

Dhaka Day by Day

A Story of Survival

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

There are people who are shattered when their worlds crumble down before their very eyes, when life becomes a living hell and death the only means of escape. But there are those who somehow pick up the broken pieces and painstakingly mend them together to begin all over again. Maleka Banu belongs to this rare minority. Her very sorrow and disillusionment in life has been the driving force behind her determination to survive in a world that is strictly a man's.

Maleka Banu is now in her early thirties though the lines of pain on her face make her look much older. She is a 'Churiwali' selling pretty glass bangles from door to door in Jigatola and Dhanmondi. Sometimes after her usual rounds she sits outside the Eden College selling her wares to the young women who cannot resist stopping to take a look at the sparkling circles of silt-con on their way to class or home. Her face seems to hold an expression of quiet peace and resignation. What is the story behind this expression I wonder and soon here it is from her own lips.



Maleka tries bangles on a prospective customer's hands. — Star photo

kind-hearted fisherman. This marriage gives Maleka three sons and two daughters and a lot more peace than the previous one. But her bubble of happiness soon bursts when her husband's brothers conspire and plot against him. One cold winter night Maleka's husband Manik Mia, mysteriously disappears only to be found next day stabbed to death and thrown into the river. With the grief of her husband's death Maleka must now face her lecherous brothers-in-law who lose no time in making passes at her and

slandering her name in the village. Whenever her parents turn against her Maleka is forced to come back to Dhaka with her five children. She manages to get work for four of her children and herself as domestic servant in different houses in Hazaribag, Jigatola. A whole year goes by during which Maleka manages to save some money from her salary. She begins to dream of a different sort of life. With her savings she buys glass bangles from a glass factory and begins to sell them, going from door to door. Maleka begins to do quite well in this business and soon she is able to set up a

small 'paan' shop with the proceeds. This brings us back to the present Maleka Banu. With the money from selling bangles and the 'paan' shop Maleka can now support her children. All of them go to school and take turns in sitting at the shop. The eldest daughter helps Maleka vend bangles which sell at 10-12 Taka per dozen. The glass factory from where she buys the bangles is quite pleased with her performance and gives her regular discounts. Life is not easy for Maleka Banu being a single parent for five children, but on the whole, quite stable. When asked if she will marry again, she declines firmly with "I have had enough of that to last me a lifetime."

Maleka is quite content with her life as a 'Churiwali'. She has her children to live for and her greatest accomplishment is that she no longer has to rely on a man for survival.

Rabita to provide more fund for cyclone-hit hospitals

Visiting Secretary General of the Mekkah based Rabita Alam Al Islami Dr Abdullah Omar Nasseef called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban on Friday, reports UNB. He apprised the President of setting up of the Darul Ihsan University in Bangladesh, which would be the seat of learning and high level research work needed for the Muslim Ummah. He also informed that Rabita would provide more fund for the reconstruction of the hospitals run by this organisation at Chittagong. The hospitals were damaged by tidal surge last April. The Rabita will also assist in rehabilitating cyclone victims of the last cyclone in different coastal areas of the country. Nasseef also discussed with the President about the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis from Bangladesh and informed that Pakistan would start rehabilitating them soon in Punjab province. Dr Nasseef also assured that Rabita would provide more help and cooperation in other fields of development to the democratic government of Bangladesh.

Solution to CHT problems demanded

Dipankar Taitukdar, MP, Friday condemned the killings in greater Chittagong Hill Tracts during the last couple of days, reports BSS. Taitukdar, in a statement, said such kind of killings in a moment when a political process was going on for resolving the CHT problems, would hamper the process. He said some communal quarters were making evil attempts to disturb the communal harmony in the CHT by capitalising the killings. Taitukdar, who is elected to the Parliament from Rangamati Hill District, demanded of the government to solve the existing CHT problems politically.

President Biswas thanked Dr Nasseef for giving continuous support in different fields of our development and hoped this close cooperation between Bangladesh and Rabita would contribute immensely to develop relation among the Muslim Ummah. The President also expressed his satisfaction over the relationship with the brotherly people of Saudi Arabia and conveyed his best wishes to King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz and the Saudi government.

The President lauded the role played by Rabita in setting up Darul Ihsan University in Bangladesh and hoped this model institute would be a place of learning and research which would also benefit the Muslim Ummah. Among others former Saudi Ministers Sheikh Ahmed Saleh Jamjoom and Dr Mohammad Abdul Yeamani, Secretary to the President A N M Yusuf and Dr Ali Ashraf, Rector of the Darul Ihsan University were present on the occasion.

Electronic media to get autonomy

Information Minister Nazmul Huda Friday said the present democratic government would keep its words to provide autonomy to the electronic media of the country, reports BSS. Addressing as the Chief guest, the fourth annual conference of Bangladesh Betar Television Shilpi Sangsad, the Information Minister said, "You must wait and have patience and give us sometime to fulfill our commitments." The Minister said, during the last seven months the BNP government had successfully tackled many national problems like switching over to parliamentary form of government, cyclonic storm and disturbance in jails. "Now we are setting our priorities to focus on the rest of the problems," he said. Elderly artiste Barin Majumdar attended the function as the special guest while Shilpi Sangsad President Kalim Sharaif presided. Convener of the Sammilita Sangkritik Jote Faiz Ahmed, Chairman of the Group Theatre Federation Nasiruddin Yusuf and General Secretary of the organisation Jamaluddin Hossain also spoke on the occasion. Huda underscored the need for maintaining constitutional process and stabilising demo-

cratic system. Barin Majumdar urged the government to bring the radio and television in a "system" by giving them autonomy. Faiz Ahmed said the electronic media needed autonomy for the welfare of the country as well as enrichment of our literature, culture and language. He demanded setting up of a commission or a committee to scrutinize their suggestions and recommendations to pave the way for autonomy of the radio and TV. **TV Saturday**
5-00 Opening announcement, Al Quran
Programme summary
5-10 News in Bangla
5-20 Reading from the Tripitak
5-30 Sports world
6-00 Documentary film: Museums around the World
6-30 Mati-o-Manush
7-05 Barishah Folk songs
7-50 Today's some programmes
8-00 News in Bangla
8-30 Bishwa Parikrama
9-00 Uzziban
10-00 News in English
10-30 Drama series: Dallas
11-30 Khabar/The News
11-45 Close down.

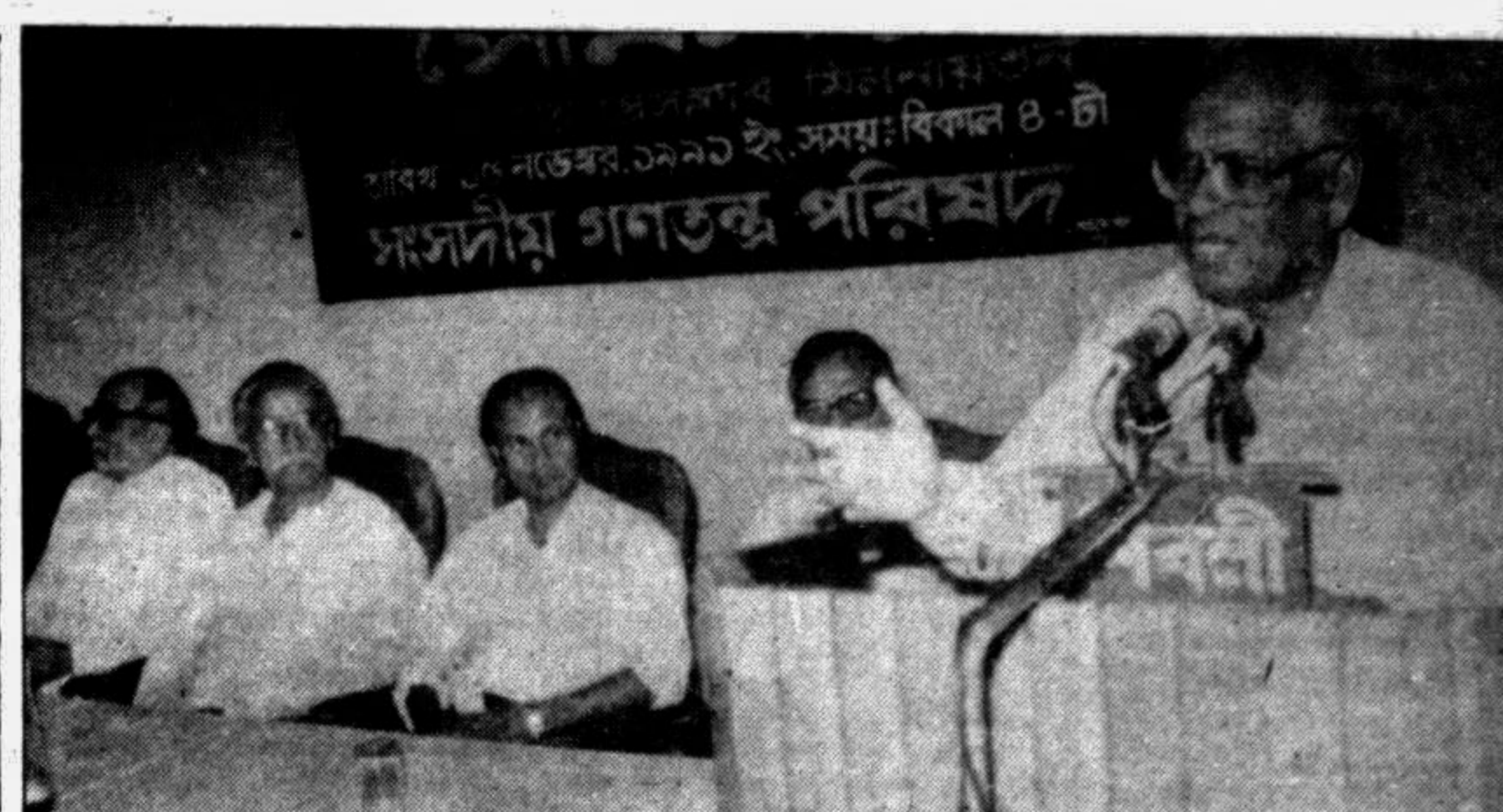
US navy team leaves for home

The goodwill delegation of the US Navy which arrived in Dhaka by a maritime patrol and surveillance aircraft (P-3 "Orion") left Friday morning ending their three-day visit to Bangladesh, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS. During their stay in Bangladesh, the leader of the delegation called on the Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Muhammad Mohaiminul Islam at the Naval Headquarters on Thursday. They carried out demonstrations and surveillance mission over the Bay of Bengal. They were seen off at the air port by senior officers of the Naval Headquarter and officials of the US Embassy in Dhaka.

ESCAP Executive Secy arrives today

SAMS Kibria, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, arrives in Dhaka today (Saturday) on a week-long visit, reports BSS. During the course of his stay, Kibria will participate in a number of important events in addition to holding consultations with leaders and senior officials of the government on matters of cooperation between Bangladesh and ESCAP.

Among the several events Kibria has been invited by the government to the regional workshop on sectoral development issues and environment from November 18 to 21. This workshop is being organized by UNDP in cooperation with UNDP and is one of the 5 major regional meetings being organized by ESCAP, aimed at implementation of the regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.



Former Justice Debash Bhattacharya speaking at a seminar on 'democracy, rule of law and Indemnity Ordinance' at the National Press Club auditorium on Friday. — Star photo

It's a simple law, says Kemaluddin

'Two-third majority for repeal of Indemnity Ordn not needed'

Justice Kemaluddin Hossain, a former chief justice, on Friday said the Indemnity Ordinance of 1975 is not a constitutional law and its repeal does not require a two-thirds majority in parliament, reports UNB. "It's a simple law and can be scrapped by a simple majority of the members of parliament," he told a meeting at the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka Friday afternoon. The meeting, organised by "Sangshadiya Ganatantra Parishad" (parliamentary democracy council), was addressed by Justice KM Sobhan, Justice Debash Bhattacharya, Advocate Gazul Haq and Sardar Fazul Karim, Doctor Mohammad Selim presided. Justice Kemaluddin termed illegal the government that took over after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. "The Indemnity Ordinance by that government is also illegal," he said.

Justice KM Sobhan supported the contention of the former chief justice about the ordinance which barred the trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujib. He said former President Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed had no constitutional right to promulgate this ordinance. He quoted Articles 48 and 93 of the constitution. "Mushtaq was a self-proclaimed President." Referring to effective functioning of democracy, Justice Sobhan said democracy cannot function in a country until rule of law is established. Justice Debash Bhattacharya said promulgation of the indemnity ordinance tantamounts to killing of the constitution. "If parliament fails to scrap the law, we will have to go to higher court", he said. Justice Bhattacharya also called for restoration of four state principles and other democratic provisions as envisaged in the 1972 constitution.

Advocate Gazul Haq questioned how a constitution could provide protection to the killers. He called for scrapping "this black law for restoration of democracy and rule of law in the country."

3.5 pc people suffering from diabetes

A random sample survey carried out by Bangladesh Diabetes Association in the city Friday found about 3.5 per cent people suffering from diabetes, reports UNB. Blood examination of some 200 people of various professions was done by Bangladesh Diabetes Forecast Centre (BDFC) as part of a country-wide programme to identify the diabetes patients. A mobile camp was stationed in front of Jatiya Press Club to facilitate free check-up for the people.

Qirat confce begins

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Friday said that teachings of the holy Quran should guide us in social, economic, political and moral life, reports BSS. The Quran has universal appeal and the depository of all values and virtues, he stated. The President was addressing the inaugural ceremony of International Qirat conference in Dhaka at the Outer Stadium. Organised by the International Quran Reciting Association

What's on today....

'Poets From Home and Abroad'
The Thomas Ansell Foundation is sponsoring a poetry recitation 'Poets From Home and Abroad' evening today (Saturday) at the Alliance Francaise Auditorium at 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi at 6 pm. French Ambassador to Bangladesh Serge Degalaix will be the chief guest. Poets from home and abroad will recite their own poems.

National workshop on instrument maintenance
A six-day national workshop on instrument maintenance and repair arranged by the Department of Chemistry of Dhaka University begins at Chemistry Lecture Theatre, Curzon Hall of the University at 9 am today (Saturday). Prof M Shamsul Haq, Chairman of Bangladesh University Grants Commission (UGC) will inaugurate the workshop and Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of the university will be present on the occasion.

Bangladesh Chashi Kalyan Samity
The inaugural ceremony of the fifteen day membership drive of Bangladesh Chashi Kalyan Samity will be held at the Samity's central office (435, Elephant road, Boro Moghbazar) at 11 am today (Saturday). Mawlana Abul Kalam Mohammad Yusuf, President of the Samity will inaugurate the programme.

Solo musical programme
The solo musical performance of noted Pakistani singer Alamgir will be held at 7 pm today (Saturday) at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Ganotantrik Biplobi Jote
Ganotantrik Biplobi Jote will hold a demonstration in front of GPO in protest against violence in the educational institutions and price-hike of essentials at 4 pm today (Saturday).

Investigation training course
The clashes of the second part of investigation training arranged by the Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of the Human Rights (BSEHR) in collaboration with US Aid begins today (Saturday) at FPAB Building at 2, Nayapattan.

... and tomorrow

Short film inaugural ceremony
The inaugural ceremony of the short film titled "Bangla Namer Desh" will be held at the auditorium of German Cultural Centre (Goethe Institute) at 5.30 pm tomorrow (Sunday). Col (ret'd) Nuruzzaman, Prof Strajul Islam Chowdhury, Selim Aldin, Sontosh Gupta, Abdus Selib will speak on the occasion. **Compiled by FA**

Plea to cancel Dholaikhal acquisition order

The Minister of State for Youth and Sports, Sadeque Hossain, Thursday assured the inhabitants of Dholaikhal area of all possible government cooperation to solve their problems, reports BSS.

The local people called for the construction of a road over Dholaikhal khas land, cancellation of both acquisition order and commercial project taken up by the Corporation.

Weather

Night temperature may fall
Weather is likely to remain mainly dry across the country during the next 24 hours till 6 pm Saturday, reports UNB. Met office says night temperature may fall by 1-3 degree Celsius over the country. Friday's maximum temperature in Dhaka was 28.5 degree Celsius and the minimum 19.8 degrees. Country's lowest temperature 14.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi. Percentage of humidity was 82 in the morning and 64 in the evening. Sun sets today (Saturday) at 5-13 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6-15 am.

Krishak Dal confce Dec 22

The national representative conference of Jatiyatobadi Krishak Dal will be held on December 22 in Dhaka, reports BSS. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is likely to inaugurate the conference. The decision to hold the conference was taken at an emergency meeting of the Jatiyatobadi Krishak Dal held at the party central office Friday afternoon. Presided over by Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, the Minister for Labour and Manpower, who is also the Convenor of the Dal was addressed, among others, Mia Mohan Borhan Uddin Ahmed, Mafiqul Hasan Tripti and Shahidur Rahman.

The meeting also decided to inaugurate "Zia Canal Digging" programme and hold a peasant rally at Atrat in Naogaon district on December 3. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the Canal Digging Programme and address the rally.

It's new just for you

The Daily Star is pleased to introduce a new column where individuals and organisations can publish Birthday and Anniversary Greetings, Congratulatory and Condolence Messages, Get-Well/Good-Luck Wishes, Birth/Death Announcements, In Memoriam, etc. at nominal charges.

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