

Dhaka Day by Day

Travails of an Insomniac

By Fayza Haq

There are many reasons, resting in my room in Dhanmandi, I am sometimes unable to sleep all night. I put some of the blame to the noises that come from the window: There are the endless taxis thudding — carrying passengers to and fro, at full speed like some Ben Hur and Messala. One wonders who are these strange people returning from late-night parties or visits to amarantahs at strange hours. I am sure normal families will not pile into taxis and rush pell-mell at 3 a.m. and beyond.

There are then the occasional lorries and buses carrying their loads of bulls, jute, vegetables and what you will. One can understand this happening on the main roads leading outside the city, as near Savar, but when this takes place on Satmasjid Road, you wish to heavens you were tucked away in some lane of Purana Paltan or Paribagh or anywhere else, which was not a busy thoroughfare by night and day. The Pandemonium that commences in the morning proceeds through the night, though I admit at a reduced speed when the sun sets.

In the day time there is so much of noise without intermission, that one takes it for a background sound, and can ignore it. But when noises assail your ears in spasms, at night, your sensibility is jarred.

There are the sudden arrivals and clear uninitiated conversations of the neighbours. This happens between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. Perhaps they are only returning home from late get-togethers, or seeing off people at the airport. Maybe the neighbours include many doctors by profession. They might have been out for late night urgent deliveries, as is witnessed so often in the "Cosby Show".

There is then the neighbouring "chowkidar" who is always yawning noisily, sneezing loud enough to bring down a straw roof in the vicinity. When he is fully awake, he takes to reading aloud our "surahs" from the Koran Sharif.

To add to all this are the many cats and dogs of the neighbourhood near the rubbish bin at Dhanmandi Road No 14, and elsewhere along the Satmasjid Road. They produce an unending cacophony and caterwauling, snatching the bits and pieces left by the maids, cooks and the boy-servants of the neighbourhood during the day time, until nightfall.

There is also the solitary baying of the dog at the moon. This is quite melancholic and you fear it augurs nothing good, being superstitious at

your particular point in life. One thought the birds chirped and cheeped when the sun rose, and they then made love or conversed with each other in harmony. At night, after 2 a.m., I hear the ravens and the crows, along with the woodpeckers, settling their nest, and instructing their young or having conjugal tiffs, or heaven knows what they are up to — at that late hour. In winter, in the mango, litchi and bay-leaf tree.

There is the steady whistling of the "rickshawalla", tinkling his bell just because he is in a good mood late at night. Added to this is the lone flute player. It is good that the poor and needy can be so exuberant so late at night and have the joie vivre and energy and the mood to indulge in music on the instrument themselves. He is not just putting on a cassette player. He is using his fingers, lips, lungs and what have you,

deep into the night. I wonder at these "Krishnas" in my neighbourhood.

What is even more mind-boggling are the late-night visitors of the maids in the house. The servant-quarters downstairs has needy relatives, whining daughters, admirers and ex-husbands flocking in for the scheduled visit. With the chatter and the clacking that goes on, and floats into my window, my sleep flies miles

away. But servants too require a social life. I wonder why they cannot make it during reasonable hours of the day or evening, or at least at some reasonable time of the night, instead of 3 a.m., when I am struggling to put some necessary sleep into my bohemian existence.

There are then the bored housewives and their children who watch Indian and other imported colour VCR films till 3 a.m. and beyond, and the noise from the neighbourhood naturally emanates and pervades my room, where I am tossing and turning, with various efforts to put myself to sleep.

Just as I am about to put myself to sleep about 5 a.m. and I have read all possible pieces of available outdated novels and second-hand magazines, there is the "azaan" from the various mosques of the neighbourhood of Dhanmandi. When one is summoned to do one's duty, and has an office schedule to follow in the morning, how can one linger more in bed? It is then time for a hot cup of tea, and to think of Madonna's "Holiday" — to put the necessary zing to one's existence.



Rashed Khan Menon addressing a discussion at the TSC yesterday on the occasion of Shaheed Asad Day. —Star photo.

4 killed in separate incidents

Four people, including a woman and a child, died in separate incidents in the city and suburbs yesterday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

Batashi (2) of village Kashipur in Narayanganj was brought to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) Sunday after she fell down from the roof of a three storied building. She succumbed to injuries at the hospital in the afternoon.

Mohammad Strajul Islam (28), an assistant accountant of Shepal Garments Ltd, was admitted to the DMCH after being hit by a speeding truck at Gabtali while he was returning

home by a taxi. He died at the hospital at 11 Sunday night.

Rahima (25), wife of Ismael Munshi of Gulshan, allegedly committed suicide on Saturday by hanging herself at her residence Sunday morning.

Gulshan police later recovered the body and sent it to the hospital for autopsy. Her father, Advocate Abdul Alim, however, said the death was mysterious.

An unidentified young man, struck by a running train Sunday morning near Dhaka Cantonment, succumbed to his injuries at the hospital at about 4 pm.

What's on today . . .

National Drama Festival '91

Today's drama of the month-long National Drama Festival will be staged by 'Arindam Natya Samprada' of Chittagong at the auditorium of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at 6.30 pm. The story of the drama was taken from Syed Wailullah's Novel 'Lal Salu'. Shishir Dutt prepared the drama script while it was directed jointly by Munir Helal and Shishir Dutt.

Rotary Club of Dhaka

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held today (Tuesday) at 5 pm at the Hotel Sheraton. President of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) will attend the meeting as the guest speaker. He will speak on 'Garments-manufacturing and export-development and prospects.'

Rotary Club of Ramna

The regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Ramna will be held today (Tuesday) at 5.30 pm at the Hotel Sonargaon.

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front has organised a discussion today (Tuesday) at 11 am at the 'Battala' of Dhaka University on the occasion of its 8th Founding Anniversary. Five-Party Alliance leaders Khalequzzaman, Hasanul Huq Inu, NAP leader Pankaj Bhattacharya, Badaruddin Umar, Mostafa Faruq and Nazmul Huq Pradhan will participate in the discussion.

The meeting will be presided over by Chhatra Front President Belal Chowdhury.

Bangladesh Chhatra Parishad

An emergency meeting of the Executive Body of Bangladesh Chhatra Parishad will be held today (Tuesday) at 4 pm at its office at New Circular Road.

Press Conference

Bangladesh Praktan Samaruk Karmachari Bahumukhi Samabya Samity has convened a press conference today (Tuesday) at 11 am at the National Press Club.

Officials of the Samity and Bangladesh Human Rights Commission will speak at the press conference.

Amra Muktijoddhar Santan

An announcement of the formation of a new organisation titled 'Amra Muktijoddhar Santan' will be made today (Tuesday) at a press conference at 5 pm at the National Press Club.

Book Fair

Chalantika Boighar and Citic Beijing China will jointly organise a book fair from today (Tuesday) at 10 am at the Central Public Library at Shahbag.

The book fair will remain open every day from 10 am to 7 pm. Chinese books will be available there in 20 per cent commission and others in 15 per cent commission. The book fair will be continued up to two weeks.

. . . and tomorrow

Lecture on Free Economy and Bangladesh

William B Millam, US Ambassador in Bangladesh will give a lecture tomorrow (Wednesday) at 11 am at the conference room of the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) on "free economy and Bangladesh" and on "private sector's role in the least developed countries".

The function has been organised by the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries.

Weather

Dry weather to prevail

By Staff Correspondent

The Met Office Monday forecast dry weather likely to prevail over the country till 6 pm today (Tuesday) and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged.

The lowest temperature 7.4 degree Celsius recorded in Khulna while the highest 26 degree Celsius at Cox's Bazar Monday.

Maximum temperature in Dhaka was 24 degree Celsius and the minimum 12 degree Celsius.

The percentage of humidity in Dhaka was 85 in the morning and 63 in the evening.

Sun sets today (Tuesday) at 5.37 pm and rises tomorrow (Wednesday) at 6.43 am.

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

City	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	Max	Min
Dhaka	24	12	85	63
Rajshahi	24.4	7.8	95	64
Khulna	24.7	7.4	93	67
Chittagong	24.4	13	85	48
Sylhet	23.4	12	87	77
Barisal	24.6	9	76	78
Bogra	24.5	12.2	93	77
Cox's Bazar	26	14.6	64	

EUCSU Film Festival begins tomorrow

By BUET Correspondent

A three-day long Short Film Festival begins at the auditorium of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology tomorrow Wednesday.

Organised by the Engineering University Central Students Union (EUCSU) the festival will be formally inaugurated by the President of EUCSU, Vice Chancellor Dr M Shahjahan.

BAU Crop Science Society confce held

The biennial conference of the Crop Science Society of Bangladesh (CSSB) was held at the Shilpakarya Zatul Abedin Auditorium of Bangladesh Agriculture University on January 18-20, report BSS.

The inaugural session of the three-day conference was presided over by the president of the society Prof. M. Goum Ali Fakir. Eminent agricultural scientists attended the conference.

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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'Cargo moves faster than supporting documents'

Although unbelievable, studies undertaken in some developing countries of the South Asian region indicate that it requires anything between 29 documents in 118 copies with 256 signatures to 85 documents in 102 copies with 113 signatures. And upto 22 man-hours of typing for a single export transaction, reports BSS.

This was revealed in the message of the ESCAP Executive Director S A M S Kibria read out at the inaugural session of the national-level workshop on "Trade facilitation" which began in Dhaka on Monday.

Kibria pointed out that this demonstrated the gravity of the procedural bottleneck in the international trade for the countries of the region and it

called for immediate remedial measures.

The ESCAP Executive Director also pointed out that cargo moved faster than supporting papers which were normally delayed due to documentary and procedural impediments and as a result shipments were often piled up at frontier ports, sea ports, airports and cargoes worth millions of dollars are held up for want of pieces costing just few cents.

He said "We have reached a stage where computers will be doing the job of mails and other ongoing means of communication system and within next few years, most of the developed world would be conducting their external trade without exchanging any document."

Developing countries, Kibria said, could, therefore, ill afford not to adapt to the changing situation before it completely overtake them.

The Executive Director of ESCAP said technology was bringing about a process of change in every sphere of human activity and conducting a trade transaction was no ex-

ception. He pointed out that one significant development in this area was the United Nations layout key for trade documents. It not only helped to simplify and standardise international trade documents but made the handling of international trade simple and straight forward, he said.

Kibria said international commerce needed, fast, efficient and accurate information to ensure the smooth flow of goods and services. He said the current system inhibit an effective operation, increase the possibility of errors, are wasteful of resources, raise the administrative cost, and are cumbersome.

The ESCAP Executive Director said the United Nations rules for electronic data inter-change for administration, commerce and transport known as UN/EDIFACT had been a recent development to address the universally recognised problems in the context of international trade.

Kibria said the UN/EDIFACT comprised a set of internationally agreed standards, directories and guidelines for the electronic inter-change of structured data related to trade.

Wanted

Experienced teachers with proficiency in ENGLISH for an ENGLISH Medium School at Uttara (PG-V). Contact-894557 (10 am-2pm).

WVA Annual Meenabazar-1992

WVA will be holding its annual Meenabazar at Gulshan Shishu Park on January 31, 1992 from 11 AM to 5 PM. The bazar will have international and other stalls and attractive prizes for raffle: Entry cards will be available at the venue. This annual fair is being held to raise funds for WVA's health, educational and vocational projects in aid of underprivileged and physically disabled children of Bangladesh.

TV Tuesday

5.00 Opening announcement, Al-Guran, Programme summary

5.10 News in Bangla

5.20 Recitation from the Geeta

5.30 Documentary: Wild Life on one

6.00 Educational programme: Shikhhangon

6.30 Mayeder Janya: A programme for mothers

7.05 Nazrul songs

8.00 News in Bangla

8.30 Drama series: project No. 202

10.00 News in English

10.25 Parliament round-up

10.35 Film: War and Remembrance

11.30 Khabar/The News

11.40 Wednesday's programme summary

11.45 Cinema

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
Dhaka

Notice for Admission into the 1st Year Master Degree course in Urban and Regional Planning

No. D-1522 (2) Dt. 19.1.92

- Applications are invited for admission into the first year class of the two-year full time Master's Degree course in Urban and Regional Planning in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Dhaka (Session 1990-91).
- Applicant must have a Bachelor's Degree in either one of the following disciplines: Urban and Regional Planning, Physical Planning, Architecture, Agricultural Economics, Engineering, or a Master's Degree in one of the following subjects: Economics, Geography, Sociology, Social Welfare, Social Work, Statistics, Mathematics, Public Administration or Physics. The applicant must have at least 2nd Class in each public examination conducted by a Board/University. Candidates who have appeared for the final examinations for the aforementioned degrees but awaiting the publication of result may also apply subject to the condition that they will produce their examination results at the time of interview.
- Graduates with above degrees already employed in different Ministries, agencies, corporations, NGOs and other institutions are encouraged to pursue the programme. They may come on deputation/study leave from their respective organizations.
- Application in the prescribed form (available in the office of the Registrar) must be submitted to the office of the Registrar on or before 15.2.1992. The applicant may directly get an application form by paying Tk. 50/- to the Office of the Registrar, or, may send a bank draft or crossed postal order of Tk. 50/- (non-refundable) in favour of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Dhaka, and a self-addressed envelope of 10"x4-1/2" size attached with Tk. 10/- postage stamp.

The application must be submitted along with the following documents:

- Attested copies of mark-sheets of all the qualifying degrees and all other public examinations.
- Attested copies of certificates of all public examinations.
- Three attested copies of recent passport size photographs of the applicant.

5. The applicant should take care that all statements and information furnished in the application are complete and correct. Candidates will be selected on the basis of the information provided in the application. Application with incomplete or incorrect statement will be rejected. The names of the selected candidates for admission will be announced on 1.3.92 in the notice board of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

The University offers quite a number of fellowships for full time regular students. The awards vary from Tk. 1500/- to 1750/- per month. Interested candidates are requested to contact the Head, Department of Urban and Regional Planning for further information.

D-72 **Registrar.**