

Dhaka Day by Day

Marbling — an Ancient Art Form

by Nancy Wong



Students flicking colours on to the trays of treated water during a recent demonstration of marbling by Beth McKee (second from left) at the Gulshan residence.

If you belong to the category of admirers of artists who think you could never produce anything approaching a work of art, take heart. For marbling is such an art form that practically anyone with color sense and some imagination can whip up a finished painting in minutes.

All one needs is a trayful of distilled water mixed with carrageenan and moss, sheets of paper treated with alum (a chemical easily available in art shops) and dried oxgall (for its chemical equivalent) mixed with water color and presto, you are in business.

Beth McKee, a talented Canadian calligrapher, who presented the English Queen Mother a specimen of her work when she visited Ottawa in 1989, showed how the magic worked in a day-long workshop conducted at her Gulshan residence recently. There, a group of enthusiastic ladies learnt how to transform a pattern of colours floating on water on to a piece of paper — producing a painting literally in minutes! This art form bears the name, "marbling" since it resembled some of the veined designs found in natural marble.

The ultimate shape and look of the pattern transformed on to the piece of paper depends largely on the way the individual wishes it to be. Hence the personal satisfaction one derives from this art form. All one does is to flick little drops of paint (here's where one's colour sense can run riot) on to the surface of treated distilled water contained in a tray. This forms the basic "canvas" upon which you enlarge your pattern by either blowing delicately on the surface and vary it further by using small "instruments" such as eye-drop dispensers, small rake-like gadgets (which can be home-made) and tiny Bengali-like brooms made of dried corn straw.

Infinite varieties of pattern resembling curly sea-waves frothy in action, intricate fish scale-

like designs and lovely flowers in a garden can be formed with a wish of blowing motion made with your lips and a delicate touch here and there of the paint on water. The best part of this for the amateur painter is that if you don't fancy the "finished design" which appears on the water, you can wipe it all away with a small rake... and start all over again!

When you think you like the pattern you have created, place a piece of alum treated paper (you can easily make your own) on top of it and voila — it is transformed on to it and there you have your very own painting. The next stage is simply to pour some water carefully on to the painting, hang it up to dry and it is all ready for framing. For Beth McKee's students however, they have plans to use their marbled paintings to decorate the end papers of a book containing samples of their captivating calligraphy. Such artistic patterns are also popular for book binding covers.

There are some inspired marblers who take this art form so seriously that they are meticulous about the environment in which it is practised. That is they will do it in a room which has no windows, all doors closed so as to prevent the slightest trace of dust settling on the water and paper surfaces; and the atmospheric temperature kept at a certain constant level. Marbling can also be applied on T-shirts, ceramics and wood: in which case different kinds of paints would be used.

For those with a penchant for secrets, it will delight their hearts to know that marbling was historically a secret process, closely guarded by the Japanese who invented it around the twelfth century. With the passage of time, this found its way via the trade routes to Europe from whence it spread to the rest of the world.

Beijing keen to provide acrobatic training to Dhaka

China has shown keen interest to provide acrobatic training to Bangladesh children and juvenile. Final decision will be taken after mutual discussion in future, reports BSS.

The visiting Chinese Acrobatic troupe led by team leader Fang Tong Dey offered the proposal when the troupe called on State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum Tuesday morning.

Welcoming the Chinese Acrobatic Troupe, the State Minister said that the visit of the troupe would be helpful to consolidate the cultural ties between the two countries. She expressed hope that the friendly relation between two countries would strengthen further.

The Acrobatic troupe leader recalled the long traditional cultural exchanges between Bangladesh and China. He showed keen interest about Bangladeshi prominent poets and literatures.

Cultural Secretary Islam-uddin Malik and high officials of Chinese embassy and cultural ministry were present on the occasion.

Bill separating judiciary from executive being examined

RAJSHAHI, May 12: Law and Justice Minister Mirza Gohar Hafiz said here today that necessary measures were being taken to separate judiciary from executive, reports BSS.

He said that the Bill for separation of judiciary from executive was being examined minutely by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice Ministry to make it acceptable to all.

The Law Minister was addressing a meeting of lawyers at a local Bar Association building here today.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mizanur Rahman Minu and President of Rajshahi Bar Association Mujibur Rahman Talukder.

Mirza Hafiz said that the present democratic government was committed to establish rule of law in the country. He said, since lawyers were the vital part of the judicial system, cordial relation between the lawyers and the judges was indispensable for better functioning. The service condition of the judges had been improved, he mentioned.

The minister said, upazila civil courts were being shifted to the district headquarters in phases.

Earlier, addressing the fifth founding anniversary and prize distribution ceremony of Balajannessa Girls High School here, the Law Minister said that the government attached special priority to women education to ensure their participation in development activities.

UNB service for Ctg newspaper

United News of Bangladesh (UNB) has made arrangements to make its computerised news service available for the newspapers in Chittagong, says UNB.

UNB home service and international service from Associated Press of America (AP) consist of nearly 40,000 words daily.

Similar arrangements will be made to deliver UNB service to other divisional and district towns.

Matiur resigns from Ajker Kagoj

By Staff Correspondent
Journalist Matiur Rahman Chowdhury has resigned from Ajker Kagoj, a national daily Tuesday.

According to a press release, following a disagreement between the newspaper owner and the journalist regarding publication of an article named 'Shirsha Column' on May 9 by Chowdhury.

TV Wednesday

- 5:00 Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 5:30 Campus
- 6:00 Sports Programme: Giffete World Sports Special
- 6:30 Samachar
- 7:05 Programme of New Artists
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Ritter tale tale: Dance programme
- 9:00 Film Show: MacGyver
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Kissa Kahini
- 11:30 Khabar/ The News
- 11:40 Thursday's Programme
- 11:45 Closing announcement



Lord Ennals, Chairman of the Asia Committee of the British Refugee Council called on Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her office Tuesday.

Ennals apprised of BDRCS problems

Chairman of the Asia Committee of the British Refugee Council Lord David Ennals called on Syed Shahidul Huq Jamal, MP, Chairman of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) Tuesday, reports UNB.

They discussed various matters of mutual interest of the two organisations.

The Red Crescent Chairman explained to Ennals various programmes and projects of the Society, including its current programmes for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts.

Lord Ennals evinced keen interest in the cyclone preparedness programme.

Head of the Delegations of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Marcel Fortier was present.

'Storage dams in Nepal, Bhutan can help reduce fury of flood'

Eminent water expert B M Abbas A T yesterday stressed the need for storage of water in the monsoon for utilisation in the dry season, reports BSS.

Addressing a weekly tea meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka as guest speaker on "Sharing of River Water: Imperatives for Bangladesh," he said construction of storage dams in Nepal and Bhutan can help reduce severity of floods in the region and meet the dry season water requirement.

Abbas said, the future of millions of people rests on the long-term optimum development of water resources of river basins, treating the entire river basin as one unit and its water as property of all living in the basin, to be equitably allocated.

In this connection, he recalled the futile negotiations on the sharing of water with

India over the last 40 years. He said, the withdrawal of water of the Ganges through Farakka has been causing adverse impact on river hydraulics through sharp decrease in the water level and river flow.

The adverse effects, he said, have been increasing, reflected in the siltation of the river beds, decrease in total upland flow in the estuary and increase in salinity, sedimentation and drainage congestion.

Abbas further said that the drastic reduction of the dry season river flow along with the lowering of the ground water table is inducing trends towards desertification of the western part of Bangladesh.

Parliament member KA Taher, presided over the meeting.

Dwelling at length on various aspects of adverse impact

of Farakka Barrage, Abbas said, Bangladesh must take effective steps to offset the increasing damage through implementation of the programme of constructing barrages on the major rivers of the country. He said, the Ganges flow at Hardige Railway Bridge recorded an all-time low of only 13,000 cusecs during the current dry season.

In this connection, Abbas said, the two barrages on the Ganges and the Brahmaputra will irrigate more than 50 per cent of the total irrigable land and also open the way to an all-round development.

He noted that India has been following a policy of bilateralism and is opposed to water development river basin-wise jointly with the co-basin states and insists on talks separately with Nepal and Bangladesh.

Abbas strongly pleaded for the execution of the Ganges Barrage Project on a top priority basis as the Ganges-Kobadak pumps become inoperative with the fall of water level in the river. He also opposed the link canal proposal for diverting the water of the Brahmaputra into the Ganges above Farakka. He described it as merely transferring the shortage from one river to another.

He said Bangladesh holds the principle of equitable apportionment of the water of an international drainage basin.

Abbas said, storage dams which will also produce powers can control the recurring floods, augment the dry season flow of the rivers and boost irrigation, navigation and exploitation of agricultural and mineral resources of the basins.

Steps to protect coastal wetlands suggested

Minister for Fisheries, Livestock, Environment and Forest Abdullah Al-Noman returned home Tuesday after attending three-day International conference on Responsible Fishing held in Cancun city, Mexico

Times employees demand payment of arrear dues

Journalists, employees and press workers of the Bangladesh Times Tuesday demanded of the government to take immediate steps for payment of their last three months salaries, reports UNB.

They blamed the government for deadlock in the process of forming a trust of Bangladesh Times and Dainik Bangla and also demanded formation of an effective trust for providing efficient management and solvency of the papers.

The joint meeting organised by BFUJ, DUJ, Press Workers Federation and Newspapers Employees Federation, the meeting demanded clearing of salary by the first date of each month and demanded payment of all dues including bonuses by this month.

Held at the newsroom of the Times and chaired by Times DUJ unit chief Jaiul Abedin, the meeting urged the authorities to take the unions into trust regarding formation of Trust.

Housewife commits suicide

A young housewife of Nagar Mahal village in Keraniganj upazila of the district allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling hook on Monday, reports UNB.

Police said Nazma Begum (16), wife of Zillur Rahim Masud, committed suicide following a family feud. Halting from Luxmipur district they got married seven months ago.

Director of Fisheries Department Alaur Rahman accompanied the minister to the conference.

Sixty six countries with nineteen ministerial delegation attended the conference.

The conference was designed to evolve a code of conduct in fishing for checking environmental degradation and over exploitation of fisheries. It has also a direct relevance to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) scheduled to be held in Brazil in June next.

Noman highlighted the widening gap between demand and supply of fish and environmental hazards arising out of fishing in Bangladesh. He called for a concerted effort on a global basis to evolve a policy of responsible fishing.

The conference issued a declaration urging the states to

adopt an effective fisheries planning and management standard for maintenance of the quantity, quality and diversity of the fisheries to ensure supply of fish products to feed present and future population.

The declaration laid stresses on scientific knowledge regarding the biology, abundance, distribution and fluctuation of fisheries. It pleaded for necessary measures to protect coastal wetlands and other areas of critical fisheries habitual from all kinds of degradation.

It also called for international cooperation involving financial support to the developing countries to enhance their capacity in marine scientific research and fisheries management.

The declaration recommended to the United Nations to declare the next ten years as the decade of responsible fishing.

Weather

No change in temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or shower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over the region of Rangpur, Mymensingh and Sylhet during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Tuesday.

Met office forecast that weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

No rainfall was recorded for the consecutive second day Tuesday anywhere over the country.

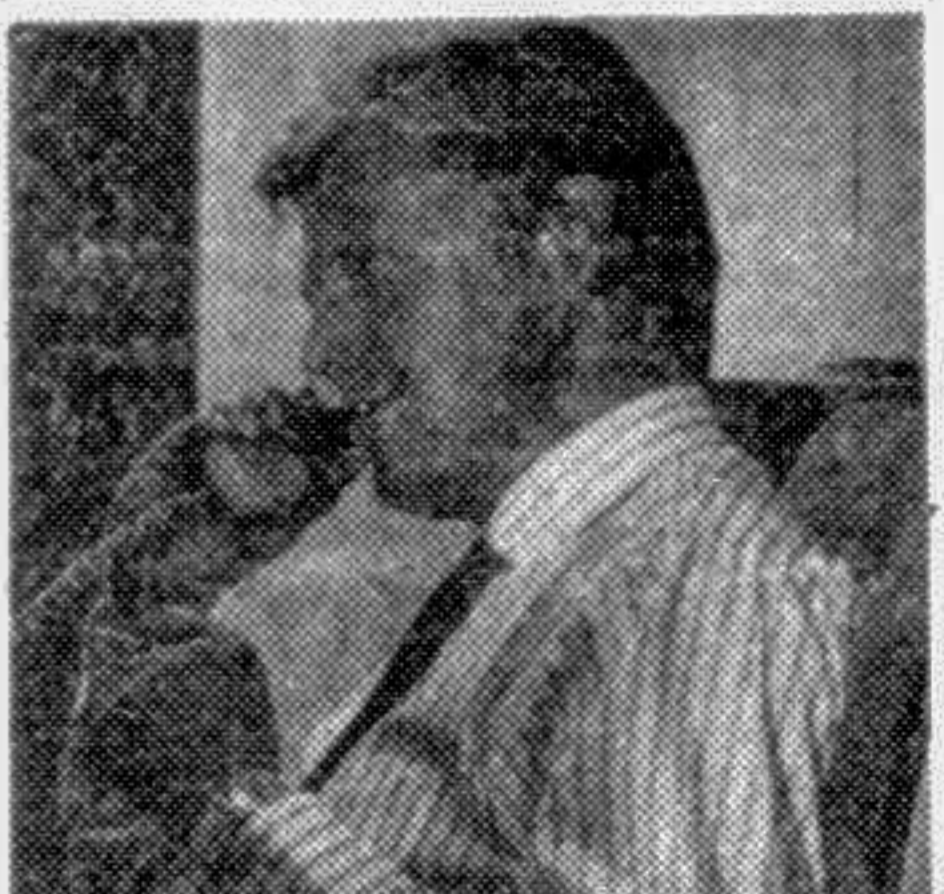
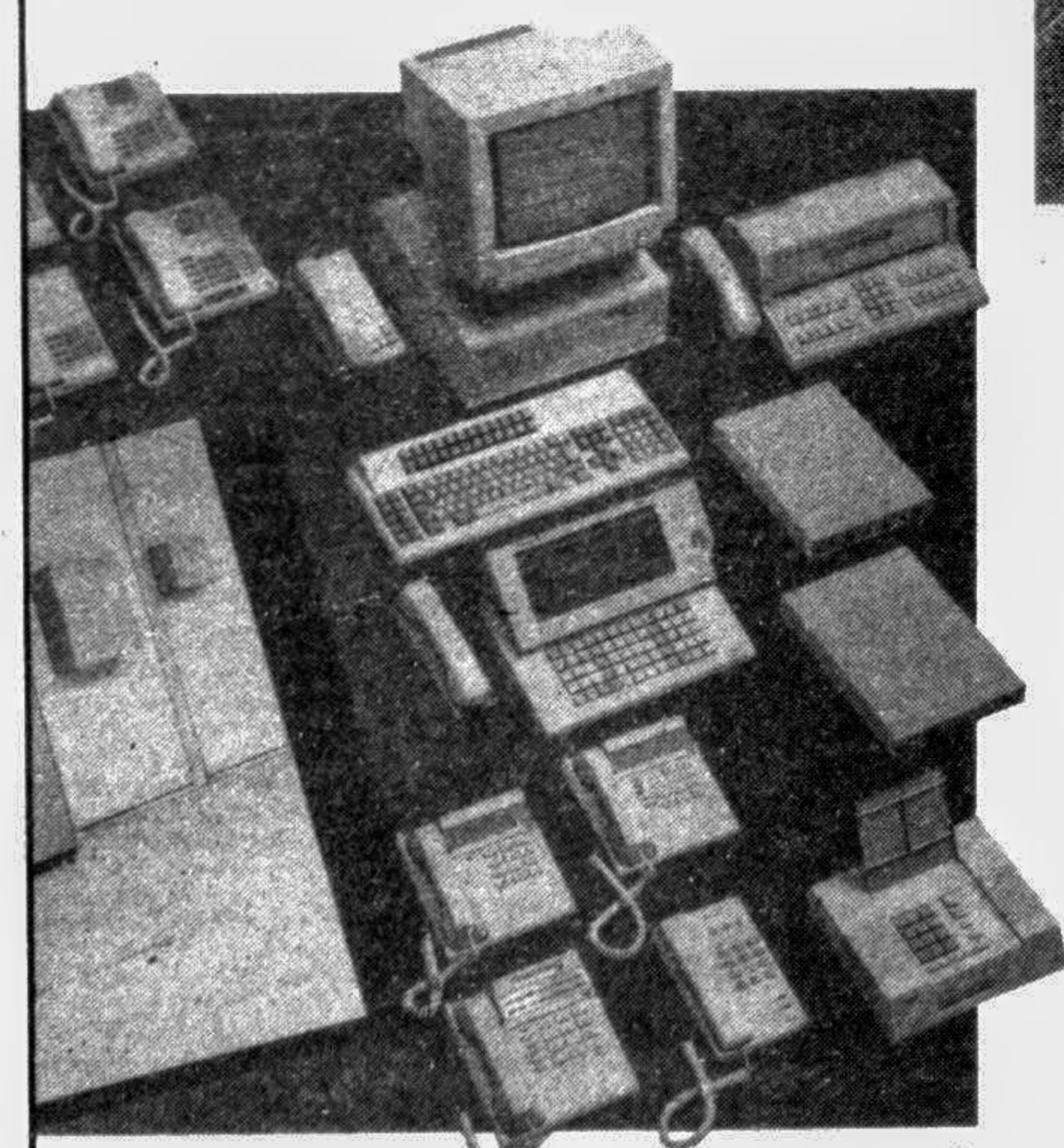
The sun sets in Dhaka on Wednesday at 6:34 pm and rises on Thursday at 5:16 am.

The highest temperature of 39.4 degree Celsius was recorded in Rajshahi.

Temperature and humidity recorded at important cities on Tuesday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	35.4	27.2	72	61
Chittagong	33.8	26.2	86	71
Rajshahi	39.4	25.2	74	50
Khulna	35.8	25.6	87	68
Barisal	35.2	26.4	84	73
Cox's Bazar	34.0	26.4	78	72
Sylhet	34.3	23.0	65	72
Dinajpur	35.0	24.5	68	60

COMMUNICATION TO FIT YOUR COMPANY



There's more to business communication than the telephone. The SOPHO-S range includes all the equipment needed to integrate data, text and image into the network: line adapter modules to allow workstations and telephone sets to share extension cables; plug-in cards to connect telephones into PCs...

We could go on, but the range is constantly expanding. Suffice it to say, SOPHO-S has the right tools for the job. So the job gets done better, faster and more effectively.

The SOPHO-S family includes systems with capacities from 20 lines to 20,000 — plus all the equipment for effective business communications.

For more information please call us at Tel : 316011. PABX : 815306-10

Professional Products & Systems Division
Philips Bangladesh Limited

16/17 Kawran Bazar, Dhaka
Fax : 880-2-813062



PHILIPS