

Dhaka Day by Day

Of Fur and Feather

by Fayza Haq

In Dhaka, among the upper middle-class families there is often a great deal of fuss and pampering with the pet bird or the pet kitten. A friend of mine can hardly rest fifteen minutes in a house that she is visiting when she is worried about her little puppies that she has left at home. Her dogs are always having a litter of puppies and the house, including the bedroom, is inundated with animals.

Another friend of mine has her pet rabbit treated as a baby in the home although it has chewed up the matting and furniture in the living room. She is extremely proud of the fact that the rabbit is toilet trained. Yet another friend of mine is crazy about her cat whom she never puts down from cushions or her lap, as she sits on the rocking chair.

room with my ware through out the town, going past offices and court houses. Sometimes my income may shoot up to even Tk 100 but this is rare and there are days when I have sold nothing at all. There are 10 to 15 boys like me employed by my master," Jamal narrated.

"Walking the miles through the rough weather, I pick up infections of all sorts, and am not merely run down by fatigue. I have to spend from Tk 2 to Tk 30 on doctors so that I can keep up the constant walk with the weight on my shoulders. It is not easy at all," Jamal narrated.

People in certain dubious areas can be rough and cruel. While those in Gulshan and Banant willingly buy from them at a ready price, there are "mastans" who grab him and drive



Peddling pet birds.

—Star Photo

People in the city do buy animals through classified ads. In the papers or get their pets through friends. Yet a common sight in the city is the seller of birds and rabbits like Jamal, aged 18, born in Dhaka. He has his boss sitting in the large markets in New Market while Jamal peddles the birds through the heat and wet weather.

He charges Tk 60 for the Muniya birds, Tk 100 for the parrots or a little more than that, and Tk 80 for the rabbits. He can arrange for the sale of cockatoos for Tk 4000 a pair or budgerigars for Tk 400 a pair. The buyer has to place an order for them. He does not carry the rare birds on his shoulders normally. In all, Jamal's earning for the day does not surpass Tk 50, sometimes he earns nothing at all the whole day, when he has to depend on the generosity of his master for his meals and money to take home for the family of five, four younger brothers and sisters and a mother.

The birds are originally from Rajshahi, Jamal informed me. He feeds them with "dhan" and rice. He must also bathe them when necessary. The owner has huge cages in which he mates the birds, and these birds have young ones twice a year.

When the birds are sick they have to be taken to the Animal Hospital and the treatment is not free of cost. The medicines may range from Tk 50 to Tk 90, as Jamal informed me, and the owner in New Market pays for this. The birds are quite hardy, if you look after them, Jamal told me.

As for the rabbits, they eat vegetables, rice and have young ones every three months.

Who are the people who buy these birds and rabbits? The customers are individuals who have good jobs, steady income and live in areas like Eskaton, Dhanmandi, Banani and Gulshan. I

him away. Although he works from morning to dusk, Jamal does not get the taste of fish or meat more than once a week. Does he have a saving? His earning is barely enough to make ends meet, as he has to earn for the other brothers and sisters in the family and for his widowed mother. They live in the slum areas near New Market but they have to pay a hefty rent for that. The brothers are too young to go out to work while the girls too are not old enough to be sent to the garment factories. They do not have money to go and enjoy themselves on the free days at the Children's park, leave alone go to films at the local theaters.

Jamal would love to own a radio but he will have to work very hard for that. This would provide me with entertainment and feed me with information as to what is going on in the world. Even in the villages there are community televisions but in the slums of Dhaka there is no hope of that," Jamal confided. He also has his heart set on a watch. But for such a luxury he must wait and work diligently. Right now he has to watch even the cups of tea and the occasional biscuit and cigarette that he has. Apart from the meals at home, he has to arrange for his poor mother's "pan-sapari" allowance too.

Is his family contented with the work that he does? "At the moment I can find no other job and what is the use of them complaining and carrying on? They are simply contented that they get any meal at all and that they have a roof over their heads, specially during the rainy weather. I wish I could spare the time for vocational training and find my way to some lucrative job in the Middle East. That would be an answer to all our problems," he hoped.

What's on today

Atish Dipankar Award '90

The Atish Dipankar Award '90 ceremony and a seminar on the role of the media in the movement against drugs and terrorism will be held at the Hotel Sundarban starting at 5 pm today (Thursday). Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas will be the chief guest on the occasion.

Imam Khomeni Council meet

A special meeting of the Imam Khomeni Memorial Council, Bangladesh, will be held today (Thursday) at 115, New Circular Road, Siddeswar starting at 5 pm. All members have been requested to attend the meeting.

Uttara Rotary Club meet

The 32nd regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Uttara will be held today (Thursday) at the Chiling Restaurant starting at 5:15 pm. Habibur Rahman Khan will speak on Miladunnabi at the meeting.

Janata Dal meet

A meeting of the Ramna thana unit of the Janata Dal will be held today (Thursday) at the Maghbazar Municipal Community Centre beginning at 4 pm. Central leaders including party chief K M Obaidur Rahman and Secretary General Mirza Abdul Halim will be present at the meeting.

Engineers' welfare body meet

The 19th meeting of the Engineers' Services Structure and Welfare Committee will be held today (Thursday) at 5:30 pm at the council room of the Engineers' Institution at Ramna. All members of the committee have been requested to attend the meeting.

OP-1 Winners' press confce

A press conference organised by the OP-1 Winners' Association will be held today (Thursday) at the National Press Club starting at 5pm.

. . . . and tomorrow

JSS meet

A joint meeting of the central committee and the Dhaka city unit of the Jatiyatabadi Sechshasebak Sangathan will be held at its central office at Dhanmondi tomorrow (Friday). All members of the central committee and Presidents and General Secretaries respectively of the city unit have been requested to attend the meeting.

Seminar on Miladunnabi

The World Sufi Organisation has organised a three-day seminar on the occasion of Eid-e-Miladunnabi beginning at 5pm tomorrow (Friday) at its head office at 98, Arambagh. Renowned Islamic scholars and Sufis from home and abroad will participate in the seminar.

More political parties greet people

More political parties and socio-cultural organisation have felicitated the people for giving their verdict in favour of "Yes" vote in the just concluded referendum on the form of government, reports BSS.

In a statement, President and General Secretary of the Syed Hossain Ali Smriti Sangsad said the way people voted in the referendum regarding the ineluctable weather is really unprecedented and it proved the political awareness of the masses. A meeting of the Bhashani Smriti Sangsad held at its Sangsad office Wednesday congratulated the people for giving their verdict for parliamentary government which is accountable to the people.

Presided over by Altabuddin Talukder, Vice President of the Sangsad, it was addressed by, among others, Abul Kalam Azad, General Secretary, and other leaders of the Sangsad.

The JSD leaders said the people had discharged their historic duty by ending the long 16 years of presidential system of the country, "now a golden chapter has been opened in the country," they added.

Muksed Ali Masud and Humayun Kabir, President and General Secretary respectively

Thursday

- 5-00 Opening announcement Al-Quran, programme summary
- 5-15 Recitation from the Oeta
- 5-20 News in Bangla
- 5-30 Esho Gaan Shikhi
- 5-55 Cartoon Film: Captain Planet
- 6-30 Jiboncr Alo
- 7-05 Antoranga
- 8-00 News in Bangla
- 8-40 Drama of the week
- 10-00 News in English
- 10-30 Mini series
- 11-30 Khabar/The News
- 11-45 Close down

of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Masud) in a joint statement, also hailed the people for their verdict

Railway earns Tk 35 cr more

The newly constituted Railway Advisory Committee held its first meeting Wednesday at the conference room of the Railway Division of the Communications Ministry with Oil Ahmed, Minister for Communications, in the chair, reports BSS.

The Minister was informed that the railways earned Taka 238 crore during the last fiscal year which was Taka 35 crore higher than the earnings of the previous year. The railways was deprived of an earning of Taka 4 crore because of the halting of train movement during countrywide democratic upsurge and the damage caused to railway installations in the April cyclone, a PID handout said.

The Minister, while welcoming the advisers, said as a result of realistic measures, satisfactory improvement has been attained in the railway administration. Because of the Middle East crisis, railway had to pay Taka 20 crore for higher price of fuel during the last fiscal year. Another amount of about Taka 8 crore had to be spent as dearness allowance of government employees. Despite all these additional expenses, deficit in the railways in 1990-91 was Taka 2.17 crore less compared to the deficit of the previous year.

The meeting was attended by Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Ashraf Hossain, M A Jinnah, Md Aminul Haq, Shahnewaz Chowdhury, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zahiruddin Khan, Secretary, Railway Division, Nurul Momen Khan, and senior officials of the Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission and Railway Division.

Third World needs new strategy in foreign policy: Shamsul Huq

Former Foreign Minister M Shamsul Huq Wednesday underscored the need for including the concept of "co-operation" in foreign policy formulation in view of the changed international scenario, reports UNB.

"Co-operation is a bidding factor and must be a part of the strategy," Huq said in his presidential speech at a national seminar Wednesday morning.

He also denounced the notion that the Non-Aligned Movement and Group-77 have lost its credibility saying the Third World countries need new strategy for foreign policy

formulation. Held at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) conference room, two papers were read out at the seminar on "Bangladesh in the Nineties: National Security and Foreign Policy."

Dispelling the notion that Bangladesh is a small state and cannot contribute to international politics, Huq said the country had played constructive and very positive role in the past.

Our threat and security perception are irrelevant under rapid and dramatic changes in the global politics,

he observed adding "endless debate on India factor will not solve anything."

He urged the policy makers to consider the prospect of human development in overall policy planning and said, "We should cease to remain captive of the past."

In his paper on "Foreign Policy of Bangladesh: Challenges in the 1990s", AKM Abdus Sabur, Senior Research Fellow of BISS called for achieving national consensus on foreign policy through bridging gaps among the mainstream political forces.

The second paper, by Md. Nuruzzaman, a research associate of the institute, on "National Security of Bangladesh: Challenges and Options," observed that internal threats are most serious and fundamental in nature for the security of the country.

Weather

Temperature likely to rise

By Staff Correspondent

Met office forecast on Wednesday rain or thundershower may occur at one or two places over Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions and the regions of Mymensingh and Tangail during the next 24 hours commencing from 6 pm Wednesday. Weather would remain unchanged elsewhere over the country.

Day temperature is likely to rise one to three degree Celsius during the period, Met office added.

Sun sets today (Thursday) at 5.59 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 5.46 am.

Rainfall recorded on Wednesday 30 mm at Bogra, 22 mm at Rangpur, 11 mm at Siramangal, 3 mm each at Barisal and Hatiya and 1 mm at Dinajpur.

Temperature and humidity recorded at important cities and towns on Wednesday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.8	46.6	83	72
Chittagong	32.7	25.8	76	75
Rajshahi	33.0	25.2	82	86
Khulna	34.3	26.0	79	82
Dinajpur	32.6	25.0	90	78
Barisal	30.2	25.6	81	88
Feni	33.3	25.0	81	76
Mymensingh	-	23.2	81	-
Chandanga	35.0	26	82	75



The first meeting of the newly constituted Railway Advisory Committee was held at the conference room of Railway Division Wednesday with Communication Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed in the chair.



Bangladesh Polytechnic Teachers Association brought out a silent procession in the city on Wednesday to press home its 10-point demand. —Stat photo

Dhaka-Cairo ties to grow further

The new Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt Mohammad Kamal Elgohary Elmcliguy presented his credentials to Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban Wednesday morning, reports BSS.

Presenting the credentials, Ambassador Kamal said Bangladesh and Egypt were tested friends. He said he would work to strengthen the existing bonds of friendship between the two friendly countries through expansion of trade, commerce and cultural links.

Welcoming the Ambassador, the Acting President said the existing Bangladesh-Egypt brotherly ties were deeply rooted in our common religion, shared heritage and culture of the two Islamic nations.

He said the two countries had developed a fine tradition of close cooperation and consultation on regional and international issues.

Justice Shahabuddin ex-Shahabuddin, Khaleda greet Chilean President

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Wednesday greeted Sr Patricio Aylwin Azocar, President of the Republic of Chile on the occasion of the Independence Day of the republic, reports BSS.

In a message the Acting President expressed his best wishes for good health, happiness and long life of the Chilean President and for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Chile.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia also greeted Sr Patricio Aylwin Azocar, the Prime Minister wished good health and happiness of Azocar and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Chile.

pressed the hope that Egypt would continue to stand by Bangladesh to ensure a better future for our people and strengthening our democratic life. He conveyed his warm greetings to President Hosni Mubarak, government and the people of Egypt.

'Cooperation with US to strengthen democracy'

Bangladesh Ambassador designate to USA Abul Ahsan Wednesday expressed the hope that future cooperation between Dhaka and Washington would help further strengthen democracy achieved through mass movement, reports UNB.

He described the relation with USA as "deep and wide-ranging" while talking to newsmen at his office on the eve of his departure for Washington on Friday.

He will be replaced by Riaz Rahman who was promoted to the rank of Secretary.

Ahsan said that the United States, a country "with big population and high income" has been providing both bilateral and multinational assistance to improve the socio-economic conditions in Bangladesh.

Referring to the recent changes in Europe, Ahsan observed a special place in the global scenario due to its "stronger defence, greater economic potential and high technology", with one-fourth of the world's total income.

He lauded the US stand for democracy, human rights, improvement of human quality and society free from poverty.

Ahsan observed the US has been launching a process which facilitates others to preserve peace, security, stability and territorial integrity.

Polytechnic teachers submit memo to PM

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Polytechnic Shikshak Samity on Wednesday presented separate memoranda to the Prime Minister and the Education Minister to press home their 10-point charter of demand.

Earlier, a silent procession of the Polytechnic teachers started from the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute at Tejgaon at around 9 am and went around different city streets. Police stopped the procession near the National Press Club.

Later, a group of the leaders of the Samity handed over memoranda separately to the Prime Minister and the Education Minister at Secretariat. The group included Khandakar Shahabuddin Mahmud, President of the Samity, General Secretary Md Shamsur Rahman, Vice-President Abdur Rouf, Joint Secretary Md Ali Siddiqui and Organising Secretary of the Samity Md Idris Ali.

After presenting memoranda, the General Secretary of the Samity spoke briefly in front of the Press Club.

In his speech he demanded payment for the teachers for working additional shifts, implementation of BCS technical education appointment rules, providing promotions and filling up of vacant positions, regularisation of teachers appointed on an adhoc basis and providing selection grades and JMC scale.

Date for credit to aman growers extended

The last date for extending credit to the farmers for transplant aman cultivation has been extended till October 31, a Bangladesh Bank press release said in Dhaka on Wednesday, reports BSS.

The farmers have been advised to contact immediately their concerned bank with agriculture loan pass book to take loan.

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