

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Air Taxis in Bangladesh

by Raffat Binte Rashid



Traffic jams below often make you feel like flying in the air. — Star photo

"I wanted to get out of the restrictions of life and see the world," an adventurous dream every young man or woman has, but very few can pursue. Flying is no doubt an expensive profession, you have to have a lot of courage and spirit of enterprise to ever consider it. The Bangladesh Flying Club, situated on the old airport, provides training to such young men of vigour. The club advises on all matters pertaining to aeronautics. It also facilitates general aviation.

Commercial and general aviation are two parts of mechanical flying. In Bangladesh there is a total void where general aviation is concerned, the club is trying to fill this vacuum. Air taxi facilities are part of this aviation business. You can charter an aircraft for an agreed time and attend to your urgent matters.

The club's aircraft are used by foreigners, foreign diplomats, NGOs and others to visit the distressed people who suffered the flood and tornado or even the Rohingyas. They transport people from one place to other at a speed or efficiency that cannot be imagined. They provide air ambulance facility, too. They do not have their own doctors or emergency first aid services. But once informed about an accident, where it would take hours to reach by road, they rush to the spot to evacuate the patient to any city hospital. Recently they helped a man in Barisal whose skull had been cracked. They did the same to a patient with serious head injuries in Thakurgaon. Both of them are now living and are doing well. Thanks to air ambulance service.

Water Development Board, World Tourism Organization (WTO), and Bangladesh Biman is also helped by the club. For example if Biman is in need of a wheel or some other parts, instead of sending a bigger aircraft, they contact the club.

Air taxis are very expensive and can be patronized only by the aristocrats of the society. Informed the president of the Bangladesh Flying Club, Group Capt (Retd) Saiful Azam. He is an MP too, and wants the general aviation to popularise amongst the common people.

At present, the cost is not economically viable, because of a particular fuel they use. 100 LL octane is imported, which is five times more expensive than the normal aviation fuel. Asked about why they use this particular fuel, Azam said, "It's a poor club with only 127 life members giving Tk 15,000 each with practically no capital as such. All the aircraft we have procured are quick. We exchanged our old craft with the present ones. When we obtained these aircraft, 100 LL octane was only Tk 25 per litre and now it is Tk 69 per litre. We did not know that the price will go sky high. Now we are trying to rearrange our equipment. We are trying to get JP1, JP4 kind of aircraft. Then the cost of our operation will just be halved."

Now they charge Tk 17,500 per hour for 8 persons. With the right kind of aircraft, the cost will come down to 7,000 or 8,000 at the most. Any person can spend this amount to save his or her loved ones.

The club can now connect, nearly all the remote areas of Bangladesh, like Hiron point, St Martin, Mongla, Bhola, Hatia, Sandwip, Shansernagar, Koakata, Ishurdi, Thakurgaon, other than the places where Biman can land. With the right kind of aircraft and equipment air taxi is sure to be in demand like in other

countries of the world. You cannot buy a single ticket you charter the plane and fly wherever you want to.

The chief instructor M G Murtaza said, "The club is actually performing two duties. We have not only introduced general aviation in Bangladesh we are also training students to obtain their private pilot licence or commercial pilot licence. Unfortunately it should have been an institute instead of a club."

The Bangladesh Flying Club is a private company only for the purpose of management. Members cannot get any profit out of the shares. Their gain, energy, devotion and hard work is rendered to the club out of interest for aviation. It's like Red Crescent or Red Cross Society.

The aircraft for trainees are given by the government and Tk 4 lakh for their maintenance. The government also gives scholarship to student pilots, who have completed 100 hours of flying.

A student pilot is the one who chooses flying as a profession. The club is now training 56 students and 8 of them are girls. The club also gives financial aid to these pilots from little operations done here and there. If they are hired and are flying 200 hours in a month, they can do something helpful for the benefit of their students. "We want to enlarge our scope of operation, so that we can earn a little more and help students further," says the president of the club. They pay their employees, and maintain the club, solely from these incomes other than the investments of the life members.

The trainees go through two courses the academics with approved syllabus from civil aviation and flying lessons. Academics continue up to a point where he is fit to fly the aircraft. Having passed their academic course the student starts flying — the 1st course. They commence flying and simultaneously academic courses continue.

Once the trainee spends 10 to 15 hours on air, the instructor determines whether he or she is ready for solo flying. The chief instructor governs a check before the maiden flight. Solo is very important and having done this successfully a student is fit to fly by himself. The flying lessons and academic courses continue till a stage of 200 hours of flying. They then apply for examination with the Civil Aviation authority.

They are allowed to clear their 11 subjects, with two instrument rating, part by part and three chances are given for this. If a person qualifies the check, which consists of general flying, cross country and instrumental, where you should be able to fly blindfolded within the cloud, he or she is ready for the commercial pilots flying licence and can apply for a job. A private pilot licence is obtained after 30 hours of flying. They also have the engineers department where they are training students who want to be flight engineers. Without the approval of these engineers a pilot cannot fly.

In Bangladesh, their only employers are, Biman and Plant Protection Department. Any young man or woman with enough enthusiasm can sign up today and be a part of this exciting and daring profession. The accident rate on aviation is minimum. "Aeroplane does not let a pilot down, pilot kills himself," quoted M G Murtaza.

## Nine AIDS victims detected, JS told

Nine people carrying AIDS virus have so far been detected in the country, Health Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf informed parliament Wednesday, reports UNB.

In a written reply to Sudhangshu Shekhar Halder of Awami League during question hour, the minister said blood of about 1.70 lakh people suspected carrying Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) had been tested till May this year.

He, however, didn't give details of the nine found carrying the virus of the deadly disease.

Explaining the steps taken to prevent the fatal disease, the Health Minister said the National AIDS Committee had recently been reorganised with Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury as its Chairman.

Programme for prevention and control of AIDS, both financially and technically aided by the World Health Organisation, is now in full swing.

Five laboratories, three in Dhaka and one each in Chittagong and Sylhet, have been set up where AIDS virus is being tested. Another laboratory will soon be set up in Khulna, he said.

Under the programme, surveillance teams are collecting blood samples from suspected people for screening in the laboratories, he added.

The minister informed the House that a three-year mid-term plan prepared by the government to prevent the killer disease was now awaiting approval by the donor agencies. The plan is expected to be put into action from next January.

Replying to another question from Shahjahan Khan (AL), the Health Minister said some 5,67,925 people were attacked by diarrhoea in 1991-92.

## Govt urged to introduce gold policy

Bangladesh Jewellers Samity yesterday urged the government to introduce a gold policy and implement trade organisation rules to ensure dignity of jewellery makers, reports UNB.

At a press conference at Jatiya Press Club this afternoon the samity leaders placed some suggestions to the government to reinvigorate the country's jewellery industry and develop it as an export-oriented one.

President of the samity Syed Shamsul Alam Hasu criticised the imposition of extensive taxation on gold in the new budget and said it would inspire smuggling of the item into the country.

He was also critical about the imposition of VAT on jewellery and feared that it would hamper the industry.

Lauding the decision to allow import of gold under baggage rules, he said it was a welcome step by the government.

He, however, urged the government to impose 2 per cent VAT on ornament making charges.

## SAARC Secy Gen meets Mostafiz

SAARC Secretary General Ibrahim Hussain Zaki called on Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman in Colombo on Tuesday and exchanged views on the preparation for the forum's next summit due in December in Dhaka, reports UNB.

According to a message received here today they also discussed other matters relating to the seven-nation regional association.

Mostafiz is in the Lankan capital in connection with the 11th session of the Council of Ministers of SAARC which began there today.

He is leading a five-member delegation to the two-day meeting.

## DU authorities urged to shift exam dates

Honours and Master degree examinees of Dhaka University yesterday urged the authorities to shift their examination dates due to adverse campus situation, reports UNB.

The examinees submitted memoranda to the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Controller, Deans and Chairman of the university urging the change in schedule of the examinations due to begin July 28.

The students demanded that the examinations should be delayed by at least 25 to 30 days and that there should be a recess of at least one week from one examination to another.

They forwarded six causes in favour of their demands including the prevalent insecure situation at the Salimullah, Jagannath and Zahurul Huq halls.

Moreover, they said, tutorials and in-course examinations in several departments and academic curricula were yet to be finished due to the 20-day strike by the teachers.

Earlier, hundreds of students brought out a procession in the campus chanting slogans in favour of their demands.

## Ulta Rath jatra tomorrow

Ulta-Rath festival, which symbolises return journey of the chariot of Sri Sri Jasho Madhav, will be observed on Friday at Dhamrai, about 40 km from the city, reports UNB.

Ulta Rath commences after eight days of the inauguration of Rath Jatra as per rule of Utikal, said an official handout yesterday.

A large number of Hindu pilgrims and tourists are expected to attend the Ulta-Rath festival.

The festival authority — the Jasho Madhav Supervising Committee — has taken all preparations in this regard.



**Thursday**

5:00 Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary News in Bangla

5:10 Recitation from the Geeta Shabar Shathe

5:30 Cartoon Show: The New Three Stooges Jiboner Alo

6:30 School debate

7:05 News in Bangla

8:00 Weekly Drama

10:00 News in English

10:25 Parliament Round up

10:35 Drama Series: Twin Peaks

11:30 Khabar/The News

11:40 Friday's programme summary

11:45 Closing.

## Weather

### Temperature likely to rise

By Staff Correspondent

Light to moderate rain or showers may occur at few places over Khulna, Chittagong Divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi divisions during the next 24 hours commencing from 6 am Wednesday.

The Met office forecast day temperature is likely to rise by one degree Celsius over the country.

The country experienced rainfall at some places yesterday. The highest rainfall of 42 mm recorded in 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm was reported from Teknaf. While Patuakhali recorded 26 mm, Khepupara 12 mm, Cox's Bazar 10 mm and Mymensingh recorded 3 mm of rainfall.

The maximum temperature of 35.4 degree Celsius was reported from Jessore yesterday and the minimum of 22.7 degree was reported from Sylhet.

The sun sets today (Thursday) at 6.50 pm and the sun rises tomorrow (Friday) at 5.18 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns of the country yesterday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.4	26.7	78	78
Chittagong	31.4	25.2	74	83
Khulna	33.0	23.4	88	
Rajshahi	34.6	24.4	100	72
Sylhet	30.2	22.7	91	77
Dinajpur	32.3	24.8	84	77
Cox's Bazar	30.6	24.9	87	88
Barisal	31.6	25.2	84	86
Jessore	31.6	23.8		



Former Chief Justice Kamal Uddin Hossain addressing a reception organised by Dakhin Bangla Jubo Kalyan Samity in honour of newly elected office bearers of Bar Council yesterday. — Star photo

## Share Investors Forum press confce Reformation of Company Act suggested

Bangladesh Share Investors Forum yesterday placed a four-point suggestion to the government to invigorate the dull-paced stock market, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference at Jatiya Press Club Wednesday afternoon on "Budget for the Fiscal 1992-93 and the Development of Capital Market", President of the forum Dr. Abu Ahmed suggested reformation of the century old Company Act of 1913.

He also urged establishment of a security and exchange commission which was pro-

posed by the Finance Minister in his budget speech, reform auditing process, several competitive stock exchange and law's for preserving the interest of the minority shareholders.

Dr Ahmed, a Dhaka University teacher, demanded hastening of the denationalisation process and give priority to the interest of minority share holders to sell shares of the companies.

He also demanded solution of the Bangladesh Credit Limited (BCL) issue within the framework of existing rules

and regulations and give loan from all commercial banks by mortgaged share.

The DU economics teacher bracketed absence of capital market and too much dependency on government as the main causes for low pace industrialization in the country.

He said loan exemption is not the favourable step for investment and this opportunity would be used by the vested industrialists.

Dr Shamsul Haq, MG Azam Chowdhury, Shakil Rizvi, Sayed Md. Sirajuddinillah and Dr. Sadrul Reza were present.

## One doctor for 5,030 2,500 doctors unemployed

Some 2,500 doctors are unemployed in the country, Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf informed parliament during question hour Wednesday, reports UNB.

In a written answer, he said the government is continuing its efforts to find overseas employment for the unemployed doctors.

Replying to another question, the Health Minister informed the House that at the present there are a total of 21,451 doctors having registration from Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.

He said presently there is one doctor for every 5030 people in the country.

Another report adds: The government has declared a total of 103 medicine as substandard during the past 11 months between January 1991 to May 1992.

Legal actions have been taken against the manufacturers whose formulations were found substandard, said State Minister for Health Sirajul Huq in the parliament during question hour Wednesday.

He said registration of 35 such drugs has been suspended and action is being considered against another 57 drugs.

Eleven manufacturers have also been sued, the minister informed the parliament.

## Jubo Dal confce by November

The Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, the youth wing of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold its annual conference immediately after the rainy season is over, sources say.

The State Minister for Environment and Forestry and General Secretary of the Jubo Dal Goyeshwar Roy yesterday told the Daily Star that fifty per cent of the district level units of BNP's youth front had already completed their local conference.

He said that conferences of the rest of the district units of the Jubo Dal would be completed by October this year.

"We shall hold the central conference of the Jubo Dal sometimes between mid October and mid November this year," the Jubo Dal leader said.

## Shishu Academy inaugurates tree plantation programme

Bangladesh Shishu Academy arranged a tree plantation programme at its premises yesterday, reports UNB.

A large number of children took part in the programme and planted saplings at the academy premises.

## Anniversary of Jadu Miah's birth today

The 68th birth anniversary of Mashtur Rahman Jadu Mia will be observed today (Thursday). Different programmes were undertaken by various organisations, which include laying of floral wreaths at the mazar, says a press release.

The discussion meeting will be held at 80, Naya Paltan, in the evening

## Happy Wedding Day

We Rejoice Syed Saad-Shahnaz Andaleeb On Your Wedding Day Abba-Amma, Sadia-Firu, Nazia-Rahi, Arastu, Renaad, Samira, Fariha, Silma

## WE REMEMBER TODAY

WE REMEMBER TODAY WITH FOND MEMORIES OUR MOTHER AYESHA AZIZ, FOUNDER -CHAIRMAN, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH CENTRE FOUNDATION, ON HER 7TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY. MAY HER SOUL REST IN ETERNAL PEACE.

MAJ. GEN. NURUL ISLAM (RETD.) HABIBUR RAHMAN SANNI

## ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন

পরিবেশ উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প ফুলবাড়িয়া, ঢাকা।

আপনার পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও পরিষ্কার রাখুন আপনার শিশুকে টিকা দিন

## দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের জন্য ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদার/প্রকৃত সরবরাহকারীগণের নিকট হইতে বাংলাদেশ ফরম নং ২৯১১ তে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাইবে। দরপত্র প্রাপ্তি ২৬-০৭-৯২ইং/১১-০৮-৯৯ বাৎ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকায় নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, পরিবেশ উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প, ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের দপ্তরে গ্রহণ করা হইবে এবং ঐদিনই বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকার সময় দরপত্রাদায়া অথবা তাহাদের প্রতিনিধিগণের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হইবে। ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের মেয়রের অনুকূলে উক্ত দরের ৩% হারে বায়নার টাকা (ফেরতযোগ্য) যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাকের ব্যাংক ডাকট/পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে অর্থ দিতে হইবে। প্রতিটি কাজের স্পেসিফিকেশন ও দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের সকল আঞ্চলিক দপ্তরের প্রকৌশলী বিভাগ/হিসাব বিভাগের পোদার/নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দপ্তর হইতে নির্ধারিত মূল্যের বিদ্যমান (অফেরতযোগ্য) ক্রয় করা যাইবে। এতদসংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত বিবরণ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের পরিবেশ উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পের নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর হইতে জানা যাইবে।

দরপত্র খোলার তারিখে কোন দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট বিক্রয় করা হইবে না। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শালে বাতিলকৃত হইলে যে কোন বা সমুদয় দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

ক্রমিক নং	কাজের বিবরণ	বায়নার টাকা	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্টের মূল্য	সময়সীমা
১।	ইসলামাবাদ কমিউনিটি সেন্টারে সমাজকল্যাণ কার্যক্রমের জন্য ফার্নিচার সরবরাহ	উদ্ধৃত দরের ৩%	২৫০/-	৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিন
২।	ইসলামাবাদ কমিউনিটি সেন্টারে সমাজকল্যাণ কার্যক্রমের জন্য যন্ত্রপাতি সরবরাহ	উদ্ধৃত দরের ৩%	১০০/-	৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিন
৩।	ইসলামাবাদ কমিউনিটি সেন্টারে প্রাথমিক স্বাস্থ্য পরিচর্যা কেন্দ্রের জন্য ফার্নিচার সরবরাহ	উদ্ধৃত দরের ৩%	১০০/-	৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিন
৪।	ইসলামাবাদ কমিউনিটি সেন্টারে প্রাথমিক স্বাস্থ্য পরিচর্যা কেন্দ্রের জন্য যন্ত্রপাতি সরবরাহ	উদ্ধৃত দরের ৩%	১০০/-	৩০ (ত্রিশ) দিন

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী পরিবেশ উন্নয়ন প্রকল্প ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন ফুলবাড়িয়া, ঢাকা।

ডিসিপি/পিসিআরডি/০৯/৯২-৯০ D-381