

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Where Have All the Lakes Gone?

by Parveen Anam

Joan Baez's famous lines, 'where have all the flowers gone' etc, etc, bring back haunting memories of times gone by. The flowers can be seen, from time to time, it is the lakes, in this our city of Dhaka, which apparently put on the disappearing act. And perhaps prompts us to wonder, 'Where, oh where, have all the lakes gone?' Dhaka was a beautiful city, dotted with

have offered spaces to park the boats in, when renting out these buildings, instead of car parks and the driving schools could have done roaring business, by giving boating and canoeing lessons. The wise do not tamper with nature, we are told. But we are all wise, in this city of Dhaka. So, nature's outlets, of natural drainage, had to be tampered with, with disastrous consequences. But the pundits and the city fathers know it all. Build walls to keep out the flood waters. You could almost applaud their originality of thought, actually. And wonder aloud what went wrong, with such careful planning. The sharp rise in the temperature and the lack of rains, they will inform you, has nothing to do with the lakes being filled up. It's the green house effect. Bravo to the well informed city father and the powers that be' and all without the advantage of the CNN. Yet, they were hardly visiting the hotels to



get their information. They are just well-read. It has never entered their wee brains, that all this adds to the 'green house effect'. We all contribute, in our small way, or big. And let us not forget for a moment that any contribution we make to the overall environment, in the ultimate analysis, has its effect on the 'green house effect'. 'Ignorance is bliss,' we agree, but ignorance stretched to such lengths is foolishness. Let us leave the lakes, which still exist, as an apology for the previous ones, alone.

of the world. True, feeble voices were raised in protest and outrage. But they were the weak minority and were quickly overruled. Soon, the other side of the picture emerged. Not that the pundits were worried. 'Nature's ways' was the explanation given for the likes of us. Naturally, it was 'nature's way.' What other way was there? Where was the rain water supposed to drain off to? On to the main road. Where was the flood water supposed to go? Into the houses, where else? The houses built on the ex-lakes. Perhaps the pundits could

## Tributes paid to Tagore

Speakers at a discussion, organised by 'Rabindra Charcha Kendra' at its office Friday, paid tributes to Rabindranath Tagore to mark his 131st birth anniversary, reports BSS.

The discussion meeting was presided over by poet Abul Hossain. Dr Ahmed Rafiq, Syed Abul Maksud, Raisuddin Bhuiyan, Saïda Kamal, Kayanta Roy and Rea Mahmud discussed various aspects of the life and works of the Nobel laureate.

They urged the government to organise next Rabindra Jayanti at a national level at Patishar where, they said, Rabindranath had not only spent a considerable time of his life to look after his Zamindari but also carried out rural development activities.

## World No-Tobacco Day tomorrow

World No-Tobacco Day '92 will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world tomorrow (Sunday) with this year's theme being: Tobacco-free Workplaces: Safer and Healthier, reports UNB.

The first No-Tobacco Day was launched by World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1988.

This year WHO has called for alerting people to the problem on both sides of the industry, encouraging regulations banning smoking and fostering preventive action in workplaces by the health services.

It has also selected the themes for the years ahead: 'Health Services Including Health Personnel Against Tobacco' in 1993, 'The Media Against Tobacco' in 1994, 'The Economics of Tobacco' in 1995, 'Sports and the Arts Without Tobacco' in 1996, 'The United Nations and Specialised Agencies Against Tobacco' in 1997.

Adhunik, an organisation for anti-smoking campaign, has chalked out a day-long programme which includes anti-smoking procession, rallies, seminar, open discussion and distribution of posters and pamphlets.

## JASSAS to initiate research project on Zia

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Friday attended a discussion on Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman organised by Jatiyatabadi Samajik O Sangskritik Sangstha (JASSAS) at the Shilpakala Academy, reports BSS.

The discussion held to mark the 11th death anniversary of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman was addressed, among others, by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain, BFUJ President Reajuddin Ahmed, Secretary General Amanullah Kabir, Chairman of Political Science Department Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, writer Juvayda Gulshanara, Muktiyoddha Command Council Chairman Mahfuzur Rahman, Journalists Hedayet Hossain Moshed and Rezwan Siddiqui and JASSAS leaders Zahid Hossain Chunnun and Ruhul Amin. The function was presided over by JASSAS Convenor Amjad Hossain.

The Energy and Mineral Resources Minister said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had given the nation its true identity as a nation. He had initiated the correct political trend for the Bangladeshis. Other speakers paying rich tributes to Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman observed that the great leader had taken the responsibility to lead the nation whenever it plunged into deep crisis.

JASSAS Convenor Amjad Hossain announced that JASSAS would initiate a research project on Shaheed President Zia and a lecture series on him.



Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the Parliament addressing a three-day convention, on 'Women and Politics in Bangladesh' at the National Museum Auditorium Friday. Also in the Picture (from left) Dr Mahmuda Islam, Begum Sarwari Rahman, State Minister for Women Affairs and Dr Nazma Chowdhury. — Star photo

## 3-day convention on women and politics begins

# 'Sub-continent women were never out of politics'

A three-day convention on 'Women and Politics in Bangladesh' was inaugurated Friday with a view to hold a threadbare discussion on the position of women in politics and their future scope.

Organised by a research and study group 'Women for Women', the inaugural function at the National Museum auditorium was attended by Deputy Leader in the Parliament Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury as chief guest and State Minister for Women Affairs Begum Sarwari Rahman as special guest.

Women for Women President Dr. Nazma Chowdhury presided over the function. It was addressed by convenor of the Convention Preparatory Committee Dr. Mahmuda Islam and General Secretary of the Organisation Rasheda K. Chowdhury.

Prof. Chowdhury said that the women of this sub-continent were never out of politics since the Mughal empire.

'They were not in the limelight during that period but now they are actively participating and even leading major parties,' Chowdhury said.

He said that without active participation in politics it will

be difficult for women to establish their rights and to resist repression.

'Even in advanced countries women are being deprived, deceived and tortured and sometimes their beauty is being used as a commodity, the Deputy Leader of the House told some two hundred audience adding that it should be faced politically.'

He said that Margaret Thatcher with a long tenure as the Prime Minister of Britain, gave rise to a revolution there. The British Parliament currently had its first women speaker and 60 female MPs and in India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Myanmar and also in Pakistan, women played leading role.

In Bangladesh the major political parties except Jamaat-e-Islami have started placing women in appropriate position as a result of which the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader in Parliament are women.

'The Jamaat, so far I know, does not even believe in women leadership but they do not spare the women membership in the House,' Chowdhury said.

He said that without active participation in politics it will

He hoped that the convention would identify the major problems of women in our country and recommend proper amendment.

Begum Sarwari Rahman said that the politics in Bangladesh is not risky as it was earlier. So a large number of women are interested in it.

She expected that the convention would make the womenfolk about the aspects of politics.

A total of 147 representatives from 82 women organisations are participating in the convention which is being considered as the annual conference of the 'Women for Women'.

## Extension of time for power bills payment demanded

Shop owners in the capital Friday demanded extension of time for payment of arrears power and water bills without interest and surcharge upto June 30 from May 30.

In a joint statement, Md Helaluddin Hela and Md Shahabuddin, President and General Secretary respectively of the Federation of Dhaka Metropolitan Shop Owners' Association, said that due consideration on the time and capability of the consumers was needed before offering such rebate.

They said that the business community was not in a position before the Eid Ul Azha to pay the arrears bills of PDB and WASA to avail the opportunity.

PDB and WASA in a general notice recently announced to waive all interest and surcharge if the consumers paid the arrears bills by May 30.

## Water level in major rivers rises

The rivers Teesta, Buriganga, Manu and Meghna registered rise at varying centimetres during the last 24 hours, but they were flowing below danger level, reports BSS.

The major rivers which registered rise during the same period were the Brahmaputra, Surma and Khowai. The Ganges, however, registered rise at Rajshahi but receded at Hardinge Bridge.

There had been light to heavy showers at many places in Chittagong and Khulna divisions and a few places in Dhaka division.

The weather was mainly dry in Rajshahi division.

# Ideals of Zia will inspire nation for ages : Biswas

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Friday said reminiscence of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman would provide the nation an indomitable inspiration for ages in building the country, reports BSS.

Let his 11th death anniversary strengthen our commitment for building an exploitation free society instead of ferocity of mourning, he said.

In a message on the eve of the 11th death anniversary of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, President Biswas said objective and timely political steps of Shaheed Zia and unequivocal support of people to his development oriented 19-point programmes was the epoch making successful directive.

Expressing his deep respect to the beloved leader of the people, declarer of independence and valiant freedom fighter Shaheed President Zia

aur Rahman, Biswas said he (Zia) had united people with the ideals of Bangladeshi nationalism and initiated a new process in the socio-economic development of the country.

Shaheed Zia, the great patriotic leader, had embraced martyrdom in a heinous conspiracy in 1981 in Chittagong on this day, he said.

President Biswas said Shaheed Zia had widened the way for development and prosperity by introducing snatched away democratic rights and multi-party democracy in the country. His revolutionary steps for improving the lot of the rural people, which was our independence commitment, had created a great animosity among the neglected and deprived people, he said.

Shaheed Zia, President Biswas said, was at the top of his popularity for his tireless service to the people, honest

livelihood and dedication. Weeping of lakhs of people at his (Zia) death and mourning procession turned into strength, he said adding that Shaheed Zia had acquired the status of great statesman in the contemporary period.

President Biswas said Zia's democratic ideals had brought a qualitative change in our politics for the present generation. His bold programme for reorganising the peasants-labourers-working people and the youths had inspired all in building the country, he said.

The student community, he said, throughout the country was now reorganised as a force of followers of his ideals. Their role in anti-autocratic movement had now become a history.

President Biswas prayed to almighty Allah for the peace of his (Zia's) departed soul.

# Set up a separate ministry on technology, students to govt

A group of graduate and post-graduate students Friday called upon the government to set up a separate ministry styled as 'Information Technology and Computer Service' for strengthening the base of this hi-tech industry, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference here at the Jatiya Press Club, the group, representing the students of Dhaka University and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) said such a ministry should be set up under the direct guidance of the Prime Minister and comprise eminent scientists, efficient administrators and entrepreneurs.

'Computer technology can open up a new vista for millions of educated unemployed youths by providing them with creative and meaningful jobs

and thus enabling the country earn billions of dollars per annum. Asif Rahman of the Computer Science and Engineering Department of BUET told the press conference.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Rahman in a written statement said that Bangladesh was falling behind others due to its failure to be in the mainstream of agrarian and industrial revolutions. What is left for us is the revolution in the information technology, he pointed out and added, we must not miss the chance.

Rahman said, Information Technology has all the potentials to revolutionise all aspects of life including mass communication, education, management and administration.

He said computer is the tool of this revolution and expressed his confidence that Bangladesh had the intelligence, skill and capability to join this revolution.

Criticising the attitude of a section of officials and bureaucrats who were obstructing the information revolution and computerisation, the students demanded that 'data entry' be recognised as an industry to help initiation of labour intensive industries like garment and leather industry.

In this context, Rahman referred to the recent statement of Nusrat Retina, a Bangladeshi computer specialist living abroad who claimed

that Bangladesh could earn Taka 20 thousand crore a year by exporting computer service and data entry.

The students put forward a set of demands to the democratic government for the promotion and development of computer technology. The demands listed inclusion of computer in the curricula from school up to university, waiving of tax on computers used in educational institutions and taking up a definite programme to take Bangladesh at par with Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) within five to seven years.

## Saturday

- 5.00 Opening announcement Al-Quran
- 5.10 Programme summary
- 5.20 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Triptak
- 5.30 Special Programme on Zia
- 6.00 Drama: Moon Dial
- 6.30 Mati O Manush
- 7.05 Banshari
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Probaha
- 9.00 Special Programme on Zia
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Drama series: Dallas
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.40 Sunday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing

## Weather

### Shower with squally wind likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or shower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong and Khulna division and at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi division during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Friday.

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

Little change in weather would be noticed in subsequent two days.

On Friday 42 mm of rain was recorded in Sand Wip, 15 mm in Sylhet, 17 mm in Rajshahi, 6 mm in Srimangal and 1 mm each in Sitakunda, Matjdee Court, Comilla, Bhola and Jessore.

The sun sets in Dhaka on Saturday at 6-42 pm and rises on Sunday at 5-11 am.

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

| Cities/Towns | Temperature in degree Celsius |      | Humidity in percentage |      |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|              | Max                           | Min  | 9 am                   | 6 pm |
| Dhaka        | 35.4                          | 26.7 | 78                     | 68   |
| Chittagong   | 32.2                          | 25.2 | 73                     | 80   |
| Rajshahi     | 33.6                          | 25.0 | 83                     | 72   |
| Khulna       | 35.5                          | 24.5 | 83                     | 66   |
| Barisal      | 34.1                          | 23.6 | 81                     | 78   |
| Cox's Bazar  | 32.0                          | 24.5 | 82                     | 80   |
| Sylhet       | 31.0                          | 21.7 | 98                     | 77   |
| Rangpur      | 33.4                          | 24.5 | 81                     | 82   |
| Jessore      | 36.2                          | 25.4 |                        |      |

# Huge arms seized, 273 held in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, May 29: The district police in a special drive from May 12 in 14 upazilas recovered huge quantity of arms and ammunition and arrested a large number of culprits, reports UNB.

Police arrested 273 people, recovered 2 LG 22 locally made pipe gun, 1 long gun, 4 hand bombs, 26 bullets, 9 pipe gun's barrel, 8 ktrich and other arms and ammunition.

The arrested people were identified as convicted persons, illegal arms holders, terrorists and toll collectors.

Meanwhile, a review meeting was held on May 25 at the district police headquarters presided over by MA Kalaque, DIG, Chittagong range.

DIG directed the police officers to be more vigilant for maintaining law and order situation and arrest all the wanted persons at any cost within short time.

Police sources said, law

## Obituary

The first death anniversary of renowned industrialist and social worker AM Shafiqul Alam Siddiqi will be observed in Dhaka today (Saturday), reports BSS.

A milad mahfil will be organised on this occasion at his Gulshan residence after Asar-prayer, family sources said.

order situation was improving after the special operation had started.

## Smuggler arrested

Police arrested a long wanted smuggler from his residence in Panchlaish under Chittagong district on Tuesday.

According to a CMP press release, the smuggler Jafarullah had a close link with the international smuggling ring and worked as their agent in the port city.

He succeeded in avoiding arrests from a very long period.

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