittagong	32.2	24.5	78	81
Rajshahi	33.6	26.2	85	78
Khulna	32.8	26.6	82	78
Rangpur	32.5	26.5	88	76
Barisal	31	25.6	81	82
Cornilla	31.5	X	X	73
Sylhet	31.4	24.5	85	73
Jessore	33	26.4	78	X

AB BANK আরব বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

প্রধান কার্যালয়, বিসিআইসি ভবন
৩০-৩১, দিলকুশা বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা।

নবম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা আরব বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক লিমিটেড-এর শেয়ারহোল্ডারগণের জ্ঞাতার্থে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, নিম্নবর্ণিত বিষয়সমূহ আলোচনার জন্য আরব বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক লিমিটেড-এর নবম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা আগামী ২৯শে আগস্ট, ১৯৯১ইং তারিখ রোজ বৃহস্পতিবার বিকাল ৪:০০ ঘটিকায় ঢাকা শেরটন হোটেল-এ অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

-ঃ আলোচ্যসূচী :-

- ১। চেয়ারম্যানের ভাষণ
- ২। ১৯৯০ সালের ৩১শে অক্টোবর তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত কোম্পানীর অষ্টম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভার কার্যবিবরণী অনুমোদন।
- ৩। ১৯৯০ সালের ৩১শে ডিসেম্বর সমাপ্ত বছরের ব্যালেন্স নিরীক্ষিত স্থিতিপত্র, লাভ-ক্ষতির হিসাব এবং সেই সংগে নিরীক্ষক ও পরিচালকমন্ডলীর প্রতিবেদন গ্রহণ ও অনুমোদন।
- ৪। ডিভিডেন্ড ঘোষণা।
- ৫। পরিচালকবৃন্দের মনোনয়ন/নির্বাহন।*
- ৬। ১৯৯১ইং অর্থ বছরের জন্য নিরীক্ষক নিয়োগ ও তাদের পারিশ্রমিক নির্ধারণ।
- ৭। সভাপতি মহোদয়ের অনুমতিক্রমে অন্য যে কোন বিষয় আলোচনা।

পরিচালকমন্ডলীর আদেশক্রমে

(স্বাক্ষর)

তারিখ: ঢাকা, ৮ই আগস্ট, ১৯৯১ইং

শরীফ-উল হক
সচিব

বিশেষ হট্টবা:

- ১। কোম্পানীর শেয়ার হস্তান্তর বই বৃহস্পতিবার, ২২শে আগস্ট, ১৯৯১ইং থেকে বৃহস্পতিবার ২৯শে আগস্ট, ১৯৯১ইং (উভয় দিনসহ) বন্ধ থাকবে এবং এই সময়কালে কোন শেয়ার হস্তান্তর কার্যকর হবে না।
- ২। বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় অংশগ্রহণ ও ভোট প্রদানের যোগ্য যে কোন সদস্য/সদস্যা তাঁর পক্ষে সাধারণ সভায় অংশগ্রহণ ও ভোট প্রদানের জন্য প্রতিনিয়ত নিয়োগ করতে পারেন। এমন প্রতিনিয়ত কোম্পানীর সদস্য না হলেও চলে।
- ৩। প্রতিনিয়ত যথাযথ ভাবে ২:০০ টাকার রেজিষ্টার্ড স্ট্যাম্প সহযোগে সভার নির্ধারিত সময়ের ৭২ ঘণ্টা পূর্বে কোম্পানীর রেজিষ্টার্ড অফিসে অবশ্যই জমা দিতে হবে, অন্যথায় প্রতিনিয়ত বৈধ বলে বিবেচিত হবে না।
- ৪। সার্টিফিকেট অব পোটিং-এর মাধ্যমে শেয়ারহোল্ডারদের ঠিকানায় এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি, বার্ষিক রিপোর্ট, প্রতিনিয়ত এবং হাজিরা পত্র পাঠিয়ে দেয়া হচ্ছে।

* কোম্পানীর আটকেন্স অফ এসোসিয়েশনের ১০৬ নং ধারা অনুযায়ী বর্তমান পরিচালকমন্ডলীর এক-তৃতীয়াংশ (যাবস্থাপনা পরিচালক ব্যতিরেকে) চলতি বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় অবসরগ্রহণ করবেন। ১০৭ নং ধারায় বিধান রয়েছে যে, নির্বাচিত হবার পর যে সব পরিচালক তুলনামূলকভাবে অধিককাল দায়িত্ব পালন করেছেন তারা অবসরগ্রহণ করবেন এবং ব্যাংক কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯১-এর ১৬নং ধারার সাথে সংগতি রেখে কোম্পানীর আটকেন্স অফ এসোসিয়েশনের ১০৮ নং ধারা অনুযায়ী তাঁরা পুনঃনির্বাচিত হওয়ার যোগ্য।