

Dhaka Day by Day

Moving with the Tempo

By Aasha Mehreen Amin

As the correspondent for Tempo, the largest news weekly in Indonesia, Yuli Ismartono's job is far from humdrum. As the very name 'Tempo' suggests Yuli has to be always on the move. If she is in the streets of Yangon today, she may very well be on her way to Saudi Arabia tomorrow. She has covered all kinds of events from the war in the Gulf, to elections in Burma, to boxing matches in Thailand. With the exuberance and energy of a teenager, Yuli talks of her exciting assignments and the reason that has brought her to Bangladesh, namely the Rohingyas.

Excitement and danger will often go hand in hand and Yuli with 25 years in the world of journalism has felt this combination only too well. She recalls the time when she was covering the Burmese elections in 1989. "I was in the middle of the crowd and had lost my companion, a photographer for Time magazine. Suddenly a man was pointing a gun right towards my head. I just held up my hands and tried to explain that I was a journalist and he let me go." Another terrifying incident Yuli will never forget is when she was covering the Gulf War. Says Yuli, "I was travelling from Baghdad to Aman in a car with some CBS people, through the desert. And all the while there were bombs exploding all over the place which we had to dodge. I don't know how we made it alive."



As I waited by the Naaf River I saw boatloads and boatloads of people coming in

Talking about the Rohingya issue which Yuli has come to cover, she says that the people of Indonesia most of whom are Muslims, are very concerned about the refugees. When asked about the plight of the Rohingyas, Yuli looked worried. "There lives are full of uncertainty and despair. As I waited by the Naaf River I saw boatloads and boatloads of people coming in. The men and women I interviewed were crying with real fear. It is scary to think what will happen to one hundred thousand displaced people."

Yuli further adds that the Red Crescent is short of everything. Shelters have to be made with branches and sticks and sanitation is so bad that the break out of epidemics of diarrhoea and measles are feared.

Apart from the Rohingyas, Yuli seems to have a personal interest in Burma, since it is the home of Aung San Su Kyi, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner. Yuli used to go to school with Su Kyi in India during the late 60s when Yuli's

parents were working for the Indonesian Embassy there. Yuli's eyes are misty when she talks of Su Kyi. "She is someone who is ready to give up anything for her country. She has not seen her family for more than two years. My last interview with her before she was placed under house arrest in 1990 was very poignant. At the end of it when I asked her if I could get her anything she asked me if I could help her buy some silk material to make sarongs since she wanted new clothes for her campaign. That hint of femininity was so pleasing."

Being the mother of two teenage children both of whom live in the US while Yuli lives in Bangkok, 'compromise' is very much a part of Yuli's life. "I'm a very liberal mother," she says matter of factly. "I couldn't be otherwise."

When asked whether being an Asian woman reporter is a disadvantage Yuli replies, "I don't think being a woman is a disadvantage. In fact in many cases it is an advantage. In any case I always try to respect the culture of the country I go to. In Aman I talked to hardline PLO leaders and when I went to Pakistan when Benazir was elected I met the most fundamentalist mullahs and they were very polite and cooperative. Of course I made sure I was covered from head to toe."

Being an Asian reporter, Yuli admits, does have its limitations. "You always have to be at the end of the line. I mean whoever heard of Tempo? Money wise also it is impossible to compete with say, American journalists who have so much more resources. What I do is make friends with other journalists and latch on."

After spending so many years in India as a child, Bangladesh is not such unfamiliar territory but still has one or two surprises for Yuli. Says Yuli, "I am really impressed with how politically aware people are here. In a country with about 20% literacy there are so many newspapers, in trains, buses, everywhere I went people were talking of one thing — politics! But what bothered me was that of the 7 days I have been here 5 days there was some sort of strike. It made me think of what 'democracy' really means; whether a balance is needed between the right to express freedom and the need for stability and development". She could not have said it better, I thought!

Salim-Delwar Day observed

By DU Correspondent

Various students organisations held rallies at the Dhaka University and laid wreaths at Fulbaria in observance of the Salim-Delwar Day Friday.

The Chhatra League leader Ibrahim Salim and Kazi Delwar Hossain were killed in 1984 when a police van was driven over a procession of the then Kendria Chhatra Sangram Parishad during the autocratic regime.

The Chhatra League (S-A) held a rally in front of the Madhu's canteen of the Dhaka University yesterday addressed by the BCL (S-A) president Shahe Alam.

BCL (S-A) demanded immediate trial of the killers. The Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) laid wreath at the Fulbaria and also held a rally there in which GCO leader Nasir-ud-Doja was present.

The Jatiya Chhatra League also held rally in observance of the day.

Golden Jubilee of F H Hall observed

The Golden Jubilee of Fazul Huq Hall of the Dhaka University was observed yesterday (Friday) amid unbounded joy and enthusiasm by the present and former residents of the hall, reports UNB.

To mark the completion of half century of the hall, hundreds of residents — old and new — paid tribute to Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazul Huq, the great leader after whom the hall was named.

In a colourful ceremony, the present and former residents of the hall exchanged greetings and had lunch together. They also went round different corners of the red-coloured hall building reminiscing many a historic moment.

The former students, many of whom now hold dignified position in society, advised the new generation to prepare themselves properly to lead the nation in future.

Earlier, LGD Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder inaugurated the jubilee function in the morning. Talukder was a resident student of the dormitory in the 50's.

Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah attended the function as chief guest.

Alam, Ukil declared 'unwanted'

Two top central leaders of Awami League-backed Chhatra League were declared "unwanted" in all activities of its Dhaka City Committee for failing to resolve intra-party conflict within the organisation, reports UNB.

The decision was taken Thursday at a meeting of the city committee with its President Ashrafur Islam Maruf in the chair.

Chhatra League President Shahe Alam and General Secretary Ashim Kumar Ukil were declared "unwanted" in City Committee activities as they lost "impartiality" and failed to check internal conflict, Nirmal Goswami, a central leader of BCL and Vice President of the City Committee, told UNB by telephone Friday night.

Weather

Saturday
5:00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programmes summary
5:10 News in Bangla
5:25 Sports World
6:00 Drama series
6:30 Jibon O Projukti
7:05 Bansharee
8:00 News in Bangla
8:30 Probab
9:00 Mukadhdhara
10:00 News in English
10:30 Drama series: Dallas
11:30 Khabar/The News
11:40 Sunday's programme summary
11:45 Closing

Ekushey Book Fair to be expanded further

Bangla Academy Ekushey Book Fair will be expanded next year from 'Doel Chaitar' to Shahbagh avenue, reports ISS.

This was stated by Bangla Academy Director General Prof M Harun-ur-Rashid in a get-together organised by the academy at a city hotel Friday, reports ISS.

Prof Rashid said the book fair could be completely shifted to the road from the academy premises considering huge crowd of visitors at the fair which is one of the main attractions of the Ekushey programme.

The Director General expressed gratitude to all concerned including the journalists for making the three-week Ekushey Book Fair successful.

Two killed in road mishaps

Two people including one woman were killed in two separate road mishaps in the city Friday, police and hospital sources said, reports UNB.

Police said an unidentified woman aged 35 was killed on the spot near Tongi bridge when a speeding truck hit her from behind at about 5:30 in the morning.

Another accident took place near Khejurbagan in Tajgan area at about 5:30 in the evening. The rickshawpuller died on the spot when a minibus hit his vehicle.

However, agitated rickshawpullers damaged a car and blocked the Asad Gate crossing for about half an hour immediately after the incident.

The bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

JP rally today at Saidabad

The grand rally of the Jatiya Party will be held at the Saidabad crossing of the Biswa Road near Saidabad bus terminal at 3pm today.

The rally was scheduled to be held at the Manik Miah Avenue.

According to sources, the government did not permit the party to hold its meeting at the Manik Miah Avenue and consequently, the Jatiya Party leadership changed the venue of the rally.

Myanmar troops' firing leaves nine killed

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 28: Nine Myanmar citizens were killed and another injured when troops opened fire on two groups of refugees crossing the Bangladesh border during the last four days.

Quoting refugees from Myanmar, a report of the newly-formed Arakan news agency said today that eight people were killed on February 25 when Myanmar army sprayed bullets on a group of refugees at Shahib Bazar in Mongdu township of Myanmar.

They were crossing the border near Teknaf to enter Bangladesh, it said adding that among the victims were two women and two children. However, the identity of the victims were not available.

The Myanmar soldiers also shot dead a male Myanmar citizen and injured another at Shilkali near Mongdu Wednesday. The injured, who managed to cross the Naaf channel and enter Bangladesh, was admitted to Rabhat Hospital at Cox's Bazar, the report added.

Heroin case Blankson implicates 'Abdul'

By Staff Correspondent

The teen-aged American girl, Elladah McCord, and her accomplice Robert Blankson will be produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court today (Saturday).

Blankson, a South African national, who was arrested by Sarsha police at Benapole border, Jessore, Thursday was escorted to Dhaka by Detective Branch (DB) police Friday night.

Meanwhile, the two-day police remand of Elladah was over yesterday. She was arrested at Zia International Airport (ZIA) with 3,300 grams of heroin Tuesday night. Blankson disclosed to Jessore Kotwali police that Elladah was sent to Bangladesh by another Nigerian to collect the packets from 'Abdul', a local agent.

Rival groups clash at Plassey

By DU Correspondent

Several rounds of shots were fired in the Plassey and Zahurul Huq hall areas Friday in a renewed clash between two local groups of the Plassey bazar.

According to a source, a non-student of the Plassey bazar area was stabbed by a group of young people of the same area. The assailant reportedly took shelter at the Zahurul Huq hall of the Dhaka University few days ago.

The Plassey group filed a case against the Zahurul Huq hall group in connection with the incident.

Later the Zahurul Huq hall group threatened the Plassey group several times to withdraw the case.

Meanwhile on Thursday a member of the Zahurul Huq hall group was chased by the opponent when he went to the Plassey bazar area.

The incident created panic among the hall residents and the people of the Plassey areas. Quoting residents of the Plassey colony UNB says that police were standing idle during the clash in which at least 12 people, including two policemen on duty were injured.

However UNB adds that heavy contingent of police was deployed in the area as tension was prevailing.

Weather

Gusty wind likely

By Staff Correspondent

Met office Friday forecast, rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions and at few places over Chittagong and Khulna divisions till 6 pm today (Saturday).

Night temperature is likely to rise by one to two degree Celsius over the country, Met office says.

The maximum temperature in the country, 29.5 degree Celsius, was recorded at Satkhira while the country's minimum, 11.5 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi Friday.

The sun sets today (Saturday) at 6:1 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6:21 am.

The temperature and the percentage of humidity recorded in some major cities/towns Friday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	24.3	19.5	73	77
Chittagong	26	15.5	75	68
Rajshahi	26.4	11.5	48	78
Khulna	28.4	17.8	87	61
Dinajpur	25	15	70	78
Cox's Bazar	26.3	16.4	67	74
Barisal	28.3	18.2	82	79
Sylhet	17.7	13.7	65	89



Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed addressing the fifth lawyers' conference in the Supreme Court Bar Association premises yesterday. Story on Page 1 — Star photo

Strict enforcement of law for democracy suggested

An eminent social scientist has stressed on strict enforcement of rule of law and preservation of human rights for institutionalising democracy, reports UNB.

Presenting his key note paper on the seminar on 'Status of Law in Human Rights and Democratization' which was held at Scout Bhaban Thursday, Dr F R Mahmud Hasan said democracy can only be ensured through the presence of some specific structure which can assure accountability of the government to the people.

He said, 'All elected governments are not democratic governments' and added that without any democratic institution there could not exist any democratic government.

He said decentralisation of power, enforcement of rule of law and preservation of human rights, freedom of press and publication, co-existence of people of different thoughts and opinion, internal democracy and accountability of the government to general people are main spirit of democracy.

Present parliamentary democracy also lacked this structure, he observed.

He said although there was change of party in power but the direction towards thinking was not changed. Keeping the

administration decentralised the government was taking necessary preparation to sphere party influence, he said.

In the present context there was no compatibility between decentralisation of power and decentralisation of administration, he said adding that the previous autocratic government had decentralised administration to consolidate the power of the ruling party upto grassroots level.

'Education a must for progress'

Food Minister M Shamsul Islam yesterday said, education alone could be alternative for national progress. A healthy society and a developed country might be built through proper education only, he said, reports ISS.

Speaking at a function on the occasion of a get-together in observance of 37th anniversary of Bhabal-Mirzapur Haque Jamiruddin High School at Gazipur, the Minister said the government was committed to this.

Presided over by former minister and ambassador Alhaj Shamsul Haq, the function was addressed, among others, by State Minister for Religion Prof M A Mannan.

The Food Minister said, local wealthy and elites could play a vital role with spontaneous and cordial cooperation to establish a pragmatic education system side by side with the government initiatives.

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Physicians urged to help know about health care

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Friday called upon the educated section of the people, especially physicians, to help the commonman know about basic health care, reports ISS.

The President was addressing as the chief guest a function on 'Diabetes Awareness Day' organised by the Bangladesh Diabetes Association to mark its 36th anniversary at Birdem Auditorium in the city yesterday.

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Chowdhury Kamal ibne Yousuf and Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Triqul Islam also addressed the function as special guests.

President of the Association Alamgir M A Kabir presided over the function. Wife of late Dr Mohammad Ibrahim Saktra Ibrahim was present on the occasion. Earlier, Secretary General of the Association Dr Wahiduddin Ahmad gave a brief resume about the activities of the Association and the Birdem Hospital.

Tariqul Islam called upon the well-to-do section of the people to contribute their best towards speeding up the activities of the Association and the Birdem.

He assured them of all possible help and cooperation for their research and other activities.

Happy Birthday
To
Ammu
From: **Shelley Gulshan**

It's new just for you

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