Dhaka Day by Day

Scenes from Life's Drama

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

Perhaps the most entertaining and relaxing pastime in life is watching people. Even the most mundane activities fascinate us when they are seen at a distance. As I watched a typical winter street-scene the other day I felt as if I were part of the audience of an impromptu play or short film in a mini theatre.

The setting is a back street of Motijheel. The background is an auto-works garage in front of which is the main 'stage'. On the right is a tiny side street where hundreds of passing rickshaws and motor cycles form the continuous 'back projection'. The scenes do not come one after the other, rather they happen simultaneously. Nevertheless the 'spotlight' which is at the mercy of the spectator, constantly flits to and fro depending on where the attention is being diverted to.

In the centre of the stage is a vendor selling an array of herbal medicine — powders, roots and concoctions that claim to heal a wide range of ailments from an ordinary cold to heart disease! Potions to increase virility and balms to cure baldness are among the popular ones attracting males from all age groups.

The background music is provided by the monstrous two-in-one cassette-player from which exudes a continuous commentary of nonsensical verses rhyming the names of famous film stars. The vendor and his rows of bottles of 'ayurvedic' specialities is surrounded by a thick crowd of people — some interested in buying and some just hangers on watching the fun.

The medicines man, no doubt, has the leading role in this mini drama that gives a repeat performance every Thursday afternoon. But there are a few 'extras' who contribute to its picturesque quality.

On one side is the old man who makes steamed 'pithas' in his make-shift over. He places each perfectly round rice cake on the pan, covers it with a clay cover and in seconds takes out the puffed up cakes placing them on a plate ready to be eaten. The aroma of mouth-watering 'gur-filled' 'pithas' is enough to distract many of the spectators of the 'medicine show', and sell like 'hot cakes'! From time to time the old man takes a break to play with his 8-month-old grandson, throwing him up in the air and catching him in his arms while the infant squeals in delight. The two toothless relatives with a 70-year age difference create a scene that is both amusing and touching.

The 'camera' that is the eye, then diverts to the far right of the stage focusing on the pineapple 'wala' whose slices of pineapple have lost a lot of their popularity with the chill of winter. His facial expression changes alternatively from boredom to envy as he watches the busy 'pitha wala'!

Suddenly a new set of actors enter the stage. A handful of dust covered children run in, their shabbiness sharply contrasted by the excited gleam in their eyes. Soon an improvised game of cricket begins with an irregular shaped stone for a ball and a bamboo stick for a bat.

Vendor selling an array of herbal medicines. — Star photo

The 'medicine man', the 'pitha wala' the pine apple 'wala' and the young 'cricketers' all play their roles with perfect synchronization, never forgetting a line, never making an awkward move.

As the hour goes by and the winter sun begins to retire for the day, the scenes start to fade out. The crowd begins to thin, the pineapple man collects his things with a sigh of resignation, the pitha wala puts off his stove and heads home with his daughter and grandson in his arms. Soon the cassette player is switched off and the medicine man winds up with the help of his assistant. The bottles of magic potions disappear into a large tin trunk and after counting the cash from sales the vendor picks up his two in one and walks off.

This brings us to the end of this little episode and the setting sun drops a closing curtain on the stage leaving it almost empty save a few men who linger on to finish their 'bidis'.

Efforts to be taken to ensure five basic needs : Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday assured her government would try to solve the housing problem of all the working journalists in phases, reports UNB.

"Shelter is one of the five basic needs of man," she observed and said her government would make all efforts to ensure the people's basic requirements.

Begum Zia was addressing a function arranged by Dhaka Journalists Housing Cooperative Association Limited on the occasion of distributing documents among the 180 allottees of two- katha plot each at Mirpur Wednesday afternoon.

The land, costing nearly Tk 2 lakh per bigha, was arranged by Shaheed President Zia in 1980 for providing housing facilities to working journalists.

Begum Zia expressed happiness to be at the function marking near-completion of an unfinished project of Shaheed Zia.

Presided over by Gias Kamal Chowdhury, the function was also addressed by City Mayor Mirza Abbas, local MP Haroonur Rashid Mollah, BEUJ President Reazuddin Ahmed, DUJ President Zahirul Huq, Press Club President Mozammel Huq, DUJ General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi and Housing Association's Genera Secretary Syed Abul Kahhar.

Admitting that there is a severe housing crisis facing the low-income groups, the Prime Minister said all possible measures would be taken to change the situation.

"There are resource constraints, but we are trying to solve the socio-economic problems one by one."

She referred to intensive programmes the government is taking up in education, food, health and communication sectors.

"To make the independent Bangladesh self-reliant, we have to boost food production and set up new industries for socio-economic uplift," she said.

The Prime Minister sought cooperation from the people in the government's development efforts and hoped the journalists would extend their support to the democratic government in the development process.

Pointing to the Benarasi saree industry, a speciality of Mirpur, Begum Zia said such small projects with employment opportunities for the huge jobless population would be given importance.

The government will try to find solution to the problems hindering the expansion of the dexterous Benarasi industry, she said.

Begum Zia called upon the people to use local products for encouraging indigenous industries and promoting export. New industries will not grow if the prevailing attitude does not change toward using home products.

The Prime Minister also gave assurance of looking into the possibilities of setting up a hospital in Mirpur.

She also gave away land documents to some of the allottees of plots in the Mirpur housing estate.

Mirza Abbas, focusing on local problems, said the City Corporation would take all possible steps for providing necessary civic amenities to the residents of the area.

The Prime Minister later visited a few Benarasi factories and appreciated the quality of the products, which the well-to -do women are fond of.

Education employees threaten to paralyse administration

Government employees of secondary and higher education sector Wednesday urged the authorities for fulfilling their 7-point demand immediately or they would go for action paralysing the entire educational administration.

The demands of the third and fourth class employees include repeal of the Enam Committee Report which made 3,000 employees surplus, promotion by removing disparity in service and creation of 7,000 new posts.

At a press conference at Jatiya Press Club, Secretary General of Bangladesh Madhyamik-O-Uccha Shikkha Sarkari Karmachari Sammilita Parishad Khurram Mollah placed the demands and urged immediate solution.

He told reporters that the employees were not getting overtime allowance for working in double shifts in different schools.

They announced their action programmes like demonstration in the capital, divisional and district levels December 7-17 and demonstration at Shikkha Bhaban premises on Dec 18.

Digital satellite tech incorporated in T & T

Intermediate Data Rate (IDR), a digital satellite technology, has been incorporated in the overseas telecommunication field, reports BSS.

According to a press release of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board in Dhaka Wednesday, the new technology is being used in the Talimabad Earth Satellite Centre.

UZ Chairmen support half-day hartal on Dec 9

By Staff Correspondent

The Upazila Implementation Committee on Wednesday extended total support to the half-day nationwide hartal call on December 9 by the Bangladesh Upazila Parishad Chairman Samity.

Speaking at a press conference at a local guest house the President of the committee, GML Kabir, slated the government decision to abolish the upazila system.

Terming the decision as "anti-people" he said the ordinance was passed by by-passing the parliament and it removed representative elected directly by the people.

Pointing out that the upazila system was established to decentralise the administration and to develop the villages, he said the people were not even informed as to why it was abolished.

Khaleda greets Thai PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday congratulated Anand Panyarachun, Prime Minister of Thailand, on the occasion of birthday of the King of Thailand.

In the felicitation message, the Prime Minister expressed her confidence that the friendly relations between the two countries will be further strengthened in the coming years.

ATAB problems discussed

The Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB) Tuesday held a meeting with Biman-Bangladesh Airlines to strengthen the co-operation between the travel agents and the national airlines, an ATAB press release said Wednesday, reports BSS.

The ATAB team was headed by its President, Dr H B M Iqbal, and the Biman side was led by Director, Marketing and Sales, AH Salauddin in the meeting. Among other things, the meeting discussed the problems related to reservation system, agency counter extension, coup on promotion and ways to solve those.

ATAB Vice-President Firoz Ahmed, Secretary General Mujibur Rahman, Asstt. Secretary General Md Abul Khair, executive committee members and Biman Manager, Agency Interline, Manager, Reservation, and other officials were present in the meeting which decided to meet at least once in a month.

Begum Azizuddin laid to rest

Begum Azizuddin Ahmed, wife of late Azizuddin Ahmed, a former central minister and mother of the Information Secretary, Nooruddin Al Masud, was buried at Banani graveyard Wednesday afternoon, reports BSS.

Earlier her namaz-e- janaza, was held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after Zohr Prayers.

Mrs. Azizuddin Ahmed died, Tuesday evening at a city clinic. She was 78.

Her qul khwani will be held on Friday at 5/1, Purana Paltan, after Maghreb prayers.

Municipal employees urged to improve services

A 12-member delegation of Bangladesh Municipal Employees Federation called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban Wednesday morning, reports BSS.

Led by Amanullah, convener of the Federation, the delegation representing employees of four city corporations and 107 municipalities apprised the President of their problems.

The President gave them a patient hearing and urged the employees to improve the standard of municipal services providing civic amenities.

He underscored the need for putting in dedicated efforts by all working in the city corporations and municipalities to perform the traditional role of the municipalities to render services to the citizens.

Commemorative stamp Dec 6

Bangladesh Postal Department will release a Taka 4 commemorative stamp on December 6 in observance of the first anniversary of mass upsurge of 1990, according to an official announcement in Dhaka Wednesday, reports BSS.

The postal department will also release first day cover of Taka 5 on and a special seal.

TV Thursday

5.00 :	Opening announcement, Al Quran, Programme summary
5.10 :	News in Bangla
5.20 :	Reading from the Geeta
5.30 :	Cartoon Film
6.00 :	Special programme on Shaheed Suhrawardy
6.30 :	Jibaner Alo
7.05 :	Katha-O-Shur
8.00 :	News in Bangla
8.30 :	Weekly drama
10.00 :	News in English
10.25 :	Deepta Chetona
11.30 :	Khabar/The News
11.45 :	Close down

A ten-member delegation of Islami Chhatra Shibir led by its President Abu Zafar Mohammad Obaidullah called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban on Wednesday.

Emre's works to be published in Bengali

A seminar on the famous Turkish poet and mystic of the 13th century Yunus Emre was held in Dhaka Wednesday as part of a global celebration set by the UNESCO, reports BSS.

The UNESCO had declared 1991 as the "Yunus Emre Year" on the occasion of his 75th anniversary.

Held to mark the memory of the great poet and humanist, the seminar was organised by the Turkish Embassy in co-operation with the Bangla Academy.

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar addressed the seminar as the chief guest while State Minister for Culture Prof. Jahanara Begum was the special guest on the occasion.

Turkish Ambassador in Bangladesh Ahmed H. Ermisoglu, Director General of Bangla Academy Prof. Harunur Rashid, a former Ambassador of Bangladesh M. Arshaduzzaman, who translated the poetry of Yunus Emre into Bengali, and additional Secretary in-charge of the Cultural Ministry I. U. Malik took part in the discussions on the life and works of the poet.

Gazi Shamsur Rahman, President of the Bangla Academy, presided over the session during which recitations from the poems of Emre were rendered and recorded songs based on his lyrics were played.

Poets, litterateurs, academics, cultural personalities and diplomats attended the seminar held at the auditorium of the National Museum.

Jamiruddin Sircar said the humanist poet Yunus Emre is a pride for the entire mankind. He said there are great similarities between the sufism of Emre and sufistic Baul and Lalon songs of Bangladesh.

Recalling the deep-rooted cultural ties between Bangladesh and Turkey, the Education Minister said the readings of Emre's poems, now being translated into Bengali, would bring the two brotherly nations further closer.

The minister, who is also the chairman of the National Commission for UNESCO, lauded the role of the UN organisation for projecting the 13th century Turkish poet who preached the philosophy of love and brotherhood. He also mentioned the UNESCO's effort in preserving the cultural heritage of the Third World countries.

State Minister for Culture Prof Jahanara Begum informed the gathering that Bangla Academy would soon publish a book on the Bengali translation of Emre's poetry. She said the Academy had taken the translation work in cooperation with the Turkish embassy.

She said Bangladesh would soon sign a cultural protocol with Turkey envisaging wider exchange in the cultural fields between the two countries.

Prof. Jahanara expressed the hope that the Turkish cultural ministry would take steps for translating the works of our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, who wrote about the emergency of modern Turkey.

The Turkish Ambassador, R Ermisoglu, thanked the Bangla Academy in co-sponsoring the seminar on Yunus Emre and for undertaking the translation work of the great poet.

EC gives Tk 8m for relief

By Staff Correspondent

The European Commission has approved two grants for relief for the flood affected people of the northern districts of Bangladesh .

The Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS) will receive Tk 2.6 million while Ganaswasthya Kendra (GK) will get about Taka 5.53 million for the relief work.

Ambassador J Bailly, head of delegation of the European Commission in Dhaka called on the State Minister for Relief Lutfar Rahman Khan on Tuesday and informed him about the grants.

RDRS will use the fund to distribute seeds to 10 thousand farm families and improve water supply while GK will provide medical services and food relief.

JS body to review pourashava situation

The first meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives was held in the Sangsad Bhaban Wednesday with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Abdul Hye and parliament members Haji Rashed Mosharraf, Mansoor Ahmad, Shamsuddin Ahmed and Zainul Abedin Farooq.

The committee reviewed the overall performance of the ministry with special reference to the strengthening of local government institutions and promotion of water supply both in the urban and rural areas.

The committee formed a three-member sub-committee to review the situation prevailing in some pourashavas and to suggest measures for improving the performance of those pourashavas. Members of the sub-committee are Messrs Shamuddin Ahmad MP Monsur Ahmad MP and Zainul Abedin Farooq MP.

Weather

Dry weather to prevail

Dry weather will prevail across the country during the next 24 hours till 6 pm Thursday, reports UNB.

Met office said night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country excepting 1-2 degree rise in coastal areas.

Wednesday's maximum temperature in Dhaka was 25 degree Celsius and the minimum 14.5 degrees. Country's lowest temperature 9.8 degrees was recorded at Srimangal.

Percentage of humidity was 78 in the morning and 65 in the evening.

Sun sets tomorrow (Thursday) at 5.11 pm and roses on Friday at 6.28 am.

'Role of madrasha vital for pry education'

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar Wednesday underlined the role of the Ibtadayee Madrashas in the implementation of Universal Primary Education programme of the government, reports BSS.

He said the BNP government had given top-priority to the spread of basic education among the common masses for achieving the cherished goal of national development.

The minister was speaking at the inaugural function of the national workshop on the role of the Ibtadayee Madrashas in the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme held in Dhaka.

Jointly organised by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, the inaugural function was also addressed by the State Minister for Education Principal Mohammad Eunus Khan and UNICEF Resident Representative Cole P Dodge.

Education Secretary Meer Mustafizur Rahman presided over the function.

He pointed out that the present democratic government had no lack of willingness to provide equal opportunity for both primary education and Ibtadayee Madrasha education to launch a basic education programme in a massive scale.

DEAREST NATASHA AND RIYADH, HAPPY B'DAY

WISHES WITH LOVE, FROM

ANUSHKA MEHREEN, RAIHAN BHAIYA, SHOMBIT BHAIYA, BORO CHACHI AND BORO CHACHA.

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5th December '91

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from

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স্বজনসহ আপনাকে সাদর আমন্ত্রণ প্রখ্যাত নেচারক্টিরর ফিজিশিয়ান ও চিতি উপদ্যাপক ডাঃ হিফিজুর রহমান আশরাফীর ফ্রি লেকচারে।তিনি মেডিটেশন, প্রাণায়াম, যোগক্রিয়া, Relaxation-এর বিশ্বখ্যাত পদ্ধতি, Nature Cure Therapeutics, সাত্ত্বিক খাদ্যপদ্ধতি, Positive Thought Culture সহ দেহ-মন নিয়ন্ত্রণের নানা পদ্ধতির সমন্বয়ে গড়ে তুলেছেন আত্ম-উন্নয়নের এক অত্যর্থ প্রশিক্ষণ অনুশীলনী কোর্স। সুস্ত অসুস্ত দৈহিক মানসিক ও আত্মিক শক্তির উন্মোচন, বিকাশ, নিয়ন্ত্রণ এবং আপনার আকাংখিত সাফল্যজনক জীবনের জন্য এ এক অপূর্ব কার্যকর পদ্ধতি। ধূমপান বা মদ্যপাতি ত্যাগ,ছাপের নেশামুক্তি,উচ্চ রক্ত চাপ, হৃদরোগ, এ্যাজমা, ডায়াবেটিস, স্নায়ুশক্তির দুর্বলতা, পেটের পীড়া, অনিদ্রা, নানাপ্রকার ভয়েসটিং,ডিপ্রিস ও মানসিক রোগসহ ফোবিয়া, সাইকোসিস, ডিপ্রেসন,খাদ্যে অনিহা/ অতিরিক্ত তোজনাকাঙ্খা,ওজন কমিয়ে বা প্রয়োজনীয় ওজন বাড়িয়ে চমৎকার স্লিম ফিগার তৈরি সহ কঠিন রোগ নিরাময় ও প্রতিরোধে এই কোর্স ক্লিনিক্যালী পরিপূর্ণ কার্যকর, অত্যর্থ। দেহকে, মনকে রোগমুক্ত ও শক্তিশালী করে অসীম ক্ষমতাধর হতে এই কোর্স আপনার জন্য এক অবিশ্বাস্য সুযোগ।
ছাত্র ছাত্রীদের স্মৃতি, মেধা, চিন্তা, ইচ্ছা ও কর্মশক্তি বিকাশ এবং ব্যবসা, শিল্প-কারখানা পরিচালনা, প্রশাসনিক ও যে কোন পেশাগত দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধির উপর পূর্ণ গুরুত্ব দিয়েই কোর্সটি প্রণীত-পরিচালিত। অতিন্দ্রীয় (ESP) ক্ষমতা বৃদ্ধি ও তৃতীয় নয়ন(Third Eye)উন্মোচনে Self-Improvement-এর এই কোর্স আত্ম-নিবেদিত। ফ্রি-লেকচারে ডাঃ আশরাফী আপনাকে অতি সহজ সরল ভাষায় কোর্সের বিস্তারিত পরিচিতি ও বিজ্ঞান ভিত্তিক ব্যাখ্যা দান করবেন।
ফ্রি লেকচারে আসন সীমিত। আসন সংরক্ষণ এবং লেকচারের সময় ও তারিখ এর জন্য যোগাযোগ করুন

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০২। আগ্রহী মালিক/ ব্যক্তিগণকে তাহাদের প্রস্তাব সীলমোহরকৃত খামে ১৭-১২-৯১ইং তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র ব্যাংকের সাধারণ সেবা বিভাগের ক্রয় ও মুদ্রণ শাখায় (৩য় তলায়) রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে ফেলিতে হইবে। প্রাপ্ত প্রস্তাব সমূহে বর্ণিত স্থান সমূহ ব্যাংক কর্তৃক সরেজমিনে তদন্ত করার পর গোডাউন ভাড়া নেওয়ার ব্যাপারে চূড়ান্ত সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করা হইবে।
০৩। যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র/ প্রস্তাব কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই ব্যাংক কর্তৃপক্ষ বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।

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