

Dhaka Day by Day

Cooking: an Art to be Perfected

by Nazme Sabina

At any wedding party, we may have delicious food and always give credit to the host. But we are a little bit reluctant to find out who is the real star behind the feast. In many cases, this special credit should go to Fakhruddin Baburchi.

Behind the Vicarunnesa Girl's School compound, there is a small entrance. Before stepping in, no one can guess what surprise is in store. This is where Fakhruddin and his sons prepare the goodies which have made his name virtually synonymous with wedding feasts in Dhaka.

There are at least 10 people busily cutting vegetables, with a seven-member team making mince-meat or 'keema', and about 15 others helping out. Preparing for a mammoth feast? No, this is just a part of their daily routine. The toughest task is to provide tiffin for schools by 10 a.m. especially since it means providing for about 2000 students.

Fakhruddin the legendary chef of old Dhaka is a 65-year old generous man, who migrated from Bihar in 1952. At first he says, he tried to settle in Chittagong but eventually came to Dhaka in the same year. He and his family have managed to survive the worst that could have befallen them in 1971.

Speaking broken Bangla, with a pronounced North Indian accent he informs The Daily Star that before him, nobody in his family had ever been in this profession. It was his personal interest that dragged him into cooking. What began as a hobby eventually became a full-time career.

In his group of about 70 workers, three sub-groups work out the whole process. Fifteen to 20 men engage in prepare school tiffin and finish it by 10 a.m. Another group of about 25 handles special orders, preparing all types of dishes as ordered. The third group cannot be seen on the premise. They mostly work at wedding spots.

"Some times, we hire extra workers both for working here and handling outside orders," says Fakhruddin Baburchi. "They're needed when the pressure mounts."

When asked "How many items can you prepare", he and his staff burst into laughter and asked in return, "How many items can you write down? We can do whatever you want except Chinese and English dishes." They prepare feasts for at least 1,500 persons a day by order on the premise.

The whole cooking process takes place under Fakhruddin's own or his son Mohammad Rafi's supervision. Even the decorators are employed by him. "I don't hesitate in adding ten taka more as long as it means better quality", he says. Fakhruddin's speciality lies in his exclusive decoration of the dishes. In the month of Ramzan, he decorates the back entry of the school with 'Shamiana' and lures the gourmets of Dhaka with a wide variety of traditional 'iftar' items — such as 'halim', 'beguni', 'piju', 'biriani' etc.

So far, business seems to be booming for Fakhruddin. Two of his four sons have joined this profession. One of them, M Rafi, supervises inside orders, while the other, M Shaif, is in charge of outside wedding feasts and looks after Shamima Bibaha Ghar, a community centre in Kakrail.

Does he appreciate his sons' joining the same profession? "Yes. Of course", says the seasoned chef, "and Shaif is doing even better than me. I am very proud of him." Maybe he will be able to take my place." Fakhruddin says that he does not have any plan to expand his business and that its future depended on his sons. "They will decide what they want to do."

When asked whether he enjoyed his work Fakhruddin replied, "Yes, very much. And people do not look down upon me because I am a cook, rather they respect me for it. Cooking is a profession just like any other. It is also an art to be perfected."



No natural flower but what food is turned into by a touch of class



The namaj-e-janaza of student leader Raju who was killed on Friday last, was held at the Dhaka University Mosque yesterday. Story on Page 1. — Star photo

Place economic policy in JS before accord with WB'

Planning Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan Friday urged the members of Parliament to support the democratic government of Begum Khaleda Zia to help alleviate poverty, reports BSS.

He was presiding over the concluding session of the two-day national workshop on rural poverty in the city organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS). Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed MP, CPB leader Muzahidul Islam Selim, former adviser Prof Rehman Sobhan, economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmood, World Bank Residence Mission Chief Christopher R Willoughby, Planning Commission members Dr Sheikh Moqsood Ali and Mokammel Hoq, Planning Secretary Dr Harun-ur-Rashid, Additional Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan and Dr Sultan Hafez Rahman also participated in the discussion. Former Director General of BIDS Dr Mahabub Hossain and Project Director Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman presented the

key-note papers. Stressing the need for national consensus on self-reliance and poverty alleviation, the minister said Bangladesh should go for an aggressive export-oriented trade policy for rapid economic development.

Former Planning Adviser and eminent economist Prof Sobhan stressed the need for placing the macro economic policy paper before Parliament ahead of any signing agreement with the World Bank. But the World Bank Residence Mission chief said the World Bank and the development partners would like to see effective and efficient use of scarce resources for the upliftment of the 40 per cent people living in poor conditions.

The Awami League leader urged the minister to prepare a proper plan to solve national priority problems with firm commitment and consensus. "We should be keep ourselves above party interest on the national issues for the emancipation of the poor",

he said. The CPB leader stressed the need for a 'radical policy' with rural bias. He said we should not negate market and also should not negate the private sector.

Dr Mahabub Hossain in his key-note paper said the spread of new technology in agriculture had considerable effect on increasing rural income. Appropriate mix of pricing, subsidy, credit and extension policies should be undertaken to promote expansion of new technology in agriculture, he said adding the poverty alleviation effect of rural infrastructure was found to be even higher compared to the impact of new technology particularly on the income of the poorer sector.

Dr Hossain said promotion of non-farm activities would have strong poverty alleviating effects while spread of education tends to have significant impact on increasing rural incomes. He advocated for the income transfer programmes for the lowest 10-15 per cent of the rural population with strong commitment of the government budget to alleviate poverty alleviation programmes.

Dr Zillur Rahman in his key-note paper stressed the need for redefinition of poverty as a three-dimensional syndrome of hunger, insecurity and crisis.

Almost all the participants argued for land reform, administrative reforms and strong political commitment for alleviation of poverty. They also stressed the need for more than five per cent annual rate of economic growth for productive employment generation and self-reliance.

The national workshop was inaugurated Thursday by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. Politicians, economists, policy-makers and bureaucrats discussed the poverty issues in five academic sessions.

'Theory of Surplus Value still being used by capitalism'

Speakers at a discussion meeting in observance of the 109th death anniversary of Karl Marx Saturday said that failure in the application of Marxist dialectics in any geographical area did not mean that his theory had become obsolete, reports BSS.

Organised by Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) at the Institution of Engineers, the discussion meeting was addressed by BSD Convenor Khalequzzaman and central committee member Mubinal Hyder Chowdhury.

The speakers said those who were saying that Karl Marx's theory had failed could not yet offer any alternative to his basic theories on class struggle, dialectical materialism and capital and productivity. They said that according to Karl Marx, social and economic contradictions are inherent in the development of any society. Though he may not

have uttered the ultimate words on social contradictions, yet his theory of social and economic contradiction still hold good for present world conditions.

The speakers said that the theory of surplus value of products was still being used by capitalism as a weapon of exploitation. They said under the changed world situation, international capitalism had just reshaped its weapon of exploitation and was using media and surplus capital to weaken the economic viability of the smaller countries.

The speakers asserted that Karl Marx's theory of dialectics was a reality and its application would only vary depending on the socio-economic objective realities of a given geographical area only.

The discussion meeting was attended by a large number of guests and political workers.

Environmental degradation in SAARC region discussed

Indian High Commissioner in-charge to Bangladesh A Tripathy called on the Minister for Environment, Forest and Fisheries-Livestock Abdullah-Al-Noman in the city Saturday, reports BSS.

They discussed various matters relating to environmental degradation in the SAARC region and exchanged views of both the governments on mutual and regional cooperation in the matter.

The government of India is going to host a ministerial meeting of the SAARC countries to harmonise the views of those countries on environmental issues to be highlighted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Brazil in June next.

This ministerial meeting is the follow-up of the India's offer during the meeting of the SAARC head of state/government in Colombo on December 21, 1991.

The Indian High Commissioner in-charge offered an invitation to the Environment Minister to attend the ministerial meeting scheduled to be held on April 8-9 next in New Delhi.

Car stolen

By Staff Correspondent

A car of Central Transport Poll allotted to Mohammad Strajuddin, member of Planning Commission, was stolen Friday, says a press release Saturday.

The car bearing number Dhaka Bha-2045 was lost from the premises of the Battul Mamoor Mosque, Road No-7, Dhanmondi, in the city.

A case was registered with Dhanmondi police in this connection, the press release said.

TV Sunday

- 5:15 am Special Session on 5th World Cup Cricket
- 5:30 am India VS South Africa
- 5:00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programme summary
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:25 Makey Niye
- 5:50 Mahey Ramjan
- 7:05 Tagore songs
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Praba ha
- Documentary
- 9:00 Drama series: Oshin
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Rag Rang : Classical music
- 11:15 Khabar/The News
- 11:25 Monday's programme summary and
- 11:30 Closing

NGOs offer assistance to Rohingya refugees

By Staff Correspondent

Sixteen NGO leaders at a meeting on Saturday expressed their willingness to offer assistance to the Rohingya refugees, says a press release.

The meeting held at the Rangpur-Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS) office in Dhaka commended the government services to the refugees.

The leaders also expressed their grave concern at the situation arising out of the influx of the refugees into Bangladesh from Myanmar.

The meeting said that at present in the absence of invitation or approval from the

government, NGOs felt unable to initiate and implement a large-scale refugee assistance programme.

NGOs abroad have given clear indications to their partners in Bangladesh that they would like to offer assistance to the refugees. Many NGOs have made their first plans and are now considering active involvement and would be able to respond to government request at very short notice, added.

The meeting was attended by representatives from RDRS, CCDB, CARITAS, CONCERN of Ireland, MCC, HEED Bangladesh, The Salvation Army, KOINONIA, CHCP, World Vision of Bangladesh, and the Swedish Free Mission.

5,000 Bangladeshis register for job in Malaysia

Nearly 5,000 Bangladeshis have registered themselves for employment with the Immigration Department of Malaysia between November 1 last year and January 15 this year, reports UNB.

It was officially stated in Kuala Lumpur recently that the Bangladeshis were among a total of 53,604 foreign workers in the peninsula who registered with the department during the period. The highest number of 43,780 are from Indonesia.

DCC employees thanked for resuming duty

The Dhaka City Corporation authorities thanked those employees of the corporation who joined to their respective duties Saturday, reports BSS.

The DCC authorities requested the remaining striking employees to resume their duties by mid-day today (Sunday) considering the inconvenience of the city dwellers.

Weather

Day temperature may rise

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the regions of Sylhet during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Saturday, according to Meteorological office.

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country, Met office also said. Day temperature may rise by one to two degree Celsius during the period.

The Sun sets in Dhaka today (Sunday) at 6-08 pm and rises tomorrow (Monday) at 6-08 a.m.

Temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns on Saturday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	34.0	22.9
Chittagong	29.8	21.4
Khulna	34.7	23.3
Rajshahi	35.6	16.6
Barisal	34.6	23.8
Cox's Bazar	36.0	21.0
Sylhet	30.5	19.5
Mymensingh	33.1	22.1
Dinajpur	33.0	18.2

Rainfall was recorded on Saturday 16 mm in Sylhet and 4 mm in Srirangal.

Temperature recorded in the important regional cities on Saturday were:

	Max	Min
Kathmandu	28.6	8.3
Colombo	32.7	23.2
Male	31.3	36.1
Islamabad	21.0	5.0
New Delhi	28.5	17.6

"Katan, Banarasi can earn foreign exchange"

State Minister for Textiles Abdul Mannan Saturday called upon the tantis (weavers) to improve the quality of handloom clothes, particularly the Katan and Banarasi sarees so that they could attract the foreigners, reports UNB.

Katan and Banarasi sarees are the pride of our handlooms which can earn foreign exchange if their qualities are improved, he said. The State Minister was

speaking at a function arranged on the occasion of handing over cheques to three tantis who have been badly affected in a fire on January 18 at Mirpur Section No 10. About 40 tantis including Katan and Banarasi producing factories were gutted in the fire.

Mannan said the BNP government was determined to improve the socio-economic condition of the tantis.

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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NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES

The containerised cargo ex. M. V. "Anro Temsak" V-36603 from Melbourne, ex. M. V. "Mont Blanc Maru" V-02020 from Kobe, Yokohama, Hongkong, and Nagoya, ex. M. V. "Maha Bhum" V-96 from Bangkok, ex. M. V. "Y.S. Prosperity" V-45131 from Busah, ex. M. V. "Pacific Arrow" V-19015 from Nagoya, ex. M. V. "Harkata" V-25358 from Keelung, ex. M. V. "Tokyo Express" V-04308 from Hongkong, ex. M. V. "Success Hope" V-02019 from Keelung, have been relayed to M. V. "NEW GENLORD" V-7292, Import Rotation No. 160/92 is due to arrive Chittagong on or about 15.3.92 from Singapore.

Consignees are requested to take delivery of their cargo from "FCL" containers within 5 days free time from the date of landing and if cargo not cleared within 45 days will be guided by Customs Act.

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M N Mustafa takes over as DG of Radio Bangladesh

M N Mustafa Saturday took over as the Director General of Radio Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Prior to his new assignment, he had long been Radio's Deputy Director General for Programme.

A master-degree holder in International Relations (DU), Mustafa, had professional training in BBC, British Office of Information, NHK Japan and Colorado University of USA, besides being on the roll of the British Institute of Public Relations as member.

He is the author of five books including one on the history of music in the sub-continent for which he was awarded Karol Zymonowsky Centenary medal by the Polish government in 1987.

Exemplary punishment for child murder demanded

Rokanuzzaman Khan, Director of the Central Kanchi Kanchar Asar, Saturday demanded exemplary punishment for child murder, reports BSS.

In a statement here, he said news of frequent harassment, kidnapping and murders of the children is a matter of great concern for the saner section of people.

He particularly mentioned the killing of a three-years-old girl, Halima of Sabujbag thana, who was killed with stab injuries.

Khan called for tough punishment for such offences and appealed to the government, members of parliament and others to enact stricter laws for this purpose.