

# Dhaka Day by Day

## BRAC - Through an Indian Eye

By S Y Bakht



BRAC's health centre in one of the villages.

Poverty alleviation programmes in the South Asian countries cannot succeed unless violence is curbed in the region, remarked Kalpana Mohanty, a research officer at the Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) in India.

She was recently here on a visit under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) exchange programme.

All conflicts, she said, should be dealt with in a non-violent way, so that tension and conflict can be avoided in the region.

"People should try to understand that the root cause of violence lies within man, and he has to realise that himself," she noted, adding, "but there has to be someone from outside to help them understand this and may be the non-government organisations (NGOs) can fill that gap."

The NGOs of the region should work more towards curbing violence by further improving networking among themselves, she added.

One could smell a tinge of Gandhian Philosophy in all this talk about non-violence. Sure enough, Mohanty completed her Masters degree in Rural Development and M Phil in Gandhian Thoughts and Peace Science from the Gandhigram Rural Institute in Anna district of Tamil Nadu.

During her 10-day stay here she visited a number of projects of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) in Myemensingh and Jamalpur.

"I have had a very lasting and unforgettable experience — the land is beautiful, which resembles some parts of Orissa and West Bengal, and I found the people to be very friendly," she said.

Highly impressed by health, education and other BRAC projects that she visited, the soft-spoken and articulate Mohanty observed that she found both the students and the volunteers to be "very active and alert" at the eight non-formal educational institutions that she visited.

The curriculum at the schools are very much catered to the local surroundings — for example, interest among the students is created to read through the use of local songs and poems," she pointed out.

She also lauded the sincerity and dedication of the staff members involved with the projects. Mohanty singled out the women's health programme, known as the BRAC Health Post, and some income generating projects for women that she visited for particular praise. "Work at the nakshikantha project at the Ayesha Abed Foundation in Jamalpur impressed me a lot."

Originally from Cuttack, Orissa and only in her 30s, Mohanty has already gained considerable experience in the fields of rural development, environment and women's programmes.

She worked for an NGO for developing income generating activities for women in Ahmedabad, Gujarat while she also actively

participated in the 'Narmada Bachao Andolan', a campaign against the environmental effects of the huge Narmada dam project spreading across the Indian states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

At AVARD, a New Delhi-based national organisation of about 500 non-profit voluntary agencies set up in 1958, Mohanty also coordinates with different NGOs and is involved in organising seminars and training programmes. She noted that currently in India, the major thrust is towards evolving micro or block level plans for rural development.

"Looking at the whole country, we are giving more thrust towards educational programmes, to provide functional education through which we can create awareness among the people so that they can take decisions and participate in their own development," she added.

Women's education is also being emphasised so that they can become more conscious about their legal rights. Programmes against dowry and other social evils and efforts to revive local arts and culture to create income generating activities is also being taken up, she said.

Asked if she would like to come back to Bangladesh, Mohanty readily replied, "I would love to come back again because I made some very good friends here, specially the women in the villages and the field staff with whom I have developed friendship."

Her knowledge of spoken Bengali — which she described as not so fluent — helped her to develop a rapport with the people she met here.

Eldest among two sisters and a brother, she learnt to speak Bengali from her mother, as her grandmother originally hailed from Birkampur.

She smilingly noted that she is 25 per cent Bengali and 75 per cent Oriya.

Her father, BB Mohanty, is the head of the department of Visual Communication at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication in New Delhi, while her grandfather was a former Chief Minister of Orissa and, like her grandmother, was also a student of Rabindranath Tagore.

"I have been looking forward to visiting Bangladesh for many years now, and as a student of Tagore songs I learned 'Amar Sonar Bangla' in the early 70s" she said, adding "and when I sang it with the village children I was overcome with emotion."

At the end of her stimulating interview one had the fond hope that she would visit Bangladesh again in the not too distant future.

It was a rare visit by a young woman from Orissa, whose trip to Bangladesh was supported by organisations in three different countries. The Asian Institute of Rural Development in Bangalore along with the Miwano Peace Foundation of Japan sponsored her trip while BRAC was her local host.

## DUJ urges PM's interference for Shahriar Kabir's reinstatement

The executive committee of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) at a meeting Monday strongly demanded for immediate reinstatement of the Executive Editor of the Weekly Bichitra, Shahriar Kabir, reports BSS.

Presided over by DUJ President Shahjahan Mia the meeting observed that Kabir was terminated from his service on political ground and not because of financial insolvency.

Recalling the commendable role of Kabir during the anti autocratic movement, the meeting urged immediate interference of the Prime Minister for reinstatement of Kabir.

## BDR seizes 9 gold bars, nabs two in Khulna

KHULNA, Aug 3: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) today seized nine gold bars worth about Tk six lakh and arrested two people in this connection from a bus at Chuknagar, 30 km of the town, reports UNB.

BDR officials said acting on a tip they stopped a bus of Diganta Paribhan at Chuknagar and nabbed Aminur Rahman (40) and Muzaffar (35) of Satkhira with 90 tolas of gold at about 6 am.

Amin and Muzaffar confessed to BDR that they took the gold from another smuggler Adil of Nawabpur in Dhaka Sunday after noon.

They were on their way to West Bengal and scheduled to reach the gold to one Narayan Chandra of 24 Parganas.

Both the gold and the accused remained under custody of BDR.

## One held with forged 100-taka notes

A young man was caught with three hundred-taka forged notes at Gangutibazar in Sattaria thana Monday, police said, reports UNB.

Mainuddin of village Goala in the thana was nabbed by the local people when he went to a shop for exchanging the counterfeit notes. He was handed over to police.

Mainuddin confessed to the police that he had long been involved in the forgery along with some others he named during interrogation, police said.

The racket also used to receive different forged notes from India, according to the confessional statement.

He was taken on a five-day remand.

## Painting show

A painting exhibition of the artist couple Kanak Chandra Chakma and K M Mithu will be held at La Galerica in Banani from August 8 to August 16. The show will be opened every day from 9 am to 8 pm, says a press release.

Henricus Gajenlaan, Ambassador of the Netherlands will inaugurate the exhibition on August 7.



Tuesday

- 5.00 Opening announcement - Al-Quran Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 6.00 Shikha Dikha
- 6.30 Programme for Mothers
- 7.05 Nazrul Songs
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.40 Drama serial: Ashray
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.25 Parliament round up
- 10.35 Olympic highlights
- 11.40 Khabar/The News
- 11.45 Closing

## Weather

### No change in temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Light to moderate rain or shower is likely to occur at many places over Khulna and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Dhaka division and at one or two places over Rajshahi division during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am Tuesday.

Met office says day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Meanwhile, parts of the country experienced rainfall yesterday. The maximum rainfall of 15 mm was recorded in Faridpur.

The maximum temperature of 33.5 degree Celsius was reported from Sylhet and the minimum of 23.6 degree was reported from Rangamati yesterday.

The sun sets today at 6.39 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.29 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	30.4	26.0	78	75
Chittagong	33.0	24.6	80	73
Rajshahi	32.5	25.6	95	82
Khulna	30.0	24.4	88	80
Cox's Bazar	32.0	25.5	81	80
Dinajpur	33.0	25.4	77	74
Sylhet	33.5	24.0	80	71
Comilla	32.0	25.0	77	78



MA Muhit (right) speaking at a discussion on 'Liberation War and USA' held in the city yesterday. Also in the picture (from left): Prof Rehman Sobhan, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain and SAMS Kibria. — Star photo

## Industrialised countries pay 4 pc interest against 14 pc by South Asians

Former Senator of Pakistan Javed Jabbar yesterday underscored the need for political dialogue among South Asian countries to improve their democratic methodology and ease growing tension, reports UNB.

Jabbar, who was also the former Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Science and Technology in Pakistan, delivered a talk on "South Asia: Emerging Imperatives" at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) auditorium last evening.

"We need authentic democracy" instead of "ceremonial democracy" which prevails in most of the South Asian countries," he said.

He said the integrity of the countries in the region were now threatened due to a rupture in commerce, technology and media.

Comparing it with the havoc of AIDS, he said it would distort the national culture and heritage and gave the example of Star TV in this regard.

The former Pakistani minister stressed on accountability and proportionate representation at state level to ensure a corruption free society.

He said routine accountability will pave the way of our desired democratic goals and added, "this could avoid the chances of an 'election galore' democracy".

## HERE and THERE

### Nirmul Committee

Sabubag Thana Ekattarer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee Monday held a rally and later brought out a procession on the third day of demand for night.

The rally demanded halt to harassment of Nirmul Committee members all over the country.

It was presided over by the body thana Convenor Obaidul Haque Obaid.

### Jana Parishad

Bangladesh Jana Parishad in a statement Monday urged the United Nations to withdraw all illegal embargo on Iraq immediately.

It also urged the world community to stop US military interference into the matters of the Middle East and repeated threat of aggression to Iraq.

### JSD

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Fatulla wing Monday held a rally and started a mass signature collection campaign at Post Office Road in favour of its president Mahiuddin Ahmed, against whom the S K Textile Mills lodged a case.

Attended by Azizul Islam Shawpan as chief guest, the rally was addressed, among others, by Golam Ahmed Babul, Monir Hossain, Mozammel Haq, Khairul Alam and others. Abdur Rahim presided.

The leaders said that the case against Mahiuddin was motivated and demanded withdrawal of the case.

### Lekhak Forum

A new eleven-member executive body of the Lekhak Forum (a forum of the writers and journalists) was formed Sunday with Jultus Chowdhury as Chairman and Sheikh Enayet Karim General Secretary.

The other members of the body include Anisur Rahman Bablu (Vice-Chairman), Sabrina Hasan (Assistant General Secretary), Mesbah Uddin Chowdhury (Treasurer), Dipak Bhaumik (Literary and Publication Secretary), Baby (Publicity Secretary) and Ayesha Jharna, Iqbal Ahmed and Ananta Hira (executive members).

## Rivers rising

All rivers in the country kept rising, and one of them crossed danger level, according to flood forecast yesterday, reports UNB.

The Manu at Manu railway bridge was flowing 1.70 centimetre above danger level at 6 am and will rise further with rain, the Flood Forecasting Centre said.

Rivers in the Brahmaputra basin recorded rise in the last 24 hours but all were flowing below danger level.

The Brahmaputra rose 6 cm at Noonkhoo, 4 cm at Chitmar, 5 cm at Bahadurabad, 4 cm at Straganj and 8 cm at Aricha.

River Buriganga also marked rise at Dhaka by 9 cm.

The centre forecast that the Padma would swell 7 cm at Rajshahi, 9 cm at Hardinge Bridge and Goulunda and 5 cm at Bhagyakul in the next 24 hours ending 6 am Tuesday.

## Steps to promote betel leaf cultivation urged

Bangladesh Betel Leaf Cultivators Association has urged the government to take initiative to promote betel leaf cultivation for strengthening the national economy, reports BSS.

The president of the Organisation, Advocate Harisadhan at an extended meeting of the association held on August 2 here said although betel leaf contributed significantly to the national economy, the sector remained neglected.

He urged for formulating a national betel leaf cultivation policy, sanction of loan for its extensive cultivation

## Govt NGOs joint projects can ensure women's welfare

Speakers at a rally here called for taking up different women development programmes to make them self-reliant, reports UNB.

Non government organisation (NGO) Grass Roots Health and Rural Organisation for Nutrition Initiatives arranged the meeting at village Borodeshi at Aminbazar in city Friday.

## JOB OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited for the position of Personal Assistant offering a tax paid salary around Tk 6500/- . Persons not more than 30 years old who can join on short notice having minimum qualification of HSC with shorthand proficiency of minimum 80 WPM and typing speed of minimum 40 WPM should apply furnishing complete bio-data with two passport size photographs along with testimonials/certificates and two references to GPO Box 4175, Dhaka latest by 11th August, 1992. D-440

## EDUCATION IN BRITAIN

Mr David Game, of the DAVID GAME COLLEGE GROUP, will visit Bangladesh August 7-10 to interview and inform students about the following courses in the UK:

- \* "A" levels, Foundation Courses & GCSE
- \* Degree Courses in Law & Accountancy
- \* Management, Marketing & Accountancy (ABE, CIM, CIMA, IAT)
- \* Hotel Management (AHMA)
- \* Travel & Tourism (IATA)
- \* Computing & Secretarial Studies
- \* Art, Fashion and Design

Interviews at The British Council, Dhaka on Fri 7, Sat 8 & Sun 9th August 1992 Every day 10 am to 1 pm & 3 pm to 6 pm.

For an appointment telephone (Sat-Wed): Mr M A Wadud at 240105-6, 243161 (9am-5pm)

The British Council

## Charge framed against Shahidul Islam

Former works minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam has been charged with usurping other's property through deception, according to an official hand-out yesterday, reports BSS.

The charges were framed in the special judge's court, Dhaka, on Saturday on the basis of allegations brought against Sheikh Shahidul Islam and Major General (ret) Amjad Khan Chowdhury, owner of Property Development, by the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC).

The case, in brief, is that one Kamruddin on August 6, 1975 fraudulently claimed himself as the owner of a property at 144 Santinagar. The property which was released by Works Ministry in favour of Kamruddin in 1981, was purchased by the Property Development in 1983 from Bahadur Ali and Ramiza Begum, the heirs to late Kamruddin.

The Ministry, after receiving an allegation that the property was released in favour of false Kamruddin, carried out an investigation and later included it afresh in list 'A' through a Gazette notification in 1986.

Once the property became abandoned, the owner of Property Development tried his best to get it released from the list. The Works Ministry requested for investigation into the matter.

The Ministry was told by the BAC that it would be proper to take necessary steps on the matter after it was disposed of by the Court of Settlement where it was pending, the handout added.

## Australian HC meets Samad

High Commissioner of Australia Richard K Gate had a courtesy call on Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Acting President of Bangladesh Awami League Abdus Samad Azad at the latter's office chamber yesterday, reports BSS.



Dr Kamal Hossain inaugurated the sculpture exhibition of Alauddin Ahmed Bulbul at the National Museum yesterday. — Star photo