

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Mingling and Mixing With The Masses

by Fayza Haq

Gaston Debard in his 'kurta', is often to be seen mingling and mixing with the masses at the cultural functions at the Shilpakala Academy, the National Museum hall and the Mahila Samity. His daughter Miriam, who helps bring out a monthly magazine from Dhaka, is always attired in 'shalwar-kameez' and a heavy 'dupatta' which she wraps around more like a 'chadar'.

M. Debard in his job as a consultant for the Power Development Board from France, has visited at least 14 districts all over the country and has worked in places like Thakurgaon, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Jaipurhat, Sunamganj and Madaripur. "The mosquitoes do not bother me at night and the 'dal', 'bhat' and 'curry', although they are monotonous, suffice. I go twice a month for four days each time. When I arrived in Bangladesh I was expecting a much worse situation," he said.

Talking about his work and the state of electrification in Bangladesh he narrated, "I find a lot of the area is not electrified. The Bangladesh Power Development Board can be improved from the technical and commercial point of view. The engineers are good. But their skill at the lower level can easily be improved. There is a big problem of management of store and equipment. It is centralised. Nobody wants to take any decision. This is an integral part of bureaucracy."

Discussing the stealing of electricity from the posts without permission or pay, M. Debard commented, "this is found the world over." Dwelling on underground wiring he said, "It has still to be developed because overhead wiring is hazardous due to the natural calamities."

What has brought him to Dhaka? "I love regions like Nepal, India and China. I have four children ranging from 22 to 17. It is a good way for the family to travel and have experience for themselves. However, I do, admit it may hamper family life, as in my case, my wife and the other children are still in France. I wouldn't undertake a job which involved such a separation again. But Bangladesh is a much better place than the areas in Africa that I have worked in," he confided.

Speaking about the cultural life that he finds in Dhaka, he lauded the fact that "there are a lot of modern painters who have created good pictures. There is a big variety of style from Kalidas and GS Kabir to Jamal Ahmed. I am also impressed by the poems. It seems that everybody is a poet. It is a pity that a rich culture is there but it cannot be spread due to limited finances. I've been to the theatre five times and have enjoyed every moment there. It is a pity that we foreigners are informed only a day later instead of a day before, about the cul-

tural events. I find the 'sitar', 'sarodh' recitals, dancing and singing at the Shilpakala Academy and the National Museum extremely interesting and absorbing."

What struck him as unusual in Bangladesh was the relationship between the people and the language. "The people are so proud of their language. There is then the problem of water but this often creates beautiful landscapes. The crowd is another typical part of Bangladesh. The political meetings such as those in last December, in which I sometimes participated, are an integral part of the life here. I find that fascinating. I also find the non-polluting rickshaws quite intriguing," he commented.

"I found my visits to Old Dhaka particularly interesting. There I have looked at unique shops, seen rickshaws being painted, and have examined a glass factory. I've even tried to find the Armenian Church. I've enjoyed the movements of the boats at Shadarghat. In Old Dhaka I have seen snake charmers, acrobats, and dancers," he added.

"I've been to Sonargaon and the Ahsan Manzil. It is a pity that your historical places are not kept in good conditions. I know of many temples in the countryside where I go to work," he said. M. Debard has been to Mainamati and Paharpur. He would like to go to the Sunderbans but for that you need a group of 10 people. Although he has been to Chittagong as well as the Garo Hills, he said the only other place of interest in Bangladesh that he has not been to is the Cox's Bazar. Due to his nature of his job, he is able to travel all over the country.

"Your tourism can be much more developed. You can use your rivers for boat trips," M. Debard commented.

How did he react to the cyclone and flash-flood rains — was he overwhelmed and intimidated? "We were not affected by the cyclone in Dhaka. I worked with a French team in Pkoka, in front of Kutubdia. It was difficult for us to leave our jobs in Dhaka. But I had a sense of satisfaction helping with the management of the sick people. I admit I was depressed by the cyclone and the pouring flood rain."

He had this to say about the 25% of the literate people of Bangladesh, "they think western culture is better than theirs. Why should that be? The Bangladeshis should be proud of their own capabilities and their own culture. I have friends among the artists and literary world like Kalidas, Anwar Hussain and Mamunur Rashid, and I am very impressed by them."

"It is a pity," he added, "that the foreigners have to make tremendous efforts to get outside their 'golden ghetto'."



Gaston Debard. Photo: Anwar Hossain

### 19 rescued from traffickers

Police rescued 19 people, including two children and four women, from the clutches of traffickers at Aricha ferry terminal Thursday, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip, police raided a Rajshahi-bound coach of Insaif Paribahan and rescued the victims, seven of them of one family.

The victims, all hailing from Cox's Bazar district, were lured by promise of job in India and Pakistan and gave Tk 2,000 to 3,000 each to the traders in human beings.

Those belonging to the same family were identified as Ajhar Hossain (32), his wife Nurjahan (25), sisters Laila (18), Rawshan Ara (12), Moushumi (5), brother Nurul Alam (7) and mother Sheotash Begum (50) of village Panirchara in Ramu upazila.

Kabir Ahmed (30), Masud (20), Montullah (25) and Saleh Ahmed (22) are of the same village.

Eight others were identified as Abdur Rahim (20) of village Katakhal in Chokoria upazila, Zakir Hossain (18), Mohammad Badruddin (20) of village Jelepura in Teknaf upazila, Mohammad Hossain (20), Yusuf (20), Amir Hossain (25) and Ilias (22) of Putbillah village in Moheshkhali upazila and Hashu Mollah (20) of village Laminurchara in Moheshkhali upazila.

### Biswas visits ailing MPs

President Abdur Rahman Biswas visited ailing Azizul Huq Mollah, MP, and Abdul Wajed Chowdhury, MP, at PG Hospital Thursday afternoon, reports BSS.

The President stayed with them for sometime and wished their early recovery.

Later, President Biswas visited Momtazul Huq Rafiq, former Vice President of the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall of Dhaka University at the same hospital. Rafiq is under going treatment for serious injuries he sustained during the movement against autocracy last year.

M A Mattin, MP and Kajal Abdul Majid, MP, Golam Mohammad Straj, MP and Director IPGMR TA Chowdhury were present.

### Publication ceremony held

CHITTAGONG, Oct 17: The publication ceremony of "Perestroika Deshe", written by M. Nasirul Huq, Senior Reporter of Dainik Azadi was held at the Azadi auditorium here today, reports BSS.

Justice K M Sobhan, attended the function as chief guest while Dainik Azadi Editor Prof. Muhammad Khaled presided. Bazlur Rahman, Acting Editor of Dainik Sangbad, Atiqur Rahman of Dainik Azadi and Momtaj Uddin Patwary of Chittagong University, History Department participated in the discussion on the book.

### Friday

8.00 Opening announcement, Al Quran, Programme summary  
8.10 News in Bangla  
8.15 Cartoon Film  
8.40 Nutan Kurt  
10.00 News in English  
10.05 Film  
11.15 Moser Mukurey  
12.00 Closing

### Evening session

3.00 Opening announcement, Al Quran, Programme summary  
3.15 Reading from the Triptiak  
3.20 Full length Bengali feature film  
5.20 News in Bangla  
6.00 Sports programme  
7.05 Sangeeta  
8.00 News in Bangla  
8.30 The Cosby Show  
10.00 News in English  
10.30 Film: LA Law  
11.30 The Khabar/The news  
11.45 Closing

## 101st death anniversary observed all over Mystery continues to shroud life of Lalon Shah

Mystic poet Lalon Shah's 101st death anniversary was observed in Kushtia Thursday as elsewhere in the country, reports UNB.

On this occasion, the Lalon Akhara in Kushtia, the little village about three kilometres from Kushtia town.

Even a century after his birth, mystery continues to shroud over the life of the great mystic poet whose songs transcended the ages.

Lalon who lived within the zemindari of Rabindranath Tagore, is said to have left a tremendous influence on the great poet. Lalon is popularly known as the godfather of Tagore's literary works and Tagore himself praised Lalon in his writings.

Tagore also acknowledged Lalon's influence on himself in a lecture he delivered at the Oxford University in England in 1930.

Twice a year the 'bauls',

who are great admirers of Lalon Shah, meet at the Lalon Akhara in Kushtia. One of these congregations is held in the month of March during the full moon (Falguni Purnima) and the other in October.

These are like carnivals when the bauls, both men and women, converge on the Lalon Akhara from across the country, reveling in singing and dancing to pay homage to their

### Senegalese envoy leaves for home

Senegalese Minister for Labour and Vocational Training and special envoy of the President Alhaj Ousmane Alioune Mgom left Dhaka

Thursday after a four-day official visit to Bangladesh.

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan saw him off at the Zia International Airport. Senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present at the airport.

spiritual mentor. Prominent bauls of the time have been Fakir Chand, Koda Box, Khejmat Ali, Jharu Shah, Ranjita, Nimal Shah, Shukur Shah, Khorsheed Shah. But some of them may have passed away.

The bauls, mystic in nature, are said to be free from all desires, oblivious of worldly affairs. And they are supposed to be indifferent to pains and sorrows of life. They are also considered religious mendicants — a sect representing an obscure religious cult — iconoclasts who disregard caste and creed, probably seeking a merger of Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

This gives the bauls a separate entity, a freedom to confront life beyond the prevailing social and religious customs. They do not preach any specific religious doctrine but only universal humanism.

The bauls believe that all human beings belong to one single family, as God is one and resides in everybody.

### Rabita donates \$ 15,000 to Madrasha

Makka-based philanthropic organisation Rabita Al Alam Al Islami has donated US dollars 15,000 to a Noakhali-based Madrasha Darul Aitam and Yateemat, reports UNB.

Saudi Arabian Charge d' Affairs Abdul Rahman M A Lohy handed over a cheque of the amount to the Madrasha Director Maulana Serajul Islam in Dhaka on Thursday.

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### Mother's role urged for disease free child

"Ending hidden hunger," a policy conference on micronutrient malnutrition was held in Montreal, Canada, from October 10-12 under the joint sponsorship of UNICEF and WHO and support of Canadian government, according to a message received in Dhaka, reports BSS.

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar led a Bangladesh delegation consisting of Health Secretary M Mokammel Huq, DG of Bangladesh Television Fazlur Razaque, Joint Secretary of ERD Anisul Huq Chowdhury, and Dr Abdur Rahim of BAIRC.

Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar was the chairman of a group of countries in the conference and made recommendations for ending hunger and malnutrition. He said the newly elected democratic government under the leadership of

Begum Khaleda Zia is totally committed to removing poverty, hunger and malnutrition from the country.

He underlined the role of mother for making their children free from disease and malnutrition and laid emphasis on bringing the children under extending programme of immunisation.

He stressed increased global cooperation in increasing production of food, generating income and employment and imparting education and production, distribution of Vitamin B capsules and micronutrient vitamins.

The minister also had a friendly discussion with executive director of UNICEF and Director General of WHO. They assured him of all possible helps to removing poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

### 'Steps to be taken to develop environment'

Minister for Environment and Forest Abdullah-Al-Noman Thursday called upon the people to keep their local environment clean and suitable for living, reports BSS.

The minister was addressing a discussion meeting arranged on the occasion of World Habitat Day by Azad Muslim Welfare Complex at Lalbagh.

He said due to increased population, a congested locality was a reality in our country.

Presided over by the President of the Complex Alhaj Nazir Hossain, the function was addressed, among others, by Director General of Environment Directorate, A N M Pramanik and UNICEF representative in Dhaka Gaus Mahmood.

### Weather

## Light rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Met office forecast Thursday that light rain or shower may occur at one or two places over Chittagong division during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Thursday.

Weather will remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country. Met office also said adding it will improve during subsequent next two days. Day temperature may rise by one to two degrees Celsius over the country.

Sunset at Dhaka on Friday at 5-41 pm and sunrise Saturday at 5-56 am.

There was no rainfall in the country on Thursday. Temperature and humidity recorded at important cities and towns on the day were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	31.4	24.4	82	73
Chittagong	32.0	24.0	89	78
Rajshahi	31.6	22.0	82	86
Khulna	31.8	23.3	85	78
Jessore	33.0	22.0	-	-
Dinajpur	31.8	22.0	77	86
Bogra	32.4	22.7	82	82
Sylhet	31.0	22.0	78	84
Barisal	32.6	24.2	80	83

### Worldnet dialogue on land use October 23

By Staff Correspondent

Worldnet Dialogue, a live satellite teleconference produced by USIS television, will feature a panel discussion on "Land Use And Development" on October 23, according to USIS sources.

Participants in Dhaka will be able to see and speak with their counterparts in the US in an exchange of ideas on this broad topic, touching on remote sensing in agriculture, water resources, flood control, deforestation, and population pressure.

The American panelist in Washington will be Dr. Peter Rogers, currently the Gordon McKay professor of environmental engineering and professor of city and regional planning at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts

and former senior consultant to the Master Planning organization for the Government of Bangladesh from 1983-86. He was also the team leader for the study of the 1988 Bangladesh floods for the United States Congress. A second guest may come from the World Resources Institute.

Dhaka panelists will be Dr. K. B. Sajjadur Rasheed, Professor of Geography, University of Dhaka, Dr M A H Pramanik, Director General, Department of Environment and Forests and Dr. K Nizamuddin, Associate Professor of Geography and Director, Environmental Survey Resource Unit, University of Dhaka. The dialogue will be conducted at the American Center.

## A CAREER OF HONOUR AND DIGNITY WITH CHALLENGING LEADERSHIP (OPPORTUNITY FOR FEMALE CANDIDATE)

### DIRECT SHORT SERVICE COMMISSION - ARMY MEDICAL CORPS (AMC)/ ARMY DENTAL CORPS (ADC)

**ELIGIBILITY**

- AGE ON 04 NOV 1991**  
(Affidavit NOT acceptable)  
21 to 27 years.
- PHYSICAL STANDARD**
  - HEIGHT**: (Minimum) 1.57 Metre (5'-2")
  - WEIGHT**: (Minimum) 40.82 Kilogram (90 lbs)
  - CHEST**: Normal 0.71 Metre (28")  
Expanded 0.76 Metre (30")
- EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**:
  - Army Medical Corps**:  
(1) MBBS Degree from a recognised University.
  - INTERNSHIP Completed.
  - Registered from Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.
  - Army Dental Corps**:  
(1) BDS Degree from a recognised University.
  - INTERNSHIP Completed.
  - Registered from Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.
- MARITAL STATUS**: Married/Unmarried
- NATIONALITY**: Female Citizen of Bangladesh.
- INELIGIBILITY**
  - Withdrawn/ Discharged from Army/ Navy/ Air Force or any Government Service.
  - Screened out/ rejected twice by ISSB. Once rejected and once screened out candidate may apply.
  - Declared medically UNFIT by Armed Forces Appeal Medical Board (Rejected on grounds of height, weight and chest may apply on attainment of requisite standard).
  - Incomplete application or false statement given in the application.

**SELECTION PROCEDURE**

- PRELIMINARY SELECTION**: Preliminary Medical Test/Interview will be held at CMH, Dhaka Cantonment.
- TEST/INTERVIEW BY INTER SERVICE SELECTION BOARD (ISSB)**: Inter Service Selection Board (ISSB), Dhaka Cantonment.
- FINAL MEDICAL BOARD**: Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka Cantonment.
- FINAL SELECTION**: Adjutant General Branch Army Headquarters, Dhaka Cantonment.
- TRAINING/COMMISSION**
  - Army Medical Corps/Army Dental Corps**: Post-commission-training at Army Medical Centre, Rajshahi and Armed Forces Medical Institute, Dhaka Cantonment and will be commissioned from the date of joining as under:
    - Army Medical Corps**: As CAPTAIN.
    - Army Dental Corps**: As LIEUTENANT.

**SENIORITY IN SERVICE (ANTE DATE SENIORITY)**

- ARMY MEDICAL CORPS**: 3/4 years from the date of commission as under:
  - a. 2 1/2 years (for study in Medical College).

**NOTE**: NO TA/DA will be admissible for test/ interview other than ISSB.

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