

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Student Exchange

by Sabir Mustafa



Subhrangsu Bhattacharya (left) and Surangama Bhattacharya.

"Inqulab Zindabadi" the lady from Calcutta said.

She didn't notice it at the time, but the reaction among the audience was decidedly a mixed one. The older ones smiled, as much with nostalgia as with admiration; some of the younger ones looked bemused, while some others were quite confused.

Surangama Bhattacharya, vice-president of the West Bengal state council of the All-India Students Federation (AISF), had ended her speech with the two words that have been the battle-cry of the Indian Left for over 70 years.

Inqulab Zindabad, meaning Long Live the Revolution, and nothing to do with the local press or controversies surrounding present-day Bangladesh politics.

"Perhaps I should have used the Bengali version, Biplob Dirghojibi Houk, instead," Surangama later admitted during a chat with The Daily Star.

She needn't have worried. Her audience, several thousand delegates and guests at the 1992 National Council of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) held at the institution of Engineers' Monday last, was too charmed by her delightful little speech to debate the point. The second or rather leading member of the AISF guest delegation at the BCL council Subhrangsu Bhattacharya found an inspirational message to take back to the students of Calcutta.

Subhrangsu said student leaders in India had always pointed to the revolutionary tradition of the student communities of Bangladesh and Myanmar as examples from which to take lessons and inspiration.

There was a time, he recalled, during the chief ministership of Siddharta Shankar Roy of Congress in the early 70s when repression, ill-discipline and terror characterised West Bengal life. But the advent of the Communist Party Marxist (CPM) government under Joyti Basu in 1977 put an end to all that.

Teachers, for instance, have been given back their place of respect in society. Landless farmers, workers now have a vastly improved sense of security, and West Bengal's rate of literacy is now above 50 per cent, making it second only to Kerala among all the states of India," Subhrangsu a Secretary of the all-India Council of the AISF, said at length.

There are still problems, particularly in education, Subhrangsu conceded, but he also pointed out that the CPM government had done more for the state's people than any other state government anywhere in India.

Surangama, looking resplendent in a light blue and white shalwar kameez, already had a deep admiration for the girl students of Dhaka University as she had heard about their heroic role during the tumultuous days of the anti-Ershad movement of Oct-Dec, 1990.

"In West Bengal or India, there wouldn't be a student movement without us women".

Surangama said, recalling with evident pride the name of Amarjit Kaur, a Punjabi woman who served for six years between 1979 and 85 as the Secretary-General of the AISF, one of India's biggest student organisations with two million members.

One thing that caught her eyes in Dhaka was the widespread practice of *gono sangeet* or patriotic songs by political groups.

Fakir Alamgir's rendition of "Joi Bangla, Banglar Joi" and "Nelson Mandela" at the BCL conference delighted the lady from Calcutta where *gono sangeet* is sung mainly from left-wing platforms.

To both Subhrangsu and Surangama, the advance made by Bangladesh in the field of popular music was inescapable.

"At the BCL conference, it was wonderful to see people dancing to Bengali songs sung by people like Suvro Dev, Kumar Viswajit and others. Here, you don't need Hindi or Western music to dance to. Also, all the songs we heard had that unmistakable quality that can only come from the roots of the Bengali soil," Subhrangsu said.

Surangama, whose family originated from Sakhtira, pointed out that Ekushey or the memory of the martyrs of Dhaka's Language Movement of 1952, was widely commemorated in West Bengal.

Early morning processions, poetry recitals, musical evenings were all part of West Bengal's commemoration of Ekushey as they are in Bangladesh, though not, she admitted, in the same scale as here.

The most important thing, to both the Bhattacharyas, was unity among the student communities of Bangladesh and India, and among other Asian countries.

The International Union of Students (IUS) and the Asian Students Information Centre in Delhi already have liaison with seven student organisations in Bangladesh, including the Jaiyatabadi Chhatra Dal.

"We want to hear from the progressive student groups in Bangladesh about what is wrong in Indo-Bangla relations. If India is doing any injustice to Bangladesh, then the student community of India will launch movement against it," Subhrangsu said, with Surangama giving a firm, affirmative nod.

## Doctors Assoc demands re-trial of Dr Milon's killing

Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) President Dr A K M Kamruzzaman and Secretary General Dr Md Atiqur Rahman Saturday demanded re-investigation and "re-trial" into killing of Dr Shamsul Alam Milon, reports BSS.

In a joint statement, they also condemned the negative role of a former secretary-General of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), who was present at the time of killing, during investigation and prosecution.

## River waters rising

Most of the major rivers recorded rise during the last 24 hours although they were flowing below danger level, according to a Water Development Board's press release Saturday, reports BSS.

The rivers recording rise at varying centimetres included the Brahmaputra, Teesta, Ganges, Buriganga, Kumar, Gumti, Haldia and Manu.

The rivers Surma and Kushiara recorded fall at different points during the same period.

Habigonj, Maulvibazar, Sylhet and Chilmari experienced significant rainfall during the last 24 hours while some other regions had moderate to heavy showers.

## Mugger nabbed

By Staff Correspondent

Police caught a snatcher red-handed near the church at Kakrail in the city Saturday afternoon.

Four hijackers reportedly halted a housewife, Farhana Fatema, and her daughter and snatched away a gold chain from the housewife's neck.

## Allocation in education sector to be increased in budget: Saifur

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman Thursday said the present democratically elected government is determined to improve the quality of life and develop human resources, reports BSS.

He said allocation in the education sector would be increased in the forthcoming budget of 1992-93 for the overall development of the country.

He was addressing as chief guest the 25th Annual General Meeting of the Bangladesh Association for the Aged Saturday at the Prabin Bhaban. Azizul Haq, President of the Association presided. Dr M A Wahid, Secretary General and Dr Maliha Khatun, Assistant Secretary of the Association also spoke on the occasion.

Spelling out the national priorities of the government, the Finance Minister said, "We are pledged to improve the quality of life of the people."

He urged the aged people to help the government spread literacy in the country. He said the association of the aged should chalk out education and development-oriented programmes.

The Finance Minister assured the aged that the government would undertake appropriate programmes for the elderly people of the country. He sought their cooperation in eradicating poverty, popularising family planning, health care and spreading education. If the Association undertakes programmes, there will be no dearth of fund, he said.

Referring to the breakdown of the traditional joint family system and values in the country with the influence of the western culture, he said in the developed countries, the state takes over the responsibilities of the aged through its social welfare programmes. But our socio-cultural system is different and we should consider this at the time of the formulation of the programmes for the aged, he said.

## It is our social commitment to help oppressed: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday sought cooperation of the voluntary organisations in helping the government to remove hunger, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy and diseases facing the country's poor people, reports UNB.

"There is no greater service than the service to humanity and it is our social commitment to help the oppressed, deprived and the down-trodden," Begum Zia said while addressing the 5th annual district convention of Lions Club District 315-A here.

Presided over by Lions district governor Humayun Zahir, the function was also addressed by Lions convention chairman Fakir Ashraf, former advisor of the interim government Alamgir M A Kabir and director of International Lions Mohon Lal Tulsian.

The Prime Minister said her government is yet to fulfill the adequate civic amenities including education and health facilities to all citizens.

"We have resource constraints and the government alone cannot bear these responsibilities," she said adding her government would welcome private and institutional initiatives in helping the people.

She also urged the affluent sections to come forward in helping the down-trodden.

Begum Zia lauded the welfare programmes taken up by the Lions Club after last year's cyclone and their regular eye-camp services and voluntary blood donation programmes.

The Prime Minister urged the Lions to come forward with effective literacy programmes for the poor. "Education is a must for alleviating poverty," she reminded.

Responding to a demand by some speakers for lifting ban

on social service activities by government officials, imposed during the Ershad regime, she said the government would look into the matter.

She distributed some medical equipment like ECG machine, microscopes and wheel chairs to institutions like Sir Salimullah Medical College, Diabetic Hospital, Shishu Hospital, Suhrawardi Hospital. The equipment were donated by members of the Lions Club.

## Youngman electrocuted

By Staff Correspondent


An unidentified youngman was electrocuted near Chand Textile Mills Limited at Shyempur, Demra, Saturday morning.

While the youngman was chopping a branch of a tree, a torn electric wire fell on him and he died on the spot.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy and an unnatural death (UD) case was registered with Demra police in this connection, said police.



Awami League leader Abdur Razzak addressing a rally organised by Joy Bangla Sangskritik Oikyajote in front of the National Press Club Saturday. — Star photo



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## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh seeks applications from female and male Bangladeshi nationals for the position of Economist. The broad responsibilities include sectoral analysis of the socio-economic and financial developments in the country, preparation of economic and financial feasibility studies for development projects and programmes as well as active participation in the formulation and periodic review of the country programme.

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Applications marked confidential, and including a curriculum vitae (no copies of references certificates or professional papers should be submitted at this time) should be sent to the office of Personnel Services Section, UNDP, P.O. Box 224, Dhaka-1000, by 4 June 1992.

## Dr Nurul Islam gets WHO award

National Professor Dr Nurul Islam has been awarded a "tobacco or health commemorative medal" by World Health Organization (WHO) on the occasion of World No-tobacco Day, 1992, reports BSS.

The medal is awarded to individuals and organizations who have distinguished themselves for continuous action in the prevention of tobacco use.

Dr Islam, who is the President of ADIUNIK, an anti-smoking organization, was nominated for the award in recognition of his achievements in tobacco control.

The award will be presented at a ceremony at WHO headquarters in Geneva on May 27.

Prof Islam will personally receive the award.



### Sunday

5-00	Opening announcement Al-Quran
	Programme summary
5-10	News in Bangla
5-20	Recitation from the Bible
5-30	School Bichitra
6-00	TV series: Rock Sports
6-30	Sports programme: Cricket
7-05	Tagore songs
8-00	News in Bangla
8-30	Special programme on World Telecommunication Day
9-00	Drama series: Oshin
10-00	News in English
10-30	Rang Rong
11-30	Khabar/The News
11-40	Monday's programme summary
11-45	Closing

## What's on today . . . .

### Rotary Club of Dhanmondi

The 296th regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhanmondi will be held today (Sunday) at 5:30 pm at Sonargaon Hotel. Dr M Shamsheer Ali, Vice-Chancellor of Open University will speak on "Open University" as guest speaker.

### Seminar on Telecommunications

The city chapter of the Engineers Institution, Bangladesh and Bangladesh Civil Service (Telecom) Samity will jointly organise a seminar titled "Telecommunications and space: new horizons" at the institutes auditorium today (Sunday) beginning at 5 pm.

Minister for Post and Telecommunications M Keramat Ali will be the chief guest on the occasion.

## Weather

### Day temperature may rise

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or shower accompanied by temporary nor'wester, gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over the regions of Pabna, Bogra, Jessore, Kushtia, Tangail, Maymensingh, Dhaka, Comilla and Sylhet during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Saturday.

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

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


There were 7 mm rainfall recorded in Sylhet and 1 mm in Srimangal.

Sun sets today (Sunday) at 6:35 pm and rises on Monday at 5:15 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	35.5	27.5	75	59
Chittagong	33.6	26.8	74	72
Rajshahi	38.8	26.3	69	48
Khulna	35.0	26.6	72	58
Burisal	34.0	25.0	78	78
Cox's Bazar	34.0	28.0	70	73
Sylhet	24.6	19.6	98	82
Dinajpur	30.3	22.5	85	84

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