

Dhaka Day by Day

More than just window shopping

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



Window shopping at BATEXPO 92

With pomp and style, not to mention, a great deal of money, the three-day BAT EXPO '92 (Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition) started on May 6 at a local hotel in Dhaka. As the clock ticked away for the impending visit of the Prime Minister, the participants of this grandiose show bustled themselves trying to outdo one another in decorating their stalls. Frenzied businessmen could be seen rushing to and fro to get the tube lights fixed or the bouquets arranged while harassed security men tried in vain to keep track of people coming in through the doors. Among all this pandemonium, the vacuum man nonchalantly sucked up pieces of debris left by the electricians only minutes before the Prime Minister cut the ribbon to inaugurate the fair.

The grandeur with which the exhibition was decorated indicated the relative optimism of garment factory owners. Business is expected to pick up as America recovers from recession and with that the export quotas of Bangladesh garment businessmen. Bangladesh is now the 7th largest exporter of apparel to the US, 10th largest to the EC countries and 9th largest to Canada. The garment industry is one of the largest employment sectors in Bangladesh with over 500,000 workers.

All the more reason for the impressive layout of the exhibition. About 50 stalls were set up each different from the other placed around the hall to give the impression of a miniature shopping arcade. Among the innovative ones, was a stall designed like a small boutique with an arched window and a green neon sign with the factory's name. Another one had a computer to show how embroidered or printed logos were designed through special software. Many stalls had their own VCRs to demonstrate various stages in garment manufacture.

Sportswear dominated the scene reflecting a health conscious market. Wind breakers, snow jackets, jogging suits in bold pinks, sky-blues, violets and blacks were all over the place. Synthetic sportswear seemed to be 'in' because of durability and easy care. For the incurable beach bum were the colourful Burmuda shorts, tank tops, T shirts, and denims. Accessories such as labels, name tags, logos and buttons were also on display. A few stalls had lines of knit wear and a variety of undergarments. Other items included towels, bath-

robes and bed linen in floral prints. Fabrics in glorious colours were displayed in reels or strewn over the stall counters. The effect created was that of a shopper's haven with only one difference — not a single item was for sale.

So why have an export fair when nothing can be sold? The garment factory owners do not pay from 20,000 to 25,000 takas per stall space to EPB (Export Promotion Bureau), the organizers of the show, just for the fun of it. Their main purpose is not just showing off their clothes. An export fair is the best way for prospective buyers to browse around and sellers to impress. Many contacts leading to contracts are made on the spot within minutes of 'garment business' jargon. Terms like 'C&F', 'FOB' 'price quotation' and 'Container shipment' are as commonplace as 'hello how are you?' A mere seam here or a zip there can determine whether or not a sale of millions of takas will be made. With stakes this high the garments businessmen are very anxious and on their best behaviour.

In this particular fair, the ambience was that of one big party only instead of making toasts it was the exchange of visiting cards that broke the ice. A great many 'thank you's', syrupy smiles and polite chit chat before luring the bait — or buyer into the lair.

The size of the crowd on the first day of the Expo was enough proof, of its success. Hundreds of people kept coming in — some were representatives of foreign buying houses, some were just curious and many were there with the hope of being videoed with the P.M.

Outside the main exhibition hall were stalls set up by various international cargo and courier service companies. These had charts, brochures, television sets and display items to attract the crowd.

On Friday May 8, the last day of the fair the crowd was even bigger. Everyone seemed to be quite impressed with the layout of the show but more with the products on display. It didn't matter if some of the tube lights hadn't been fixed or if the carpet hadn't been vacuumed properly. As far as the participants were concerned, BAT EXPO '92 had been a big hit. Many buyers had shown a keen interest and some had already placed large orders. 1992, it was hoped, was going to be a good year for garment factory owners.

Six-day workshop on environment begins

Journalists can play an active role in creating awareness about dangers of environmental degradation among the members of the public, a workshop was told in Dhaka Saturday, reports UNB.

Inaugurating the six-day workshop on "Environment and development: mass media reporting" at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), its Director General Ahmed Humayun said the writings of journalists could make the people conscious of the disastrous impact of environmental degradation.

Twenty-one journalists from national and regional dailies, news agencies and radio are participating in the workshop jointly organised by PIB and the Press Foundation of Asia. Humayun said massive population boom and unplanned development threatened the very existence of a pollution-free environment.

Referring to the large-scale cutting of trees around the globe, he said 200 million hectares (20 crore hectares) of forest land had been depleted during the last 30 years.

JSD (Rab) public meet May 16

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Metropolitan branch of JSD (Rab) decided yesterday that it would organise a public gathering in front of the Alawala building at Motijheel on May 16 in support of the May 18 half-day hartal.

JSD (Rab) earlier called a half-day hartal in the city on May 18 as a simultaneous programme of the National Coordination Committee for Realisation of the Spirit of the Liberation War and Resistance to the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 to press the government execute the verdict of the 'gana adalat' that tried Oalam Azam for war crimes.

Legal Aid Committee meets

A meeting of the Legal Aid Association for the Distressed Persons was held Friday at 4 pm at its head office 13-B/1-8 Mirpur, with Advocate Hashmatullah Sheikh in the chair, says a press release.

Radio Beijing team accorded reception

Information Minister Nazmul Huda today said the existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and China would be further consolidated during the time of the present democratic government in Dhaka Saturday, reports BSS.

He referred to the Bangladesh-China friendship bridge over the river Buriganga and said it was bearing the significance of cordiality of the Chinese government and its people for the government of Bangladesh and its people.

The information Minister was addressing as the chief guest a reception accorded to the visiting three-member Chinese delegation from Radio Beijing at Scout Bhaban Saturday evening.

Bangladesh Radio Beijing Listeners Club accorded the reception which was led by director of the Radio Beijing Bengali service Shi Ching Yew.

With the club's President Syed Rezaul Karim Belal in the chair, the function was also addressed by its General Secretary Zillur Rahman Zillu, and Shi Ching Yew.

The information Minister hoped that Radio Beijing would project Bangladesh and its people to the world through

the Radio Beijing. Praising such visits by radio journalists, Nazmul Huda said this kind of visit helped consolidate relations between the countries. He also said that a Bangladeshi delegation of radio journalist would visit Beijing soon.

BRC Chairman visits Rabita

The visiting Chairman, Asia Committee of the British Refugee Council (BRC), Member, House of Lords, UK and President, Stranded Pakistanis Settlement project in UK, Rt Hon'able Lord David Ennals, who arrived in city on Thursday May 7 straightway drove to Rabita Medical Hospital, Mohammadpur, Dhaka after holding a Press Conference at National Press Club, Dhaka to meet the ailing leader of Stranded Pakistanis Alhaj M Nasim Khan says a press release. He remained with him for about an hour. He also apprised of developments concerning repatriation of Stranded Pakistanis and handed over some useful documents received from Pakistan High Commission in London.

740-km cross-dam to boost shrimp, salt output soon

BADARKHALI, (Cox's Bazar), May 9 : Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan has said that the government was taking effective measures to construct a 740-km cross-dam soon in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong districts for increasing the production of shrimp and salt, reports BSS.

The Minister was addressing a big public meeting of salt growers and shrimp cultivators at Badarkhali under Chakoria upazila yesterday.

The Industries Minister said the cross-dam damaged by the devastating cyclone and tidal surge last year would be constructed on a priority basis because the salt produced and shrimp cultivated in these areas play an important role in the economic development of the country.

Khan pointed out that every inch of land in these areas was highly valuable because salt is grown here from January to June and shrimp is cultivated from July to December. The Industries Minister ad-

vised the people to make the best use of land by adopting intensive shrimp and salt cultivation through scientific process.

Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Industries — Syed Manzur Hossain, ASM Firoz, Mohammad Abdus Sobhan, Miah Abdullah Wajed, Begum Shamsunnahar, Khwaja Ahsanullah and members of the Jatiya Sangsad belonging to the salt growing areas — Shahjahan Chowdhury, Enamul Huq and Abdur Rashid also addressed the meeting, according to an official release.

The Industries Ministers urged the salt growers to play pioneering role in achieving self-reliance in the essential consumer items through increasing production like every year.

He pointed out that as per the recommendations of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industries, the government had adopted real-

istic credit schemes for the salt growers, as a result the salt growers this year had received fair price of their products.

Khan said being encouraged by such pragmatic measures, the salt growers produced a record quantity of salt within a short period. The government would continue its cooperation to the salt growers for maintaining their increased production, he said.

The Industries Minister said there would be no need for importing salt this year as required quantity has been grown in the country. In future too, the government would continue to inspire the salt growers for increasing production so that we do not need to import the item.

The Industries Minister and the Jatiya Sangsad members paid extensive visit to the vast salt growing areas of Moheshkhali, Kutubdia and exchanged views with salt growers on the prospects and problems of salt mill owners and growers.



The Chairman of the visiting Asia committee of the British Refugee Council (BRC) Lord David Ennals called on State Minister for Rehabilitation, Lutfur Rahman Khan at his office Saturday. —PID photo

DU 'Ka' unit Admission Test results today

By Staff Correspondent

The results of Admission Test under the 'Ka' unit of the Dhaka University will be announced today (Sunday), says a press release.

The results will be available at the offices of the Biological Science department and the Science faculties as well as at the Administrative Building of the university.

The dates of interviews: Merit serial from 1 to 200 on May 19, from 201 to 400- May 20, 401 to 800- May 21, 801 to 800, May 23, 801 to 1000- May 24, 1001 to 1200- May 25, 1201 to 1400- May 26, 1401 to 1600- May 27, 1601 to 1800- May 28, 1801 to 2000- May 30, 2001 to 2200, May 31, 2201 to 2400- June 1, 2401 to 2600- June 2, 2601 to 2800- June 3, 2801 to 3000- June 4, 3001 to 3200- June 6, 3201 to 3400- June 7 and 3401 to 3600- June 8.

Interviews of first 100 candidates will be interviewed from 9 am to 1 pm and the rest will be interviewed from 1.30 pm to 5.30 pm on each day of interview, the press release says.

Italy implementing agri projects

Italy is implementing an agriculture and irrigation rehabilitation project in three cyclone-affected upazilas of the southern part of country in collaboration with the government of Bangladesh, Reports BSS.

An elaborate discussion on the project was held between the agriculture and irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M Majid-Ul-Haq and the visiting chief of Italian delegation on agriculture rehabilitation Dr Francesco Badioli at Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka Saturday.

Agriculture Secretary KM Rabbani, Irrigation Secretary M Asafuddin, senior officials of the government of Bangladesh, Italian Ambassador to Bangladesh Claudio Pacifico and three members of the delegation were present on the occasion.

An Italian delegation visited Mireswarai, Sitakunda and Sandwip upazilas under Chittagong district last year after the devastating cyclone and tidal-bore. They expressed keen interest in participating in the agriculture rehabilitating activities in those areas.

Italian Government will provide heavy instruments and equipments free of cost for earth work and bolder lifting for the construction of flood protection embankment. Italy will provide training facility to the Bangladesh manpower appointed for maintenance of those equipments. Italy will also supply spare parts of the instruments in the first phase.

Weather

Rain with gusty wind likely

By Staff Correspondent

Light rain or shower accompanied by gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over the regions of Dhaka, Bogra, Pabna, Tangail, Mymensingh, Comilla and Sylhet during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Saturday.

Weather will remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country. Met office forecast.

Day temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius during the period.

There was no rain over the country Saturday.

The sun sets in Dhaka today (Sunday) at 6:32 pm and rises tomorrow (Monday) at 5:18 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min	
Dhaka	34.8	26.6	75
Chittagong	33.4	25.8	78
Rajshahi	38.2	23.0	82
Khulna	36.6	25.5	78
Barisal	34.4	26.2	86
Cox's Bazar	34.0	26.5	72
Sylhet	33.0	22.4	74
Dinajpur	33.8	23.0	78
Iswardi	39.7	22.8	81

What's on today

Seminar on Hajj

The Hajj Committee, Bangladesh will hold a day-long seminar on "Significance and dimensions of Hajj" today (Sunday) at 9 am at Hotel Sheraton.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Prof MA Mannan will attend the seminar as chief guest while Iranian Ambassador Muhammad Ganjidoost, Cultural Attache H Ali Mahadi and UGC Chairman Prof Shamsul Huq will be present as special guests.

Seminar on economic policy

A two-day seminar on "Policy options for economic breakthrough" begins today (Sunday) at 10-30 am at hotel Sonargaon.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will open the seminar, organised under the joint auspices of Jatiya Press Club and Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will attend as chief guest the concluding ceremony of the seminar tomorrow (Monday).

Dhanmondi Rotary Club meet

The 295th regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhanmondi will be held today (Sunday) at 5-30 pm at Sonargaon Hotel.

Today's programme includes handing of the Paul Harris Fellow Recognition Certificate in memory of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to Sheikh Hasina.

Chhayanat

Chhayanat, a leading cultural organisation of the country, has organised a musical soiree at 7 pm today (Sunday) at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in observance of Rabindra Joyanti.

Taher Sangsad

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Taher Sangsad will be held today (Sunday) at 7-30 pm at the Dhanmondi residence of Dr Ahmed Sharif, at House No - 25/B, Road-1.

. . . . and tomorrow

Semina on Information Technology

Bangladesh Computer Council and the Asian Pacific Development Centre will jointly sponsor a five-day seminar-cum-workshop which begins tomorrow (Monday) at 9am at the BCIC auditorium.

Condolence meeting

The Central Committee of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) will hold a condolence meeting in memory of its member Dr Akhlakur Rahman tomorrow (Monday) at the Taher Auditorium at 4-30 pm.

Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Hasanul Huq Inu, Sharif Nurul Ambia, AFM Mahbubul Huq, Naim Jahangir, Bariater Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, Prof Mozaffar Ahmed, Dr Saidur Rahman and Dr Mustahidur Rahman will take part in the discussion to be held in this connection.

Kazi Aref Ahmed will preside over the meeting.

Seminar on Coronary disease

"Esho Shasthyer Katha Bol" (Lets talk about health), an organisation run by the Medical College students, will hold a seminar on "Coronary heart disease: a modern day menace" at the Sonargaon Hotel at 9-30 am tomorrow (Monday).

Deputy Leader of the Parliament Dr AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury will attend the seminar as chief guest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Royal Netherlands Embassy acknowledges with gratitude the messages of felicitation on the occasion of the official birthday of

Her Majesty the Queen

of the Netherlands on 30 April 1992.

The expressions of warm friendship to Her Majesty and to the people of the Netherlands are highly appreciated.

The Royal Netherlands Embassy
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TV Sunday

5.00	Opening announcement
	Al-Quran
	Programme Summary
5.10	News in Bangla
5.20	Recitation from the Bible
5.30	Maake Niyce (Programme for mothers)
6.00	Rock sports
6.30	Sports Programme
7.05	Tagore Songs
8.00	News in Bangla
8.30	Probaha
9.00	Drama Series : Oshin
10.00	News in English
10.30	Sanglap (Dialogue)
11.30	Khabar/The News
11.40	Monday's programme summary
11.45	Closing