

Dhaka Day by Day

Trauma of Phoney Phone Calls

by Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury

Imagine that you are suffering from acute insomnia. By the optimum grace of the god Hypnos you have finally drifted into a deep and much awaited slumber. You wake up all of a sudden in the middle of the night because the phone rang incessantly. Much annoyed and also a little apprehensive you pick up the phone and an unknown voice from the other side asks you what the time is! By then anger has taken control over your whole being. Speechless, you put down the phone back in its cradle and for once in your life you feel life crying.

The telephone has undoubtedly confirmed its position as an essential in the life of modern man. But like almost any other gifts of modern science, its utility too, depends on the persons who use or operate it.

Apart from the calls that accidentally come to wrong numbers, which are mostly pardoned by the receivers, there are some calls which are made intentionally to disturb the receiver. If the receiver's voice seems agreeable and considerably welcoming to the caller, he or she may even start a conversation regardless of the fact that the person on the other side may not cherish any hope whatsoever to talk to an utter stranger.

To prevent such annoyance one doesn't have too many options at hand. The receiver may either allow a conversation, or with due humility ask not to phone any more. Finally, there is always the harsh way, where one can frighten the caller by saying that after tracing out his or her number it would be supplied to the police.

There is another type of 'crank' caller who does not have the nerve to talk. After holding the phone for a considerable length of time (probably hoping for a green signal from the side) they disconnect the line. They make repeated calls like this, totally regardless of time, even at the dead of the night.

Nasrin Sabina, an undergraduate student explains: "They are a peculiar lot. Some of them insist on conversing and making friendship through telephone and most of the time they are so optimistic that it is not in human capacity to discourage them or make them understand that you're not interested at all. They are usually youths between the ages 10 and 25."

She also adds, "There is another type who doesn't talk, but makes all kinds of peculiar sounds on the phone. Some exhale deep breaths into the phone, some makes sounds with their finger tips on the receiver, expecting the same Morse code in return. You would make the worst possible mistake if you ever respond. Once we had to change our phone number to escape these disturbing calls."

But those these callers have a relentless

urge to go on doing what they do. The fact that there may be an old person in the house, a person seriously ill whose physical condition may deteriorate due to these disturbances does seldom stir their consciousness.

The problems engendered by these calls are multi-dimensional. Anwar Ahmed an MBA student emphasises, "I come from a very orthodox family. My parents do not allow me to talk to any of my female friends whom they personally do not know. When these mysterious phone calls come, my parents assume they are meant for me and it is very embarrassing when the caller remains silent when they answer."

"There should be some way we could stop these calls once for all," insists Hasnapi Karim.



a retired bank executive. "You see I am an ailing person with many old age complications. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night to pick up the phone, but the line is disconnected as soon as I pick it up. It goes on again and again. I have to disconnect my own phone in the end. One shouldn't play such cruel games with old people like us."

But for the time being this retired man likes to ponder the days when there was no telephone. "The mobility that was once there, is no more. As youths, we went to visit elderly relatives and that made them immensely happy. Nowadays my relatives call on the phone to know how I am doing. Why should they come to meet me in person when they know the easier alternative?" concludes the aging man with an undue annoyance over this gift of modern science, a blame which should have been fittingly laid elsewhere.



Saugat Editor Md Nasiruddin addressing the seminar at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) yesterday to mark the 94th birth anniversary of renowned journalist, litterateur and politician Abul Mansur Ahmed.

Abul Mansur Ahmed was a social reformer : Nasiruddin

By Staff Correspondent

Editor of Saugat Mohammad Nasiruddin yesterday in remembrance of eminent litterateur, politician and journalist Abul Mansur Ahmed, said Ahmed was a social reformer and his works had advanced the nation by 100 years.

Speaking as the chief guest at a discussion meeting held in observance of the 94th birth anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmed, Nasiruddin said he came up at such a time with his works when there was virtually no progressive Muslims to uphold the cause of the Muslim community.

Abul Mansur Ahmed Memorial Committee organised the meeting at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) yesterday.

It was chaired by K G Mostafa, Acting Editor of Saugat and addressed among others by S M Ali, Rahat Khan.

Rokanuzzaman Khan, Reazuddin Ahmed, Gias Kamal Chowdhury, Khairul Kabir and Mahbub Anam. A good number of journalists and eminent personalities attended the function.

The speakers stressed the need for observing anniversaries of personalities like Ahmed at the national level.

The speakers said, the nation was yet to give birth to a writer whose satires were so sharp, socially conscious and politically punching aiming at unveiling the hypocrisies and inconsistency in the society he lived in.

Editor of the Daily Star S M Ali, recalling his contribution of late Ahmed said, the darkening situation of the present society badly needed a leader like him. He stressed on the

need for over coming limitations in the realm of journalism.

Reazuddin Ahmed, Editor of the Telegraph and BFWJ President said, Abul Mansur's journalism was blended with politics and emphasised that journalism could not go on without politics.

Rahat Khan said, Ahmed helped us in identifying ourselves as "Muslim Bengalees".

Khairul Kabir said, Ahmed had always been an inspiring personality as well as a true patriot.

He said, in his writings Ahmed used Bengali language at a new dimension. He used Bengali mixed with Persian or Arabic — the common expression of the then Muslim society and thus had portrayed the true picture of that community.

Chhatra League supporter assaulted

By DU Correspondent

Mantruzzaman Monir, a pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-L) supporter was assaulted by a group of armed youths on the Dhaka University campus Thursday.

Monir, a Masters final year student of the Accounting Department of the DU, was severely beaten up allegedly by some members of the Montu backed 'Third world' group, campus sources said.

Witnesses said that the attackers assaulted Monir with sawed off rifle butt.

Later Monir, a resident of Saltmullah Hall, was rushed to a private clinic.

JUCSU condemns killing of JCD leaders

By JU Correspondent

Jahangirnagar University Central Students Union (JUCSU) leaders in a statement today (Thursday) condemned the assassination of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders Shahabuddin and Abdur Rab.

Shahabuddin, Joint Convener of Dhaka Polytechnic Institute wing of JCD was shot dead on Saturday while Rab, Social Welfare Secretary of the Institute succumbed his injuries.

In a joint statement issued by the JUCSU Vice-President Masud Hasan Talukder and General Secretary Samsul Tabreez Mithu demanded arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers.

"A vested quarter is trying to create anarchy in the country through terrorism" they said. Calling upon the students to build up resistance against the terrorists they said that restoration of normalcy in the educational institutions was an utmost necessity.

Information Ministry affairs reviewed

Different aspects of administrative and development activities of the Ministry of Information and the departments and directorates under it were reviewed here yesterday at the monthly coordination meeting of the ministry, reports BSS.

The meeting presided over by Information Minister Nazmul Huda also considered the progress of works of the decisions taken earlier in this respect.



A rally of the secondary school teachers in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Workforce may increase to 54 millions by 2000: Minister

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Choudhury Kamal Hossain returned home yesterday after attending the fourth Asian and Pacific population conference held in Bali, Indonesia from August 23 to 30, reports BSS.

Health Secretary Syed Ahmad and Director General of Family Planning Rafiquzzaman accompanied the Minister during the visit.

The Health Minister in the conference highlight the prob-

lems of goods, fuel and housing due to population increase in the developing countries and said the rate of unemployment would also rise with the increase in workforce.

"In Bangladesh alone, the workforce is expected to increase to at least 54 millions by the year 2000," he said and added that it would strain the existing services like housing, transport, water and sanitation.

He said the present government was fully aware of the need for providing education to its generations. In this respect, he said, the government has launched a phased programme of universal primary education and literacy in the country.

The Health Minister said the government had undertaken an extensive project to provide quality healthcare to the people by allocating larger than ever share of its available resources.

He said Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had considered the population problem as the most serious one and stressed the need for small families, human resources development, protection of environment and self-reliance.

During his stay there, the Health Minister also met with his counterparts from Indonesia, Pakistan, India and China. Governors of Bandung and Jakarta also called on him.

He visited different health and family welfare centres in remote areas of Indonesia.

The performance of Bangladesh delegates in the conference was highly appreciated by the members of the participating countries.

Attack on Central Law College students protested

By DU Correspondent

The Bangladesh Law Students Federation (BLSF), Central Law College unit held a protest rally yesterday following an attack on the students of the college Wednesday.

A group of unidentified armed terrorists attacked the general students of the college Wednesday at about 7.30 pm, according to a press release.

The students brought out a procession and demanded security to their lives.

Art exhibition concludes

The week-long art exhibition on environment titled "Healthy environment for life" ended yesterday with a call for creating awareness about environmental protection all over the country, reports BSS.

Commitment, a voluntary organisation, organised the exhibition at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Dhaka to host SAARC symposium in November

A three-day SAARC symposium on prevention of drug abuse among youth will be held here in the second week of November, reports BSS.

According to a press release of the Department of Narcotics Control here yesterday, delegates from the SAARC countries are being invited to participate in the symposium.

Meanwhile, an organising committee with representatives from concerned ministries and departments has been constituted for the purpose under the chairmanship of A M M Nasrullah Khan, Director General, Department of Narcotics Control.

The press release said the committee in a meeting yesterday chalked out a tentative programme for the symposium.

The committee during its deliberation underlined the need for active co-operation among SAARC countries for prevention of drug abuse among youths.

Chehlum of Mustafiz tomorrow

The chehlum of film director and producer Mustafizur Rahman will be held tomorrow (Saturday) after Jhor prayers at 17 New Ekastan in the city, reports BSS.

All friends, well-wishers and relatives of the deceased are requested to attend the programme.



Friday

Morning session

- 8.00 Opening announcement
- 8.10 Al-Quran Programme summary
- 8.15 News in Bangla
- 8.15 Sports World
- 8.40 Cartoon: Teenage Mutant Turtles
- 9.10 Tanay
- 9.30 Film show: The Spectacular World of Guinness Record
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.05 Maner Mukury: Singsap-tak
- 11.15 Children drama series: Girl from tomorrow
- 11.45 Documentary
- 12.15 Evening's programme summary

Evening session:

- 3.00 Opening announcement
- 3.10 Al-Quran Programme summary
- 3.15 Recitation from the Tripitak
- 3.40 Alor Dishary (Religious programme)
- 5.10 Movie of the Week
- 5.30 News in Bangla
- 5.30 Sports programme
- 7.05 Sangeeta (Musical programme)
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.25 Comedy series: Perfect Strangers
- 9.00 Dristikon (Magazine programme)
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Film: L.A. Low
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.40 Saturday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing

Govt firm to root out terrorism

KHULNA, Sept 3: Whip of Jatiya Sangshad and Joint Secretary General of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Ashraf Hossain Tuesday said that the BNP government is determined to root out corruption and terrorism from the society, reports BSS.

The whip of Jatiya Sangshad was addressing a public meeting at the local Shaheed Haidis Park. The meeting was arranged by the local BNP to mark the fourteenth founding anniversary of the party. Speaker of Jatiya Sangshad Sheikh Razzaque Ali was present at the meeting.

Presided over by the president of Khulna City BNP M Nurul Islam, the meeting was also addressed by leaders of BNP and its front organisations.

Referring to the various development programmes undertaken by the present government Ashraf Hossain said that the country's economy has been revitalized.

Envoy of Qatar hosts reception

Mohamed Abdulla Al-Subaie, the Charge d' Affaires of the state of Qatar, held a reception in Dhaka Thursday evening on the occasion of the National Day of Qatar, reports BSS.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan, political leaders, diplomats, journalists and high civil and military officials attended the reception.

Weather

Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

Temporary light to moderate rain or thundershower is likely at many places over Khulna division, at a few places over Chittagong division and the region of Faridpur and Dhaka during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Thursday.

Meteorological office forecasts that weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country during the period.

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

Parts of the country experienced rainfall on Thursday. 35 mm of rain was recorded in Bhola, 23 mm in Khulna, 19 mm in Patuakhali, 14 mm in Dinajpur, 12 mm each in Barisal and Sathkhira, 8 mm in Matjdicourt and 5 mm each in Jessore and Faridpur.

The sun sets today (Friday) at 6-13 pm and rises tomorrow (Saturday) at 5-41 am.

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

	degree Celsius		percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.5	27.2	76	71
Chittagong	31.3	24.8	72	80
Rajshahi	32.8	26.0	73	77
Khulna	29.4	25.0	83	
Bhola	31.0	25.5	85	92
Cox's Bazar	31.4	24.5	74	85
Sylhet	32.0	23.6	78	76
Rangpur	32.8	26.5	83	79

Hasina to attend SAARC opposition leaders' confce

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina leaves for Pakistan on September 7 to attend a conference of the opposition leaders of SAARC countries in Karachi, reports UNB.

The one-day conference, titled Role of the Opposition in SAARC Countries, will be held on September 8 at Ramada Renaissance Hotel.

Hasina, Leader of the Opposition in Bangladesh Parliament, is the co-sponsor of the meet, first of its kind.

She will lead a three-member delegation. Other members are her party General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP, and Abul Hassan Chowdhury, MP.

Leaders of the Opposition of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives besides host Pakistan and Deputy Leader of the Opposition of Sri Lanka will attend the opposition summit.

Talking to UNB, Abul

Hassan Chowdhury said the idea of the conference was floated by Sheikh Hasina to Pakistan Leader of the Opposition Ms Benazir Bhutto while they were in New Delhi to attend the funeral of slain Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in May last year.

Later, both the opposition leaders maintained constant contacts and exchanged views through letters on the date, venue and agenda of the conference.

Chowdhury said the conference was expected to recommend measures as to how the opposition parties in the SAARC member states could play a positive role in the welfare of the teeming millions in South Asia through development of democracy and economic condition of the people as well as advancement in educational and cultural sectors.

Hasina is expected to return home on September 9.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh seeks applications from female and male Bangladeshi nationals for an Assistant Programme Officer position which has fallen vacant. Broad responsibilities include assessment of sector strategy/policies and programmes, identification, formulation, appraisal, management and evaluation of technical cooperation programmes and projects in a wide range of sectors: economic planning, employment, education/training, water resources, agriculture, infrastructure, industry and public administration/finance.

Salary ranges from TK.250,000- 301,800 net per annum plus children allowances and other admissible benefits as UN rules.

Qualifications

Minimum of a Master's degree in a development related field. Minimum three years of professional experience in the field of development and development policies, project evaluation with adequate knowledge and understanding of the socio-economic and other relevant characteristics of Bangladesh as well as an understanding of the workings of the Government. Excellent English writing and analytical skills essential. Fluency in spoken and written English and Bangla required. Computer literacy desirable. Proven expertise in working with senior-level cross cultural teams and skill in producing team documents also desirable.

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 15 September 1992.

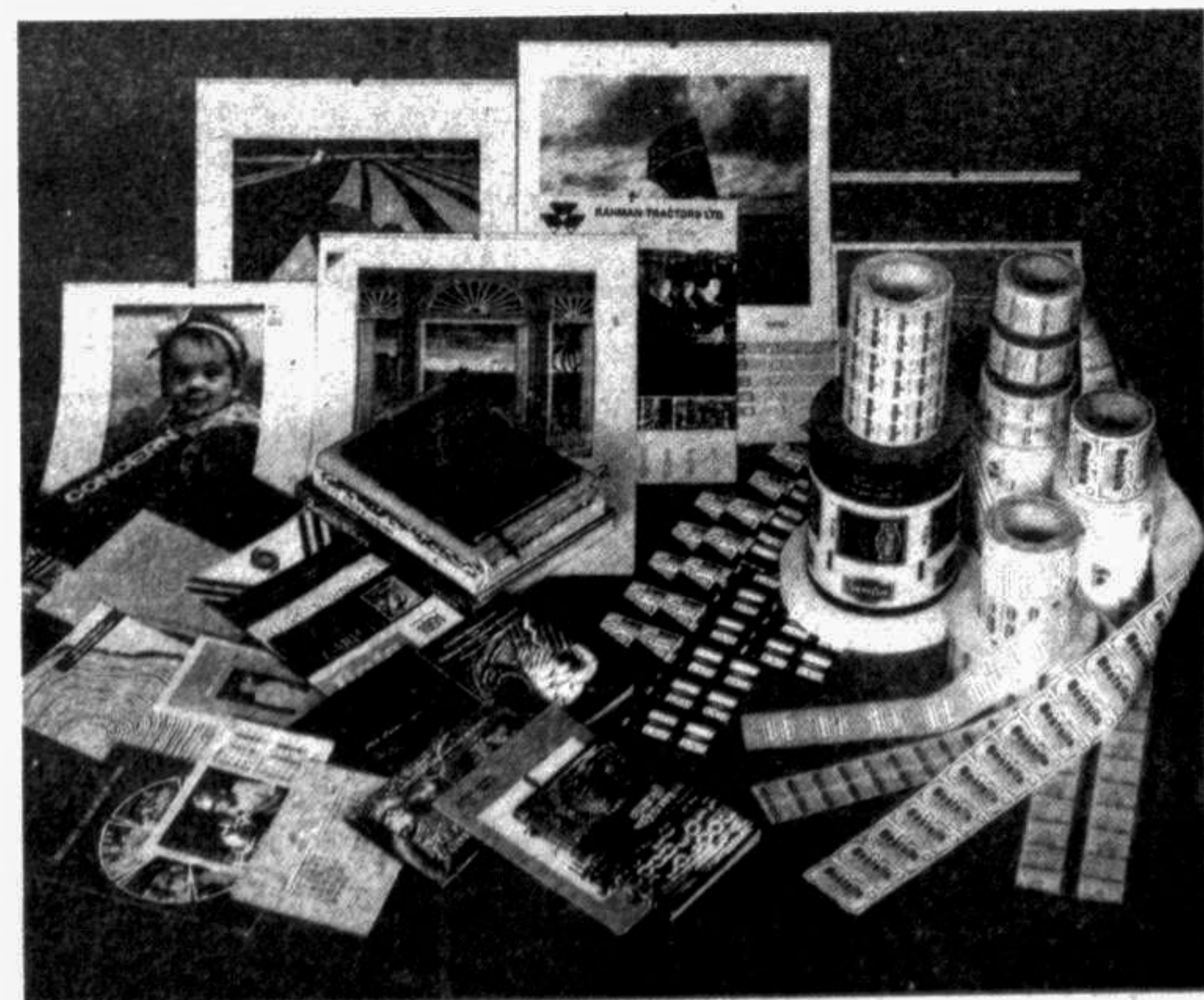
Female applicants are encouraged.

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