

Dhaka Day by Day

Of Sweets and the Sweet Tooth

Parveen Anam

The Bengali is known for his notoriously sweet tooth and justifiably so. Which other nation can rightfully boast of so many sweet delicacies, made to bring sheer joy to the being? The average Bengali, cannot think of a day or two, going past, without indulging in this all devouring passion, the sweetmeat.

A visit to the sweetmeat store in the city, or just window shopping (it takes a staunch heart to window shop for sweets, and the success story is low) will gladden the sweet lovers heart and even more so his taste buds. There are sweets which are dark in colour, like the famous 'gulab jaam' or the 'lal mohan' and there are sweets which are snow white like the white 'rasagullas' which of course have their dark counterparts too.

The 'rasagullas' are probably one of the most well loved sweets of the Bengali and many a home-sick Bengali, away from home on far shores, has attempted to make this luscious, mouth-watering sweet, to bring back memories of 'home, sweet home'.

Then again there are the sweets which are special to each district like the 'Muktachar Monda' a special sweet made of milk, and made specially in Muktagacha in Mymensingh, which the connoisseur will swear is only to be eaten from there, and nowhere else. Then again there are the 'khwajas' from Rajshahi and the 'kacha gollas' from Natore and each district takes a very distinct pride in their special sweet, and jealously guard the secret of their trade.

It is said that the British rulers of the sub-continent had also fallen prey to the 'sweetmeat mania' and had brought in many traders from different parts of India, to parts which did not possess the makers of the sweets they desired to have.

A certain Lady Canning was said to have imported the 'lal mohan' to Bengal and was an ardent fan of the said sweet! The yogurt is said to be a health food, but the famous 'dof' or the sweet yogurt, which is always in great demand at Weddings and other occasions is a speciality all by itself and the maker was certainly not calorie conscious, when he invented the recipe of this

very delicious health food. And Bogra takes the pride of place. When it comes to 'dof'. Then again there are the sweets, which look like a hamburger and has two pieces of thick sweet fleshy bits, Sandwiched together with the sweetest thickened milk, a gastronomic delight for the sweet lover but a disaster for the waist line.

Perhaps it speaks a lot for the romanticism of the Bengali, to give such appealing, alluring names to the sweets, he has made for his sheer delight. Names like the 'motichoor laddu' and the 'sandesh' specially the ones made when the fresh 'gur' is collected from the trees, which gives it its special flavour, which cannot be attained with sugar, are a delightful part of Bengali culture and taste.

Visitors will invariably carry a box of sweets and no father will visit his married daughters house, without the inevitable box of sweetmeat. Sweets are exchanged freely at Weddings, when both the groom's side and the brides side will exchange a vast amount of sweets. And sweets are also distributed when a baby is born and when results are declared. Sweetmeat shops are always sold out when the results of the secondary

boards are announced! Any happy occasion and the joy is shared with the delightful box of sweets.

But, the most interesting part of the entire tradition is, perhaps, that when one goes to buy a small amount of sweetmeat, for oneself, the 'shopwala', will invariably give him an odd look of disapproval, if he dares to ask for anything less than at least a kilogram of the delicacy!

And perhaps it is this custom which makes the average Bengali so homesick when he is away from home, because even if one does not eat as much as one would like to — the battle of the bulge is a losing battle without adding the sweet to the list of the unwanted — we often sigh, and yet, there is hardly any Bengali worth the name, who does not relish his sugary cup of tea, with the even more sugary sweet delicacy, to buoy him when the worries of life seem overwhelming.



Satyajit's death condoled

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Friday expressed his deep sock at the death of world renowned film maker Satyajit Ray, reports BSS.

In a message of condolence, the President said late Ray had enriched the filmdom by his highest form on creativity.

"His creativity was being oriented by his flow of thoughts, far-sightedness and reflection of the reality of the society," he added.

President Biswas said, the human society had suffered a really great loss at the death of this popular film maker and versatile genius.

He expressed his deep sympathy with the members of the bereaved family.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Professor Jahanara Begum has condoled the death of world famous film maker Satyajit Ray.

In a condolence message Prof Jahanara Begum said that at the demise of Ray the film world had lost one of its talented personalities.

She conveyed her deep sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Different political parties and film societies have condoled the death of world renowned film producer Satyajit Ray, reports BSS.

They said Ray had established Bengali films in the international arena through his God-given talent.

Shamsuddoha MP and Nurul Islam Nahid, acting President and General Secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh expressed their profound grief at the death of Satyajit Ray.

They said Ray had proved his creative talent in arts and literature along with producing films of international standard.

They expressed their deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

In separate press releases, Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies, Bangladesh Short Film Forum and Satyajit Ray Film Society condoled the death of Ray.

Satyajit Ray Film Society will hold a condolence meeting on May 2, the 71st birthday of the famous film maker, at its Mirpur office.

The joint secretary of Bangladesh Osmani Sarajshahaob-Gabshaha Sanged Sheikh Abul Kalam Friday condoled the death of film maestro Satyajit Ray.

The Bengalis were indebted to Ray since he made the Bengalis glorious before the world.

Nagarik Natya Sampradaya announced the staging of their production 'Irsha' today (Saturday) in memory of Satyajit Ray while condoling his death.

Various cine-clubs also condoled the death of the legendary film-maker which include National Cine-Research Club, Chalachitran Film Society, Satyajit Ray Film Society, Argenta International Film Society, Bangladesh Film Movement, Bangladesh Art Film Forum, Bangladesh Short Film Forum and Satyajit Ray Film Society. They expressed their deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Rainbow Film Society while condoling the death of Satyajit Ray announced the holding of a meeting to mourn the death on April 30.

Bangladesh-China Friendship Society and Chhatra Oikya Forum also condoled the death of Satyajit Ray.

Resistance Committee meeting tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The National Coordination Committee for Realisation of the Spirit of the Liberation War and Resistance to the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 will hold a public meeting at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the city tomorrow (Sunday) in demand of execution of the Gana Adalat verdict on Golam Azam.

TV Saturday

- 5.00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from Tripitak
- 5.35 Sports programme
- 6.00 Drama for Children: Sir Nicolas
- 6.30 Mati-o-Manush
- 7.05 Banshari
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Probaha
- 9.00 Soore Soore: solo musical programme; Stinger: Mital Mukherjee
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Drama Series: Dallas
- 11.30 Khabar/The news
- 11.40 Sunday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing.



Chhatra Jamiat Bangladesh brought out a procession protesting the United Nations' sanctions on Libya in the city Friday. —Star photo

Coordinated steps sought to face challenges of education

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar Friday underlined the need for taking up coordinated programmes to face the challenges in the field of education, reports BSS.

The programmes should be taken up, taking into consideration national priority and resource constraints, the minister said.

He was addressing the chief guest the 18th annual conference of the board of trustees of the Foundation for Research on Education Planning and Development (FREPD) at the conference hall of National Academy for Education Management (NAEM).

Presided over by National Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq, President FREPD, the function was addressed by Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor, Jahangirnagar University, Shaful Alam, Secretary, Ministry of Education, Dr Muhammad Serajuddin, member-secretary, FREPD and Prof Ferdous Khan.

The minister stressed the need for rapid development in the education sector to ensure Bangladesh's access into the mainstream of modernisation.

He said the present government had taken some epoch-making steps in the field of education for its overall development. These include introduction of free primary education up to class five, con-

tinuation of distribution of text books free of cost at the primary level, introduction of mass literacy programme and compulsory primary education programmes in 68 upazilas of the country.

Sircar said laws would be formulated soon to give permission for setting up Open University and private universities in the country.

Education-related policies and planning would be on short-term and long-term basis, he added.

He lauded the contribution of FREPD, a non-political and non-profit organisation, towards carrying out research on different aspects of education.

The minister assured FREPD of all cooperation of his ministry and urged its researchers to carry out research on different problems of the education sector.

Shaful Alam said the government had laid importance on the non-formal education, side by side with the formal education.

Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed suggested introducing a planned education system in keeping with the country's need. National Professor Shamsul Huq said education was the main weapon in accelerating socio-economic development and strengthening democratic process.

'BNP to uphold democratic norms'

Food Minister M Shamsul Islam Friday said the present government empowered by the people was determined to uphold the democratic norms and values for the welfare of the country, reports BSS.

He was addressing the biennial meeting of BNP held at the local girls' high school premises in Munshiganj.

Sheikh Mohammad Hanjan presided over the meeting.

Garib Dal urges govt to resolve Farakka issue

Bangladesh Garib Dal Friday urged the government to take effective steps towards resolving the Farakka issue instead of pursuing a "subservient policy," reports UNB.

Speakers at a rally organised by the party at Azimpur Super Market in the afternoon also demanded of the government to take up programmes for poverty alleviation, stabilise prices of essentials and create employment opportunities.

PDF leaders' comment on PM prompts attack on CPB office

By Staff Correspondent
A group of political activists allegedly of Jatiya Juba Command attacked the office of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and hurled bombs leaving one person injured Thursday.

The attackers came to the CPB office after the protest procession of Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF), of which the CPB is the major component, left the area.

The protest rally censured Prime Minister Begum Zia for trying to protect Golam Azam by branding the anti-Golam Azam movement as a conspiracy at the instigation of foreign masters.

According to separate statements issued by CPB and PDF, one person was hurt in the bomb attack by the group carrying a banner of Jatiya Juba Command.

PDF steering committee and CPB leader Nurul Islam Nahid in their statements said the terrorists' activities took place under the very nose of the police personnel who remained apathetic to the incident.

Both the parties demanded arrest of the miscreants and punitive measures against them.

Fakir's death anniversary observed

The first death anniversary of Lokman Hussain Fakir, renowned lyricist and music director and former BNP Cultural Affairs Secretary, was observed here Friday through holding of discussion meet, reports BSS.

Held at BNP central office under the auspices of the city unit of JASAS (Jatiyatobadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangthal), the meeting was addressed among others by BNP Joint Secretary and Minister for Labour and Manpower Abdul Mannan Bhuyian, Commerce Minister M K Anwar, State Minister for IWTA Harun al-Rashid and Khurshid Ali Mollah and Zahid Hussain Chhunu, President and General Secretary respectively of JASAS.

Labour and Manpower Minister Mannan Bhuyian said Lokman Hussain Fakir was a symbol of original cultural heritage. In his death the cultural arena had suffered an irreparable loss, Bhuyian added.



Pir Char Monai Maulana Syed Md Fazlul Karim addressing a rally organised by Jamiatul Majlish at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque Friday. —Star photo

4 killed, 10 injured in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

Four persons were killed and another 10 including four police men were injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Gazipur and Narasingdi Friday.

A pedestrian, Abdul Malek, 50, was killed while a truck crushed him at around 11:30 am at Narasingdi. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and succumbed to his injuries there at about 5 pm.

Railway police recovered the body of an unidentified teenaged girl near Probbhati Sharani at Dhaka Cantonment at around 9:30 am. Railway police said that the girl was run over by a speeding train in the morning.

A UNB report adds: Two people, a father and his young son, were killed and three others of the same family seriously injured when a minibus hit a private car at Master Bari area of Gazipur on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

Witnesses and police said the accident occurred when the Mymensingh bound minibus (Momenshahi BA-309) coming from Dhaka hit a private car (Dhaka Gha-5063) coming from the same direction at 9 am.

The minibus, while trying to overtake, rammed over the car killing two of its passengers on the spot.

They were identified as Mujibur Rahman (44), a Customs Officer and his son Rimon (10).

Those injured were Mujibur's wife Monwara (35), his daughter Rimi (14) and sister-in-law Bithi (16). They were

admitted to the Sreepur hospital in critical condition. Mujibur Rahman of 380/C South Goran, Dhaka along with the members of his family was going to his home district Mymensingh.

Police seized both the vehicles but the driver of the minibus to managed to escape.

According to our correspondent, four policemen were injured when a minibus, Dhaka metro-Cha-04-0192,

knocked down an auto-tempo on which the police men were on duty at Kamal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, last morning.

Of the policemen, three constables, Ratan Mia, Mofazzal Hossain and Raisuddin were seriously injured and admitted to the Rajarbag Police Hospital while an ASI of police Ameer Hossain and the auto-tempo driver Alam sustained minor injuries and were given first aid.

Weather

Dry spell will prevail

By Staff Correspondent

Kalbatshakhi (Nor wester) or thundershower with temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places today. (Saturday) over the regions of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Mymensingh, Tangail and Sylhet, the Met office forecasts.

Weather is likely to remain dry elsewhere in the country. Day temperature is likely to rise by one or two degree Celsius over the regions of Rajshahi, Bogra, Jessore, Pabna and Kushtia while the temperature will remain unchanged elsewhere over the country.

The highest temperature on Friday was recorded in Rajshahi 40.1 degree Celsius while the lowest of 18.5 degree Celsius was recorded in Sreemangal.

The sunsets in Dhaka today (Saturday) at 6.25 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 5.28 am.

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

City/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	36.5	27.0	67	45
Chittagong	32.8	24.6	78	82
Khulna	36.5	24.5	81	67
Rajshahi	40.1	24.0	68	31
Sylhet	30.5	20.7	76	74
Barisal	36.2	26.0	78	57
Cox's Bazar	32.2	25.9	84	79
Mymensingh	32.5	25.8	74	69
Dinajpur		37.6		31