

Dhaka Day by Day

Halt! Speed breaker Ahead

by Shamsad Mortuza

As the six-wheel vehicle slows down to pay tribute to the highway speed breaker, a group of young children — yet to reach their teen, approach.

If you are a conscious but suspicious reader of daily newspaper, you may even take it as a hold up. But to your great relief, only one of the clan will get-up in the bus. You will be further relieved to see the childish smile, the kid wears. From the doorway of the bus he beckons at his friends, in return of their envious glances. Not losing a single moment, the boy moves in. "Sir ... chocolate ... cigarette ... sir." The crescendo of the voice soon matches the monotonous sounds of the wheels.

Muhammad Faruq Hossain alias Ratan is a street hawker. The 12-year-old boy in his hands holds cigarettes, both local brand and foreign, and a colourful bag of chocolates.

You may really care for a smoke or a candy to add some taste in your long journey or you may even feel pity for the child. Whatever your reason is, if you are really thinking of taking something from Ratan, you must hurry. He will get down at the next speed breaker.

"Chocolate is sold better now-a-days because of the heat," says Ratan in a proud voice. "I sell them in-between Savar and Dhanam on the Dhaka-Archa Highway," he adds.

More than one hundred boys work as highway hawkers. The business zones of these hawkers are allocated by the local hawkers association. "You need to pay five taka per week to be members of the association," says Ratan. "The office of our association is at Nabinagar, Savar." "A few months back we elected Swapan Bhal, a member of the local bus owners' association, as our president, who looks after the smooth running of our business," Ratan confides. He added, all the members of the association had to count a good sum of money in return of protection.



Ratan— well stocked with toffees for the summer, also a highway hawker.

He remembers an incident, in which driver of a long-route coach, denied to drop one of the hawkers at a stoppage and treated him badly. "The money we give do not go in vain. The driver had to compensate the boy following a negotiation by the hawkers association," Ratan said. This boy goes on to say there are some passengers who try to dodge, paying on the bus.

"I've heard that sometimes a few passengers take chocolates and never pay ... however, I never faced one," Ratan smiles. But there are professional hazards, too. Some drivers pick up chocolates or cigarettes from these hawkers, as 'charge' of their business on the bus. "But they can not bully me ... I have powerful friends too."

More and more boys are stepping into this business now-a-days. Interestingly, the veterans in this profession do not resist the new comers. Ratan says, "We know that they are as needy as we are."

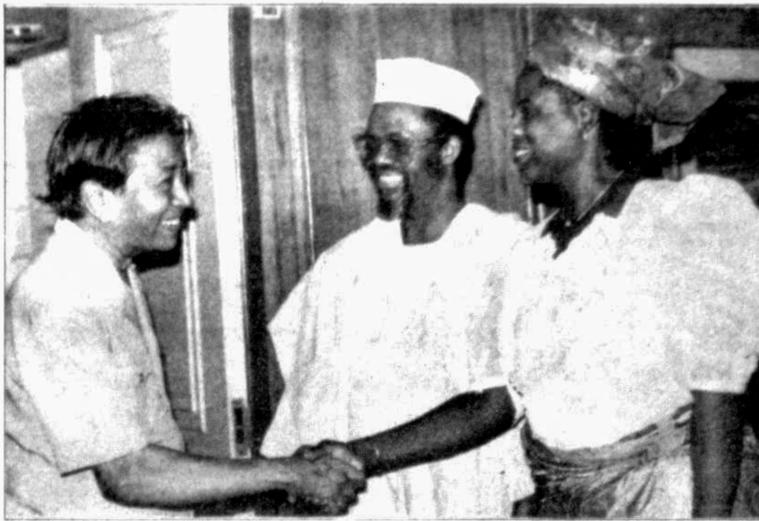
"My daily sale ranges between taka 200 to 300, and the profit varies between 40 taka and 60 taka. The young hawker gives half of the earning to his family. Ratan is the eldest son of his father who is a salesman in a shop in Farmgate. His younger brother is also a highway hawker.

"We are the only hawkers in our family. Our father never wanted us to be hawkers — what else could we do — we had to quit school despite his wish."

There are some boys in this tiring profession who go to schools and bear their own educational expenses.

"They lead a hard life," he says, "sometimes I wish I could resume studies, because our future is indefinite being a highway hawker," Ratan sighs.

(The writer is The Daily Star's Jahangirnagar University Correspondent.)



The newly-appointed Nigerian High Commissioner to Bangladesh E. Ole Adefemiwa and Madame Toyin Adefemiwa hosted a reception at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Myanmar Ambassador U Soc Myint, who is also the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, is seen in the picture. —Star photo

'Falbithi' opened

Agriculture and Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M. Majid-ul-Haq yesterday formally inaugurated the 'Falbithi' — a museum of various fruit trees of Bangladesh within the premises of National Square adjacent to Rokeya Sharani in Dhaka, reports BSS.

Happy Birthdays
to
SAZIA
From
KOLLOL BHAI
(Bhashur)

Happy Silver Jubilee
To
Baba, Mamoni
Wish you a long,
happy, peaceful life
Love
Shaila & Roman

Inter-university debate DU becomes champion

Dhaka University team clinched the title of the Inter-University Debate Competition defeating Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) at the TSC auditorium here, reports BSS.

The subject of Saturday's debate was "The main crisis of 21st century: environment: not hunger." Meher Nigar of Dhaka University was declared the best debator on the competition.

Dr. Syed Manzurul Huda, Dr. Haroon-or-Rashid, Dr. Anis Ahmed, Dr. Naqib Uddin and Birupaksha Paul conducted as the judge as the competition. Earlier Dhaka University and BUET moved into final defeating Jahangirnagar University and Bangladesh Agricultural University in the two semifinals.

The university Vice-Chancellor Prof. M. Moniruzzaman Miah attended the ceremony and distributed prizes among the winners.

The ceremony was also addressed, among others, by DUCSU GS Khatrul Kabir Khoakan, DUCSU Literary Secretary Niamat Elahi, Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron and Birupaksha Paul.

The DUCSU GS, in his speech, said DUCSU would give "DUCSU Padak" within a couple of days among the Dhaka University students for their contribution in the field of arts, literature, sports, journalism, and culture.

Art competition on Environment Day 11 children awarded medals, certificates

Eleven children were awarded medals and certificates for their success in an art competition marking the observance of World Environment Day, reports BSS.

Organised by Soroptimist International Club of Dhaka the prize distribution ceremony was attended by the Cultural Affairs officer of the United States Information Service (USIS) Ms Hilton as the chief guest.

Razia Salam, President of the club presided over the function.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms Hilton appreciated the service and welfare-oriented activities of the Soroptimist International Club of Dhaka and assured her cooperation for the expansion of functioning of the club.

She also distributed medals and certificates among the winners of the art competition.

In her speech, President of the club Razia Salam said Soroptimist International Club of Dhaka was formed in 1982 with working women representing different professions.

She said the prime objective of the club was to maintain professional standard of the women and to serve the distressed women and children.

At present the club is conducting several development and welfare-oriented programmes in different places of the country. Under the pro-

gramme, the club is running a literacy centre with health care services in Dhaka, one vocational project for distressed women at Bera under Pabna and one community development project at Sitakunda.

Salam said the club would set up ten tubewells and ten sanitary latrines among the needy people of Bera in observance of the tenth anniversary of the club. The tubewells and sanitary latrines will be procured from the savings of dinar and other expenses, she said.



Sunday

- 5.00 Opening announcement
- 5.00 Al-Quran Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Bible
- 6.00 Sports programme
- 6.45 Chena Jana
- 7.05 Tagore songs
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Prabaha: Documentary
- 9.00 Drama series: Oshin
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.25 Parliament round-up
- 10.35 Nibedan
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.40 Monday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing

Weather

No change in day temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast for the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Sunday) says, light or moderate rain or showers are likely to occur at many places over Chittagong and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka division. Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over Rajshahi division.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The Met office forecasts weather is likely to deteriorate within the next two days.

The country yesterday (Saturday) experienced little rainfall. The highest amount of rainfall recorded in 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm were: Faridpur 19mm while Rangamati had 10mm.

The maximum temperature of 36 degree Celsius was reported from Chuadanga yesterday and the minimum of 24.5 degree was reported from Rangamati.

The sun sets today at 6.45 pm and rises at 5.25 am tomorrow.

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	33.5	25.0	77	72
Chittagong	34.7	26.8	68	-
Khulna	32.7	26.4	78	74
Rajshahi	32.5	26.8	83	-
Teknaf	31.5	26.2	76	77
Sylhet	33.5	26.7	84	72
Dinajpur	35.0	24.4	69	84
Chuadanga	36.0	27.1	80	77
Jessore	32.3	26.4	-	-

Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka runs 16 literary centres

Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka has helped impart functional and adult literacy to nearly 2,000 people in the past one year, reports UNB.

The Club currently runs 16 literary centres in Gazipur, Noakhali and Dhaka districts besides financing a school at Dhaka's Kalabagan area where 300 destitute slum children get primary education.

A press release of the club said that the club has a strong public health and childcare programme under which more than 300 children are treated every week at three rural clinics and poor children are immunized.

The club spent at least Tk 50,000 for the welfare of the handicapped people in different parts of the country.

It has funded installation of 70 sanitary latrines and 20 tubewells in past one year at Kaultia, Kallitarbazar, Majhirka and Dighirpar villages.

It provides financial aid to help women make muri, sewing, tailoring, livestock raising, mat making and vegetables cultivation.

Obituary

Alhaj Mohammad Mohsinuz-Zaman Pathan, Managing Director, Bangladesh Filaments and Caps Ltd. died on July 21 of a sudden heart failure in Bangkok (Inna lillahe Rajoun). He was 45.

His body is expected to arrive in Dhaka tomorrow (Monday) by Bangladesh Biman.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend his Namaz-e-Janaza on the same day at 168, Shantinagar in the city.

HERE and THERE

PIB workshop

A six-day workshop on "Environment and Development" for the women-journalists began at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) here Saturday.

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof M. Moniruzzaman Mia inaugurated the workshop.

Fifteen woman-journalists from the daily newspapers of Dhaka and Chittagong are taking part in the workshop.

Garments Sramik Federation

A meeting of Bangladesh Garments Sramik Federation Saturday demanded the formation of a tripartite committee as per the agreement of the employees and owners of garments.

The meeting was presided over by the Federation President Khurshid Alam.

JSP

A meeting of Jatiya Sramik Party (JSP) Saturday urged the government to improve the law and order situation in the country.

The meeting also demanded the release of former President H M Ershad. It was presided over by Anwara Begum, former MP.

Lions Club of Dhaka Oriental

A tree plantation programme jointly organised by Lions Club of Dhaka Oriental and Presidency Lions Club was launched from Khilkhat to New Airport Road Friday last.

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah inaugurated the programme by planting saplings. On this occasion 500 saplings were planted.

Patkal Sramik

A meeting of Patkal Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad Saturday urged all jute mills workers to make the streets and railways blockade programme on July 28 a success.

The meeting was presided over by the Convenor of the Parishad Abul Bashar.

Need for planting trees stressed

Speakers at a tree plantation campaign here Saturday stressed the need for planting trees across the country to help check environmental pollution, reports UNB.

Rover Scouts and Rangers of Jagannath University College arranged the programme in collaboration with voluntary organisation 'Commitment' at the college premises.

They plan to plant more than 200 saplings of Mehogan, Krishnachura, Epil epil, Rain tree and Shil Koroi in schools, post office and banks on the Dhaka University campus.

Presiding over the function, the Principal of Jagannath University College called on the students community, scouts and rovers as well as voluntary organisations to make the plantation campaign a success.

Meherunnesa stands 1st in int'l letter writing contest

Meherunnesa, a student of class ten of Banani Siddyaniketan, won the first place in the national level competition of the 21st International Letter Writing Competition 1992, reports BSS.



Professor Muniruzzaman Mia, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, inaugurating a six-day workshop on Environment and Development for Women Journalists organised by Press Institute of Bangladesh in association with PANOS Institute, London. —PIB photo

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