

Dhaka Day by Day

Struggle Begins at 58

by Nazme Sabina

In 1967, Jaijal Abedin, retired as director of Anwar Academy in the then East Pakistan. To clear the paper work for his pension, at first, he had to give bribes of 200-300 taka and this became a regular monthly affair.

Now he is so habituated to this ritual that he is not even eager to talk about his experience.

He said rather indifferently, "I'm near to my grave, I don't feel like talking about these things anymore, you'd better ask someone else."

"The older the pensioner is, the more incumbent it is to give 'bakhshish' even to the small fry", adds he.

Jaijal Abedin, unfortunately, is not an exception.

Pension is a given right to, but not an astonishing achievement for a retired officer in Bangladesh. Yet, delayed actions, inefficiency, and nonbalance rule the Treasury Office, at Johnson Road, in Dhaka.

On paper, drawing of the two varieties of pensions — regular and gratuity payments — look tough enough. But there is even more to it than just formalities. The pension candidate, at first, should ask for a sanction letter from the concerned Chief Accounts Officer. Then the candidate must take

the trouble of obtaining the approval of the District Accounts Officer on the pension booklet and other papers. After this, the candidate has to approach the particular bank to draw the gratuity and regular monthly allowances. He can draw the allowance from Bangladesh Bank after obtaining an order from the Treasury.

Easy as it seems, in reality every stage is unnecessarily prolonged. Bribery or bakhshish is one way of getting through the red-tape. This 'bakhshish' in monetary value, starts from a taka, and its non-monetary value can even be two matchsticks as given by Hamidur Rahman, ex-secretary, Salimullah Medical College Hospital. When asked why he did so, he reluctantly replied, "Why not?"

"If I can't please them with a generous amount of 'bakhshish', they may intentionally make mistakes in the paper that would send me back to square one again. Now, what else should I do?" asked Hamidur Rahman.

What are the reasons behind this?

According to a Treasury staff, pensioners do not bring along all the necessary papers at a time, so that the work is half-done. "That's how it takes time," he says. But sufferers complained that they were never told what papers were necessary in time.

The staff, according to Ashraful Haque, another pensioner, would ask the candidate to come back after 20 days even when some paper was needed by the candidate immediately, and which could be supplied by the staff promptly too. Completing the entire process therefore means spending an unnecessary amount of money and time.

According to government rules, the Treasury office is supposed to prepare the candidate's pension book within a period of 30 days. But in reality, it may take up to six months.

On the other hand, a retired officer on a pension of Taka 800 cannot acquire the whole amount. After paying bribes of up to 500 taka he is left with a paltry sum of 300. Consequently, the pension cannot possibly support him.

Difficulties also arise when the government passes a new increment as medical (MA) and dearness allowances (DA). If an employee had a pay scale of 4200-150-5250 and retired before 1.7.91, then his pension would be: 40 per cent (pc) of 4200 taka plus 10 pc of 1st DA plus 10 pc of 2nd DA plus 10 pc of 3rd DA plus 10 pc of total amount and at last, MA of Taka 100, i.e. 2502.40 taka.

And now, the above pay scale has become 7100 - 8x200 - 8700 taka and effective for those who retired after 1.7.91. Accordingly, we find large discrimination between the two pay scales. The existence of two different sets of pay scales has made work of the staff and the pensioners rather complicated.

At various points of drawing pensions, some of the old men in the Court Building area on Johnson Road, can be seen panting hard, some lie on the bench waiting hours on end. To overcome these obstacles, only a bit of humanity is needed. "You should bear in mind that one day, you too will be a retired officer and come here for your pension. How will you feel when you are treated in this way?" asked a highly annoyed pensioner to the staff.



Fourth festival ends

Call to popularise Tagore songs to enrich cultural heritage

The two-day fourth National Tagore Songs Festival, organised by Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Sangstha, ended in the city Wednesday with call to popularise Tagore Songs among people for enriching cultural heritage, reports BSS.

Leading singers both from old and young generations participated in the concluding day festival, dedicated to the memory of mystic singers-Abul A'la and Montaj Ali Khan.

Three celebrated artist, Soharab Hossain, Bedaruddin Ahmed and Sudhcn Das were honoured on the occasion.

Presided over by the President of Sangstha, noted Tagore Song artist Kalim Sharafi, it was attended by noted Journalist Bazlur Rahman as the chief guest.

Royal Air Force chief calls on Khaleda

Chief of the British Royal Air Force Sir Peter Harding called on the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office Wednesday afternoon, reports UNB.

The RAF Chief who arrived here Tuesday on a three-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh spent some time with the Prime Minister.

Chief of Bangladesh Air Force Air Vice-Marshal Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and British High Commissioner in Dhaka Colin Henry Inray were present during the meeting.

Argentine envoy presents credentials

President Abdur Rahman Biswas received the credentials of Victor E Beague, the Ambassador-Designate of Argentina, at a ceremony at Bangabhaban Wednesday, reports BSS.

Presenting the credentials, the Argentine envoy hoped that the cooperation between the two friendly countries in economic, scientific, technological and cultural fields would develop in the future.

CBA leaders of PDB, DESA urged to help cut system loss

Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrat Hossain called upon the leaders of the Collective Bargaining Agents (CBA) to play a constructive role in reducing system loss to make the power sector viable and dynamic, reports BSS.

He was addressing the CBA leaders of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) who came to make a courtesy call on him at his residence in the city.

Kazi Habibur Rahman and Zafrul Hossain, President and General Secretary respectively of CBA of BPDB and Kazi Mosharrat Hossain and Abul Hossain, President and General Secretary respectively of CBA of DESA also spoke on the occasion.

Body on drug policy to submit report within 60 days

The government has taken initiatives to formulate a new drug policy for the country, the Health Minister, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, said in Mymensingh, Wednesday, reports BSS.

He said a committee had already been formed in this connection and it would submit its report to the government within 60 days.

The Health Minister was the chief guest at the first conference of the Doctors' Association of Bangladesh, Mymensingh branch held at the Zila Parishad Hall.

Presided over by the Civil Surgeon, Dr Mazharul Haq, the conference was addressed, among others, by the president, Doctors Association, Bangladesh, Dr Kamruzzaman

MP, Alhaj Amanullah Chowdhury MP, Dr Ferdous Alam and Dr KR Islam.

Referring to the enormous problems of the country, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said the present democratic government was making endeavours to solve them through its limited resources by identifying the problems.

Speaking about various problems of the employees of the Health Directorate, Minister assured them that he would do his best to resolve them.

He said the doctors were engaged in the services of the people and called upon them to work for the people with devotion, honesty and sincerity.

The Health Minister also

assured the development of the S K Hospital here. Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf also laid the foundation stone of the women hostel extension building of the Mymensingh Medical College.

Muslim League factions unite

Different factions of Muslim League have been united under the banner of one Muslim League at a meeting in Dhaka Wednesday with Kazi Abdul Kader in the chair, reports BSS.

A 22-member ad-hoc organising committee has been formed by dissolving all other committees unanimously at the meeting.

Two panels to contest for post of JU VC March 8

The Jahangirnagar University Senate will elect a three-member panel on March 8 for appointment of the post of the Vice-Chancellor, the highest administrative officer of the university, reports BSS.

The term of the present Vice-Chancellor Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed will expire on March 10.

According to the University Ordinance, the Senate members elect a three-member panel for the appointment of the office of the Vice-Chancellor. The President who is the Chancellor of the universities then selects and appoints one from them.

Two panels have come forward to contest for the office

of the Vice-Chancellor. The incumbent Vice-Chancellor of the university Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed is leading his panel with Prof. Abul Kashem Chowdhury of Bengali Department and Prof. Khondoker Moudud Elahi of the Geography Department. The other panel is led by Prof. Mustahidur Rahman of Economics Department with Prof. Enamul Haque Khan of History Department and Prof. Md. Imamuiddin of Physics Department.



Chhatra Otkya Forum brought out a procession in the city Wednesday to mark its founding anniversary. — Star photo

Master plan to protect country from natural calamities in offing

Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M Majidul Haq, Wednesday said that the government was preparing a master plan for protecting the country from river-erosion, flood, cyclone, tornado and other natural calamities with the advice of the foreign and local experts, reports BSS.

He was addressing a public meeting at the Patgram Anandhu Government High School in Manikganj as the chief guest.

State Minister for Land,

Mohammad Kabir Hossain, local Member of Parliament Harunur Rashid Khan Munno and local leaders including the chairmen of some union parishads also spoke.

The local leaders narrated the sufferings of thousands of landless and homeless people who had lost their everything at river erosion by the mighty Padma.

The Agriculture Minister said that the government was determined to extend all possible help and assistance to

rehabilitate the affected people of the area. He said the government was pledged bound to give a permanent and durable solution to the problem by materialising the flood action plan very soon.

The State Minister urged the officials to identify the khas lands and distribute them among the landless people. He said a model village would be implemented in the Hari-rampur upazila at the government initiatives.

In the afternoon, the two ministers visited the affected villages under Hari-rampur and Shivalayah upazilas on speed boats. About 20 unions of the two upazilas had been seriously affected by river erosion.

Milon murder case

One more witness declared hostile

By Staff Correspondent

The prosecution side in the trial of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon murder Wednesday declared one more witness hostile.

The witness who gave deposition in the court of the Second Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka, Mr Imami Minq was Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal, a second year student of BSC (Hons) of Applied Chemistry Department, Dhaka University.

Mostafa Kamal said that he was an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League (N-S), a student wing of Jatiya Shamajtantrik Dal (JSD).

The Judge adjourned the court till 11 am today (Thursday).

One stabbed to death

A minor girl died in a city hospital Tuesday night after she was admitted there with serious injuries apparently from sharp weapons, police said, reports UNB.

Hallima, 4, was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital at about 8 pm from a paddy field near the Rampura TV station, where she was found lying in a critical condition. She died at 11.20 pm.

Her mother Khasunnesat said she left two daughters at their house in a slum at Rampura early in the morning, to attend to the day's work but found the youngest one missing when she returned at mid-morning. Hallima's father Imami Min is a hawkler.

A case was lodged with Sabujbagh thana in this connection.

What's on today

AGM of retired govt employees association

The Annual General Meeting of Bangladesh Retired Government Employees Welfare Association will be held today Thursday at 9.30 am at local Mahanagar Griha Milanayatan at House No 33, Road No 4, Dhanmondi Residential area.

Garments Workers Jote

Sammilita Garments Sramik Karmachari Jote will hold a rally today Thursday at Kawan Bazar square at 3 pm with General Secretary of Awami League Sajeda Chowdhury as chief guest.

Jubo Hindu Samiti

The inaugural session of a two day national conference of Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Samaj Sangskar Samiti with Shih Sankar Chakraborty in the chair will be held today (Thursday) at 10 am at the Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium.

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Shaikh Razzak Ali will be the chief guest while AGM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the parliament, Adhus Samad Azad, Begum Sufia Kamal, Justice Kamaluddin, Reazuddin Ahmed, President of BFUJ, Barrister Moynul Hossain and Foiz Ahmed will deliver speeches.

Seminar on Women

Narigrantha Prohortana will hold a seminar on "the condition of women labour in Bangladesh in the context of International Women's Day" today (Thursday) at Gano Unnayan Granthagar (39 Dhanmondi, Road 14/A) at 3 pm.

Shilpakala Academy

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will hold a milad mehfil today (Thursday) at the academy after Zohr prayers in memory of late dancer GA Mannan.

Rapport Bangladesh

A tea meeting on Management Video Film titled "Uncommon People Sense — Smart Street Psychology of Winning Life Style" will be held today (Thursday) at 6:00 pm at the Academy for Planning and Development, Babupura, Nilkhet. Sponsored by Rapport Bangladesh Limited the film presentation will be followed by discussion.

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Bangla Theatre

Bangla Theatre will present "Man" (Manush), a Bengali play at La Gallery tomorrow Friday at 7.30 pm. This studio theatre is an attempt to combine group efforts of many theatre activists working in an intimate theatre situation. The cards will be available at La Gallery and Dolce Vita.

Jubilation Procession

Committee to observe International Women's Day will hold a Jubilation procession tomorrow Friday starting from Dhanmondi field and ending at Sangsad Bhaban.

Diabetic Lottery Draw

The 1991 lottery draw of Bangladesh Diabetic Society will be held tomorrow Friday at 9 am at the society's ground outdoor at Shahbag. Justice Abdul Wadud Chowdhury will be the head of the judge of the function.



Students of the Parijat Institute performing cultural programme at the Shishu Academy auditorium recently.

Weather

No change in day temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry all over the country till 6 pm today (Thursday), according to Met office.

Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country. The maximum temperature in the country, 33.3 degree Celsius was recorded at Feni while the country's minimum 13 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi Wednesday.

The sun sets today (Thursday) at 6:04 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 6:16 am.

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

Cities /Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	29.7	17.8	51	36
Chittagong	28.2	19.9	83	80
Rajshahi	31.4	13	41	27
Khulna	30.4	16.5	75	-
Sylhet	28	13.8	86	47
Rangpur	27.6	14.5	63	60
Tangail	29.5	14.4	58	47
Cox's Bazar	28.1	20.2	-	70

Thursday

- 3.15 am Opening announcement Al-Quran, Programme summary
- 3.30 am 5th World Cup Cricket: West Indies vs South Africa 11.15 am Australia vs England 6.30 Jiboner Alo: Religious programme Debate
- 7.05 News in Bangla
- 8.00 Drama of the Week
- 8.30 News in English
- 10.00 Drama Series: Twim Peaks
- 10.30 Khabar /The News
- 11.30 Friday's programme summary
- 11.40 Closing

সব ধরনের কারো উপযোগী

রেডি স্টক থেকে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।

ডিক্রিবিউটার : উত্তরা মোটর্স লিমিটেড

ঢাকা ফোন: ২৪০৩২০, ২৪০৭২৪, ২৪১৬২৪, ২৪৩২৯৬ বঙ্গুড়া ফোন: ৬৬০৬ শুলকা ফোন: ২৪৬৪২২ চট্টগ্রাম ফোন: ৫০৪৪০২, ৫০৪৭৮৬, ৫০৪৯৫৭ সিলেট ফোন: ৭৭৮২ ঘাণোর ফোন: ৪০৮৭