

Dhaka Day by Day

Leading the Way to a Better Life

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

The affluent areas on the outskirts of Dhaka are distinctive for their plush homes far away from the city grime and smog. A short ride around Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and most recently Uttara, transfers one into another world — a world of miniature villas, huge mansions with milky white walls stained with luxuriant bouganvillea or split level homes designed in ultra modern styles. It is therefore all the more surprising to see, next to such opulence, things like open garbage dumps that smell even worse than they look, exposed drains that serve as public toilets or potholed roads where cows and goats leave their distinct and, rather smelly, trails. Presumably, the inmates of these beautiful homes turn a blind eye (and a blocked nose), to such contrasting ugliness they whiz by in their equally beautiful modes of transport. Whatever the reason for such apparent apathy, it is a little disconcerting to think that areas where wealth is so concentrated show such lack of civic consciousness.

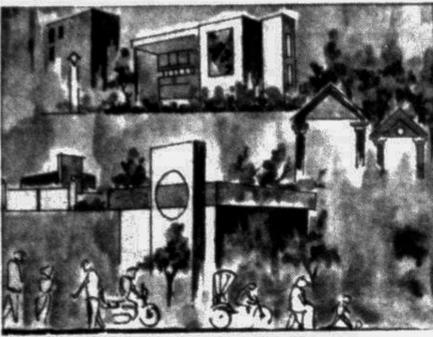
Sector Seven in Uttara, however, is an exception to the rule. It has a population of about 3000, a majority of whom come from upper-middle class professional backgrounds. What is unique about this sector is not that it has 27 PID holders, which is impressive enough, but that its residents have set up a society that is primarily concerned with carrying out civic duties to create a healthy environment for the neighbourhood in general. Sector Seven's Kalyan Samity's aim is to provide an example to other sectors in Uttara of how problems within the community can be solved through awareness and active participation of community members.

Although started in 1987, the 'Kalyan Samity' came to life in 1991 when it became more organised and productive. Now, in 1992, sector 7 is the second largest sector in Uttara with 780 allotted plots and 428 houses. With an area as large as this, security is bound to be a number one problem. Secretary General Mr Shamsul Alam, says that the security system established by the samity, is so tight that even women in the neighbourhood can safely walk around at 12 O'clock at night. Now that, in my books at least, is some accomplishment.

To create environmental awareness the 'Kalyan Samity' of sector 7 has started a project in tree-planting. Last year it distributed 2000 saplings to residents. After April 29th's cyclone, members of the society raised one

lakh taka and collected a large amount of relief items for the flood victims.

Annual get together, cultural functions, sports and other activities are also organised by the 'samity' to provide recreation and also give an opportunity to residents to get to know one another. In this way old acquaintances have been revived and new ones formed. The residents of Sector 7 have become one big family, working together to solve common problems.



Uttara, still being at a developing stage, such problems are many. Although houses are continuously being built, civic amenities are far from being ensured. There is no drainage system, no mosque, no amusement park or even a proper market for basic groceries. Persistent proposals and petitions to the government authorities have so far, produced luke warm responses.

But this has not daunted the 'Samity', which has become a central body for other 'Samities' in the other sectors. It has big plans for the future.

One proposal has been made for a 'Doctor's forum' through which elderly residents will be especially benefitted. The programme includes a 24 hours phone service will be maintained so that at any time a resident with a medical emergency can call the 'Samity' which will be responsible to take the patient to a clinic or hospital if required.

Two other proposals have been made to create jobs for the unemployed young people of Uttara. One is a shuttle service from Uttara to various points in town such as University, Magbazar etc and back. The bus system will be operated by the young men and women themselves. Another project, which is expected to start from June '92 is a programme through which vocational training will be given to young people. Evening classes at the Uttara High School will be held and taught by residents of Sector 7 who are also engineers.

In spite of many drawbacks, Sector 7 has become a success story and an inspiration to other Sectors. It has created civic awareness amongst the residents and a willingness to work collectively for the good of the community as a whole. The efforts of Sector Seven's residents are truly commendable. We hope that this kind of enthusiasm and dedication is contagious enough to be a nationwide 'epidemic' in civic consciousness!

52 with invalid travel documents taken on remand

By Staff Correspondent

The police on Tuesday has taken on one day remand fifty two 'Bangladeshi' job-seekers who were deported from Riyadh airport.

Saudi immigration authorities at Riyadh found their visas forged and sent them back to Bangladesh. When they had arrived at Zia International Airport Monday, police nabbed them as they were travelling without valid documents.

Police said the job-seekers were sent to Saudi Arabia by recruiting agents in Bangladesh.

All the arrested persons were produced before the court of the chief Metropolitan Magistrate Tuesday and were taken on one day remand by Cantonment police, police said.



Death anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad today

Today (Wednesday) is the 13th death anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad, renowned journalist, litterateur and politician of the subcontinent.

To mark this occasion Abul Mansur Ahmad Memorial Committee has chalked out an elaborate programme simultaneously in Dhaka and Mymensingh. A prayer cum discussion meeting will be held at 4-30 pm at the Dhanmondi residence of the late leader. While, distribution of alms to the destitutes will take place both at Mymensingh and Dhaka, according to a press release.

Mayor seeks cooperation in developing DCC

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mirza Abbas Tuesday sought cooperation of all concerned to help develop the organisation suiting to the needs of city dwellers, BSS reports.

Abbas made this call at a meeting of ward and thana committee leaders of BNP and its front organisations at the Nawab Yusuf Market office of the party in Dhaka.

Presided over by Mir Shaukat Ali MP, President of the city unit of BNP, the meeting was also addressed among others, by Wadud Master, Kazi Abul Bashar, Ehsanul Haq and Saifuddin Milon.

The Mayor said the people of Dhaka had given their mandate in favour of BNP candidates in the last polls so it was an obligation of the BNP workers to remove their grievances.

He recalled the recent disruption in normal functioning of the City Corporation following an unexpected situation. He expressed his sorrow for the inconveniences caused to

the city dwellers following disruption in normal work of the corporation. He had words of praise for those, who had offered voluntary services to keep the city clean.

Mirza Abbas recalled the financial burden of the City Corporation because of corruption during the past autocratic rule.

The Finance Minister expressing satisfaction over present food stock said for food security, the stock of wheat should be of nine lakh metric tons.

He also underlined the need for increasing wheat production in the country following change of food habit.

Food Minister M Shamsul Islam said huge quantity of imported wheat will arrive at Chittagong soon and government has given permission to import 60,000 metric tons of wheat to encourage the private sector and build up market economy.

Procurement price of wheat raised

Government has raised the procurement price of wheat to Tk 240 from Tk 220 and fixed the target of procuring one lakh metric ton of wheat during the current season through internal procurement programme, reports UNB.

This was decided at a meeting on food situation and food policy here Tuesday with Food Minister M Shamsul Islam in chair. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and State Minister for Relief Luthur Rahman Khan spoke in the meeting.

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IRS TAX ASSISTANCE

A taxpayer specialist from the Internal Revenue Service will visit Dhaka on March 22 and March 23 to answer questions Americans have on filing their Federal income tax returns. He will give a short general talk at 8:30 A.M. on Sunday, March 22 at the ARA Club in Gulshan. He will hold individual meetings with taxpayers after 10:00 A.M. on Sunday and all day on Monday. These meetings are open to all U.S. citizens and Legal Permanent Residents. Arrangements are being made for admittance to the ARA club for non-members. For further information, or to schedule a private meeting with the IRS representative, please call the Embassy Consular Section, ext. 794 or 273.

Weather

Day temperature may rise

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or Thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the region of Chittagong and Noakhali during the next 36 hours commencing 6pm Tuesday, according to Meteorological office.

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Day temperature may rise by one to two degree Celsius during the period, Met office also forecast.

The sun sets in Dhaka today (Wednesday) at 6-09 and rises tomorrow (Thursday) at 6-04 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9am	6pm
Dhaka	32.0	18.0	50	35
Chittagong	30.5	22.3	81	82
Rajshahi	33.0	13.0	53	24
Khulna	32.5	16.2	74	65
Barisal	32.3	16.5	72	67
Cox's Bazar	30.2	23.5	77	80
Sylhet	30.6	16.0	48	47
Dinajpur	31.5	14.0	45	54
Iswardi	33.3	14.0	54	29

More countries condemn Myanmar atrocities

More countries have condemned the atrocities let loose by the Myanmar military junta on the minority Rohingya Muslims who are fleeing to neighbouring Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Japan has expressed concern over the acts of brutality and atrocity inflicted on the Myanmar Muslims in violation of human rights.

The concern was conveyed to the Myanmar authorities through Myanmar Ambassador to Japan, who was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, news reports said.

According to a Japanese news agency, Myanmar troops killed 4,000 people, raped 2,000 women and arrested 4,000 youths belonging to the Rohingya Muslim community.

Singapore has also communicated to the Myanmar authorities its concern over the situation in the Bangladesh-

Myanmar border.

According to a message received here, a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore said, "Influx of a large number of refugees from Myanmar into Bangladesh is creating a potential area of instability for the region and human sufferings."

The island state has urged the Myanmar authorities to take measures for early repatriation of the refugees with security.

Brunei Darussalam has expressed concern over the plight of the Rohingya Muslims saying "the situation could develop into one which creates instability in South and South-East Asia."

The South-Asian tiny state has urged all parties concerned to find out a solution of the unfortunate situation.

Netherlands envoy calls on Hafiz

The Netherlands Ambassador in Bangladesh H Gajen Tan Tuesday called on Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz at his Secretariat office, reports BSS.

The Ambassador stayed with the minister for sometime. They discussed matters of mutual interest.

Wednesday

Special Session
3.45 am Opening announcement
4.00 am 5th World Cup Cricket
New Zealand VS Pakistan
11.45 am Australia VS West Indies

Evening Session
5.00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran
5.10 News in Bangla
5.20 Recitation from the Geeta
5.30 Campus
5.50 Mahey Ramzan
6.30 Shamachar
7.05 Programme for the new artists
8.00 News in Bangla
8.30 Programme in memory of Abul Mansur Ahmed
9.00 Film: MacGyver
10.00 News in English
10.30 Balun Dekhi
11.15 Khabar/The News
11.25 Thursday's programmes summary
11.30 Closing

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