

Dhaka Day by Day

Unexpected Visitors

by Fayza Haq

My friend in Kathalagan is constantly complaining about people who drop in when she is in the midst of her household chores. With a demanding husband and pampered children to cater to, she is not amused with friends and relatives dropping in, and not leaving for literally hours. They discuss matrimonial matters and seek advice for prospective brides or husbands for their grown-up children.

This friend of mine Nasreen, cares little for gossip or tattle, and has little interest in match-making. Yet this is thrust upon her when visitors come in droves, eat up her home made "singharas" and "pithas" and chat ad lib.

A relative of mine, who lives in "Huq Mansion", Motiheel, is constantly embarrassed about relatives who step on your toes because of estranged relationship, with discussions of ancestral property.

ponder to the sickly family servants or even the nagging beggars, who are constantly pestering her for old clothes or food. Yet I see her tending to all and sundry in need, with cool composure.

There are the grown sons of a friend of mine, in Neelkhet, who are political suspects — as they are constantly involved in student politics. They often drop in, scaling the gate at midnight and expect to be fed and bedded, until the danger is over. As the home is already a joint-family one, there is little room for midnight callers who must be tented to for days later.

At Isphary Colony is a dear friend of mine, Nasreen. She gets friends and acquaintances dropping in for advice about matters like divorces. She has had instances when her women friends have called her up and asked her for a place where they could court their respective

male admirers, out of sight of the peeping Toms or gossip relatives.

This becomes a total embarrassment, when Nasreen herself is living with her own relatives, who disapprove of any male callers of any kind. Her parents are strict and orthodox to the last chore. Nasreen finds herself between the devil and the deep blue sea when she has to tackle friends who must be accommodated.

I personally know of callers of a friend called Smita, who gets tele-



phone messages when she has never been remembered for about a year, by these callers. She is then simply telephoned just because Smita's friends are of the know that her aunt is a vice-principal of a school in Dhanmondi, and they need their children to be put in good educational institutions. They threaten to drop in and Smita has difficulty in being cordial and amicable, although she remains "a friend in need," to the last point and beyond.

As for friends and acquaintances who drop in to borrow my treasured books on one pretext or another, at my home at Satmasjid Road, I have no comments.

There are then the inevitable relatives who come by in to distribute wedding cards and chew your ears for hours. Many people in Dhaka would dearly prefer to receive wedding invitations by post. In our cosmopolitan city, where the women have taken to scheduled work in schools, offices, hospitals, and factories, no has the penchant for conversation that goes beyond necessary information.

There are then the old family servants with their endless tales of woe of unemployment, inadequate pensions — wanting food, money and a job in your house or that of your friends relatives — if that is possible, I have witnessed this in the house of my aunt in Badamtolly, and I know that it surely plagues her piece of mind. She not only teaches at school but tutors all evening. Her husband is far from well. Her house is bursting with in-laws, whom she has taken under her wings. She has neither the mood nor time to

Directive to form Pratirodh Mancha

By Staff Correspondent

The Chairman of Central Command Council of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Prof Ahad Chowdhury in a statement on Friday said directives have been given to form "Pratirodh Mancha" (resistance forum) in each district, upazila and union to resist the anti-liberation forces and to try all anti-liberation people including Golam Azam.

The forum will be formed with the participation of all pro-liberation political parties, student workers, women and professional organisations.

Already, a central committee of "Pratirodh Mancha" has been formed with intellectuals, sector commanders, and members of Awami League, NAP, CPB, BSD, Ganotantrik Party, Janata Party, Janata Dal, Supreme Court Bar Association, Dhaka Bar Association, Nari Andolon, Mahila Parishad, Chhatra League (A-A), Chhatra League (N-S), Chhatra Union, Chhatra Front, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Chhatra Otkyo Forum, Chhatra Samity, and Chhatra Federation.

Projanma '71 supports people's court

By Staff Correspondent

Projanma 71, an association of the children of 1971 martyrs, has supported the initiative by the committee for uprooting the killers and collaborators of 1971 to try Golam Azam and other war criminals in a people's court.

In a statement issued Friday, the association also expressed solidarity with all the moves by the pro-liberation forces to resist the enemies of the liberation.

The statement observed that the defeated forces of the liberation war captured different important positions in the society due to weakness in the national politics.

It also termed Prof Golam Azam's becoming the Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami as a direct hit to the country's independence and sovereignty.

Minister praises activities of lioness

Commerce Minister M K Anwar Friday called upon the affluent people of the society to come forward to serve the distressed and helpless humanity, reports BSS.

He said voluntary organisations could play a vital role in involving every citizen of the country in developmental activities.

Anwar was addressing the regional conference of Lioness District -315 Bangladesh here.

The Commerce Minister said present government was determined to uphold the democratic spirit to involve every citizen in nation building activities. Praising the activities of the Lioness in serving the people, the minister urged them to strengthen their role in ameliorating the sufferings of the distressed people.

Referring to the various steps taken by government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia for improving the lot of the women, Anwar expressed the hope that they would play a positive role in resisting destructive activities for creating congenial atmosphere for building a prosperous nation. He said the government would help them in their efforts in this regard.

The conference was also addressed by Director of Lioness No One Region Kamrunnahar Zahir and Lion District Governor Humayun Zahir.

City BNP meet today

An emergency meeting of Dhaka City BNP will be held today (Saturday) at the office of Demra Thana Unit BNP at 7 pm, reports BSS.

Dhaka City BNP President Lt. General (Retd) Meer Shaukat Ali MP will preside over the meeting.

All thana unit Presidents and General Secretaries are requested to attend the meeting.

TV Saturday

- 5.00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programme Summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 5.30 Khelar Jagat : Sports programme
- 6.00 Drama Series : Alice in Wonder Land
- 6.30 Maiti O Marush
- 7.05 Banshari : Folk songs
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Special programme in memory of Michael Modhusudan Dutt
- 9.00 Bishwa Natak
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Drama series : Dallas
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.40 Sunday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing.



Namaj-e-janaza of Murad, a leader of JSD (Inu) backed Chhatra League, was held at the Dhaka University Mosque yesterday. Murad was shot dead on Thursday night at Gulshan in the city. —Star photo

Janaza of Murad held

The namaj-e-janaza of student leader Abu Hasan Murad was held at Dhaka University central mosque Friday, reports UNB.

Murad, a leader of the JSD's (Inu) student wing Chhatra League, was shot dead Thursday night by a group of marauders at Magbazar Taltala in the city.

JSD leaders, including Haasan Aref and Haasanul Huq Inu, DUCSU leaders, teachers and students of Dhaka University attended the Janaza held after Jumma prayer.

The body of Murad was sent to his village home at Nawabganj for burial. He left behind his father, one brother and three sisters.

'Dubai keen to recruit Bangladeshi garment workers'

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said here Friday that Dubai was keen to recruit Bangladeshi garment workers, reports BSS.

On his return from a nine-day official visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the minister said the members of the Dubai Business Community met him Thursday and showed their interest to recruit Bangladeshi garment workers and sought the cooperation of the government in this regard.

The Labour Minister said that during his visit to Saudi Arabia he had talks with Saudi Health Minister on matters of mutual interest with particular reference to the recruitment of Bangladeshi lady doctors and mid-wives for hospitals and clinics in Saudi Arabia.

In Kuwait, the minister said he had meetings with Kuwaiti government leaders and said the Kuwait Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al Salam Al Sabah and others assured him of making all efforts to take back the Bangladeshi workers who had been forced to evacuate Kuwait during the Gulf war.

Silver Jubilee of Mohammadpur School Jan 28

The Mohammadpur Government High School has chalked out a four-day programme to celebrate its 'Silver Jubilee' beginning on January 28, reports BSS.

Education Minister Barrister Jamruddin Striar will be the chief guest at the inaugural function to be held at the school premises on January 28 at 9 am.

The programme includes annual sports meet, cultural show and reunion.

Sale of Raja condoms crosses a billion mark

By Staff Correspondent

A new landmark was reached in the country's family planning drive at the end of last year when sales of one brand of condom crossed the magical one billion mark.

Announcing the success of Raja condom, manufactured by Ansell of USA and distributed in Bangladesh by the Social Marketing Company (SMC), a Health Ministry official told a press conference on Friday that contraceptives were primarily responsible for bringing the country's rate of birth down from 3.4 per cent in 1974 to under 2.2 per cent last year.

In 1975, only seven per cent of married couples practised family planning, but today over 40 per cent of couples use one method or other of contraception.

Fazlur Rahman, a joint secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare said.

Addressing the press conference, M Mahbubuzzaman, Chairman of SMC, said over 1.2 million couples in Bangladesh are currently using contraceptives marketed by his company, such as Raja and Panther condoms, and birth control pills such as Maya, Ovaco and Norquet, all of which are manufactured in the United States.

Set up by the government in 1974 as a family planning project with the task of motivating people to adopt family planning and use contraceptives sold at subsidised prices through commercial retail outlets, the SMC went private in 1990. Today, the company claims to be the largest social

marketing organisation in the world, having distributed over one billion condoms and 43 million pills since 1975.

Mahbubuzzaman said contraception, which used to be a social taboo only a few years ago, was no longer so. Increasing sales and public participation in family planning are proof that contraceptives had gained social acceptability.

"When our mobile promotional teams go to villages, large number of people including women come out to hear them and watch the video and slide shows they put on to motivate them to use contraceptives", Mahbubuzzaman said.

However, despite acceptability at the grassroots level resistance to contraception has not disappeared completely. SMC officials admitted. The SMC cannot, for instance, advertise its condoms on Bangladesh Television (BTV), despite the fact that oral contraceptives such as Ovaco and Norquet pills are advertised regularly at peak viewing hours.

"We still receive many letters from people, some of them well-educated and quite urbane, telling us not to advertise condoms."

According to those letters, condoms on BTV might ruin the youth of the nation", an SMC official said.

During 1991, SMC distributed around 85 million condoms, vast majority of them being Rajas, and eight million pills, most of them Ovaco. The company claims

that it has prevented 3.5 million unwanted pregnancies in Bangladesh in the past 15 years by providing protection to 15 million couples.

Company also claims to have accounted for over 50 per cent of condoms and 90 per cent of pills distributed nationwide during the same period.

The SMC, which receives technical assistance from the Washington-based Population Services International (PSI), is funded entirely by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The American aid agency provides 300 million Takas worth of pills and condoms every year for distribution at nominal price. In addition, USAID also accounts for over 50 per cent of the extra 200 million Takas SMC spends in annually in packaging, promotion, distribution etc.

Replying to questions, Mahbubuzzaman denied that there was any widespread misuse or smuggling of these high-quality imported products.

"We do not have access to people's bedrooms. So it is difficult to say how these products are actually being used, but we are certain that misuse is quite negligible" he said.

Ashuganj-Comilla power project to be ready by Oct

The construction of Taka 140 crore 230 KV Ashuganj-Comilla power transmission line and sub-station project is expected to be completed by next October, Power Development Board (PDB) sources said, reports BSS.

The project, taken up in February, 1991, involves a foreign exchange component of Taka 118 crore which is being provided by KFW of Germany as grant.

The project includes construction of 79 km long 230 KV double circuit transmission line having 232 towers. The construction of 16 km long 132 KV double circuit

Maynamati-Jangalia transmission line with 54 towers are included in the project. The project also includes construction of a sub-station at Maynamati, extension of existing 230 KV grid line at Ashuganj and extension of 132 KV line at Jangalia, source said.

7 thatched houses gutted at Demra

By Staff Correspondent

Seven thatched houses were gutted as a fire broke out from an oven at a house at the village Tengra, Demra, in the city Friday afternoon.

Goods worth about Taka 70,000 were burnt but no one was hurt during the incident. Fire Brigade office said.

Two units of Fire Brigade from Demra rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after a one hour, struggle at about 4.30 pm.

Local govt bodies to be strengthened thru' election

Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz yesterday said local government bodies would be strengthened through election to build leadership at village level, reports BSS.

He was addressing as chief guest at a seminar on "Zia's political thinking and social justice" organised by Zia Parishad of Jahangirnagar University in connection with 56th birth anniversary of late President Ziaur Rahman.

The Law Minister said late Zia introduced politics of production to ameliorate the socio-economic condition of the masses. A self-reliant economy would be built through implementation of canal digging, mass literacy and cooperative programmes initiated in the country, he added.

The minister said the inspiration and guidance of President Zia should be sustained for economic emancipation of the people. He called upon the people to lend their whole-hearted support to establish social justice.

Presided over by Professor Mofizuddin Ahmed, the main paper was read out by DR Golam Hossain.

Weather

Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

The Met office Friday forecast the country is likely to experience dry weather till 6 pm today (Saturday).

Night temperature will remain nearly unchanged all over the country during the period. Met office also forecast.

Country's lowest temperature, 10.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna while the highest 26.3 degree Celsius was recorded at Teknaf Friday.

Maximum temperature in Dhaka was 24 degree Celsius and the minimum was 15.4 degree Celsius. The percentage of humidity was 97 in the morning and 67 in the evening in Dhaka Friday.

Sun sets today (Saturday) at 5:39 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6:42 am.

Temperature in some major cities on Wednesday are as follows:

City	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9am	6pm
Dhaka	24	15.4	97	67
Chittagong	25.4	14	87	77
Rajshahi	22.2	12.4	93	91
Khulna	24.9	10.5	88	70
Cox's Bazar	26.2	14.8	75	73
Sylhet	21.6	14.3	85	85
Barisal	25.4	13.4	93	78
Jessore	25.2	12.2	90	

What's on today

National Conference of SCEMRB

The ninth national conference of the Society for the Care and Education of the Mentally Retarded, Bangladesh (SCEMRB) will be held today (Saturday) at 5:45 pm at the NIMR (National Institute for Mentally Retarded) Bhaban at Eskaton Garden.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will attend the conference as chief guest and inaugurate the NIMR Bhaban and the national conference on mental retardation.

Lions Club of Dhaka Progoti

The regular meeting of the Lions Club of Dhaka Progoti will be held today (Saturday) at 6 pm at its office at Elephant Road.

Club President Gautam Saha will preside over the meeting.

National Drama Festival '91

Today's drama of the month-long National Drama Festival '91 will be staged by 'Janantik Natya Sampradai' of Comilla at the auditorium of the Shilpakala Academy, at 6:30 pm.

Janantik will stage Rabindranath Tagore's 'Bisarjan'. Prof. Maksud Ali directed the drama.

Founding Anniversary of Chalachitram

The inaugural function of the year-long programmes of Chalachitram Film Society on the occasion of its tenth founding anniversary will be held today (Saturday) at 5 pm at the Russian Cultural Centre at Dhanmondi.

Art Exhibition at JU

A five-day art exhibition by four young artists will begin today (Saturday) at 10 am at the Jahangirnagar University Library.

The exhibition organised by 'Obsession', a group of young artists, will be inaugurated by Prof. Quazi Saleh Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor of the University. The exhibition will remain open from 10 am to 4 pm everyday till January 30.

Death Anniversary of Khan A Sabur

Dhaka City Muslim League has organised a discussion meeting today (Saturday) at 4 pm at the auditorium of the National Book Centre in observance of the tenth death anniversary of Khan A. Sabur, former leader of Muslim League and a veteran parliamentarian.

Convener of Muslim League MA Hanman will attend the meeting as chief guest while Chowdhury Mohammad Faruq, Editor of the daily Millat, Alhaj GA Khan and Maolana Ruhul Amin Khan, Executive Editor of the Daily Inqilab will be present as the special guests.

Voluntary Assistance for the Needy

Voluntary Assistance for the Needy has organised a tooth and eye examination programme for the children today (Saturday) from 10 am at the Dagu Khan Government Primary School compound and Kutubkhali slum area in the city.

Press Conference on Computer

Masik Computer Jagat, a computer magazine has convened a press conference today (Saturday) at 4 pm at the National Press Club to talk about the prospect of exporting data entry and software from Bangladesh.

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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2. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased at the address given below on all working days during office hours up to 2.00 PM on 22-2-92 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Taka one thousand (Tk. 1,000.00) or US dollars thirty (US\$30.00) together with an additional amount of US dollars thirty (US\$30.00) to meet foreign air mail charges if a prospective foreign bidder wishes to obtain the same by post (no cheques/money orders or postal orders will be accepted).
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List of Items :
(1) Package-1 Books (2) Package-2 Journals.

DFF (G) 724-16/1
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Dr. Nur Muhammad Chowdhury
Project Co-ordinator
Second Livestock Dev. Project