

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Good Food at Good Prices

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



'Nirob' a place rarely silent.

The way video stores and eating places are proliferating the city one may be prone to believing that a certain proportion of the 110 million people are turning into professional couch potatoes and major gluttons. If we stick to just the affairs of the stomach, it is amazing how hundreds of restaurants boasting 'authentic cuisine' can be seen at every corner of Dhaka. Yet how many of them actually serve the so called 'authentic food'? More importantly, how many of them are affordable to the average person?

Bengalis love food — especially their own. As far as we know, there are only two or three 'standard' restaurants offering 'bhaat', 'maachh', 'muri ghanta' and many more mouth-watering delicacies of Bengal. The only hitch is that they are offered at not so mouth watering prices. This leaves most of us to stick to small 'hotels' (which in this country usually stands for cheap food), offering usually mughal food, sometimes of questionable quality. But wait. A trip to Nazimuddin road in old Dhaka takes one to a 'hotel' called 'Nirob' fashionably located near — the Central Jail. What is so special about this place is not the fact that its name has nothing to do with its atmosphere, which is far from being 'nirob' (silent), but that it serves good Bengali and Mughal food at surprisingly reasonable prices. Now that's a novelty to appreciate, don't you think?

Entering 'Nirob' between 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. is a somewhat difficult task, yet worth the effort. At this time the place is jam packed with hungry, boisterous university students coming back from a day long of hectic classes, exams — or shoot-outs perhaps? If you are lucky to get a seat don't be too disconcerted by someone hovering over your head while you eat, with one hand on your chair. This is not out of any perverse sense of humour — it is just the only way to ensure getting your seat as soon as you are done!

Once you are seated the head waiter will come to you to take the order. The menu will be said out loud quickly enough so that you will be obliged to ask him to repeat it at least three more times. A variety of 'bhortas' including 'aloo bhorta', 'begun (eggplant) bhorta', 'fish bhorta' and spinach are a regular feature for lunch, priced between 3-5 takas per serving. For the fish lover there is 'pabda', 'telapia', 'kechki' etc. At about 10 takas a plate, you can get a fairly large sized 'pabda' cooked in delicious mustard gravy and potatoes. 'Shuntki' a

special favourite, is about 6 takas per plate and beef with saag (spinach) and chicken curry 6 takas and 12 takas respectively. The food served during lunch is welcomingly light, never overdone and soothing to the taste buds. For breakfast there is a whole range of Mughal items such as chicken dopiaza, nehari, brain masala, beef bhuna, tandoori chicken, all served with hot, flaky 'paratha'. Eggs and bread are also served for the less adventurous customers.

Although not exactly a glamorous place, Nirob has plenty of atmosphere. The feeling one gets is of being in a college cafeteria and a clean one at that. This is a place to hang out and relax and have something that is close enough to home cooked food as one can get for such low rates. The tables are filled with young men and women talking animatedly about cranky professors, boyfriends, politics and life in general — not necessarily in that order. The waiters, meanwhile, run with bionic speed to and from the counter in a far corner of the room through which the food is passed on after being heated. The restaurant is on the second floor with the kitchen on the first where the real stars, the cooks, are at work.

Mohammad Fazlul Huq, one of the head cooks, says he has to cook from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. He has been cooking for over 30 years and has learnt this invaluable art from his guru — Hamid 'baburchi'. Fazlul Huq has seven helpers who work in shifts. When asked whether he likes doing what he does, his reply is, "Well it's what I have been doing for so many years and the main skill I know. What else can I do?" And how much does he get for slogging twelve hours in masala and heat? Fazlul Huq merely smiles, as he stirs a humongous cauldron of something in the dimly lit kitchen and says he would rather not say since his 'malik' may not approve.

Although there are no 'reliable sources' of information about when this cozy restaurant started business, most people say, well over a decade. The owner, one learns is a Muhammad Anwar Hussain from Calcutta and that is about all the history one can wangle out.

The kitchen of Nirob hotel does have room for improvement as far as cleanliness is concerned and the waiters may lack the 'sophistication' of upper graded restaurants. But the overall ambience is warm and friendly, the food is good and cheap and another thing — nobody stares at you!

## CEC urges people to uphold tradition of last polls

The Chief Election Commissioner, Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf, said that the Election Commission was determined to make the forthcoming by-elections to Jatiya Sangsad meaningful through holding the polls in a peaceful atmosphere, reports BSS.

Addressing a meeting of the intending candidates of the by-election of Mymensingh-3 constituency, at Gourtpur yesterday local leaders of different political parties and union parishad chairmen and members, the Chief Election Commissioner categorically said the coming by-election of two Jatiya Sangsad seats would be free, fair and neutral.

The by-election of Mymensingh-3 constituency, which fell vacant at the death of Nazrul Islam, MP, will be held on October 15. The by-election of Rajbari-1 will be held on October 12. The seat also fell vacant following the death of Abdul Wajid Chowdhury.

Justice Rouf urged the people and the political parties to extend their allout cooperation for smooth conducting of the by-elections.

He said the country had earned reputation abroad for holding free and fair parli-

mentary elections last year and asked the people to maintain that tradition in the next by-elections.

Justice Rouf said the Election Commission would not allow any rigging or hooliganism in the elections.

Any attempt to disrupt the polling or counting of votes during the election would be dealt with severely, he warned.

The Chief Election Commissioner called upon the local people to form 'voters club' in their respective areas to help maintain law and order during the campaign and election period.

Justice Rouf urged the local administration and law enforcing agencies to strictly maintain neutrality in the by-elections without bowing down to any intimidation from any quarter.

Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat A Z M Shamsul Alam and other concerned high officials spoke on the occasion.

Later, the Chief Election Commissioner met the district-level officials at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner office and exchanged views with them about the coming by-elections and union parishad polls.



GCO procession on the Dhaka University campus in protest of violence yesterday. — Star photo

## GCO blames govt for violence on campus

By DU Correspondent

The Ganatantrik Chhatra Otkya (GCO), Dhaka University unit at a rally yesterday protested the killing of students on the campus.

The GCO leaders at the rally held in front of the Aparajeyo Bangla blamed the government for continued violence on the campus.

Addressing the rally, the GCO leaders condemned the government role for not arresting the terrorists even after the murder of three students on the campus within a week.

The GCO held the rally to protest the killing of two DU students Ashraf Azam Mamun and Mahmud Hossain who were gunned down following an intra-party clash of Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) on Friday.

Presided over by Ziaul Huq

Zia, the rally was addressed by Mustak Alam Tulu, Abdullahil Kafi Ratan, Rafiqul Islam Kazal and Obaidur Rahman Chhunu.

The GCO leaders said that the JCD was trying to show their muscle strength and to keep the campus under their control by committing several murders.

The leaders mentioned that impartial role of police was a must in restoring congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

The DU campus had become a 'mini cantonment' as the terrorists and armed hooligans were staying without any disturbance. GCO leaders said adding that the authorities had to take stern measures to cleanse the residential halls from arms and armed terrorists irrespective of their party affiliation.

## Joint tele-serial Purbo-Pashchim underway

Star Report

An Indo-Bangla joint production of a tele-serial 'Purbo-Pashchim' is underway.

According to sources, Open Air Communication Private Ltd of West Bengal and Bangladesh Television are jointly producing the serial, adapted from a popular novel by Sunil Gangopadhyay.

A ceremonial shooting of the serial took place in Dhaka on February 21 last.

The sources said that 200 ace performers of the two countries would participate in the serial.

Muhtit Chatterjee, awarded best playwright by Sangit Natak Academy, India in 1991 would write the script of the serial while Nasiruddin Yusuf of Bangladesh would direct.

Purbo-Pashchim centres two Bengalee youths who were separated by the 1946 communal riots that parted the Bengal into two. It also narrates the later political developments took place in East and West Bengals.

## BUET admission test today

By Buet Correspondent

The test for admission into first year classes of different faculties of University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) for the 1991-92 session begins today (Tuesday) at 9 am.

## WP concerned at delay in identifying Menon's assailants

By Staff Correspondent

Workers Party of Bangladesh has expressed deep concern as no progress was made in identifying the assailants of party leader Rashed Khan Menon, MP even after 21 days of the attempt on his life.

The politburo of the party in a statement last night said, "the government being trapped by certain quarters hiding the assailants."

"No step has been taken as yet against those accused of attempting on Menon," the statement said adding "the identified assailants are continuing their acts of terrorism one after another."

It commented the killing of two students by the BNP-sheltered terrorists in the Dhaka University campus, murder of another in the Polytechnic Institute, the brutal killing of a Dhaka College student and a labour headman at Babubazar and the increasing acts of dacoity, loot, snatching, had raised the question in the public mind if their was any government in the country.

The party termed the present government as anarchist and irresponsible one and accused it of pretending to be neutral by arresting Golam Azam in the wake of people's wrath against the planner of '71 genocide. Since then, it added, the entire nation had been kept hostage to the hands of the terrorists.

## PID officials bid farewell to Tofazzal

By Staff Correspondent

Tofazzal Hossain, the Additional Principal Information Officer of the Press Information Department (PID) of the government, Monday went to the leave preparatory to retirement ending a career of about four decades.

PID officials accorded a reception in the office Monday afternoon to bid farewell to their veteran colleague. Hossain, an amiable personality, was invariably known and liked by all the members of the country's press.

Tofazzal Hossain began his career as a journalist at the Millat back in 1954.

Before joining the Pakistan Council as resident director in March 1967, he worked in the Daily Ittefaq, British Information Service and the United States Information Service in different capacities.

Hossain joined the PID as the Senior Deputy Principal Information Officer.

Talking to The Daily Star Monday evening, Tofazzal Hossain glanced back his chequered career to comment that the qualitative development in journalism in the country is spectacular.

With publication of increased number of newspapers in Bangladesh, the budding journalists have the field ready "to pioneer many new things for the country."

The Daily Star says goodbye to Hossain and wishes continued happiness and good health.

## Smuggled goods seized in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Sept 7: Bangladesh Rifles personnel of 20 Rifle Battalion seized huge quantity of smuggled goods valued at Taka thirty lakh during the first week of the current month, reports BSS.

The seized goods, which were smuggled included rice, sugar, pulse, sarce, cow, buffalo, utensils of steel, cloth while those being smuggled out are hosiery, bronze, brass and chillies.

A total of 36 cases were lodged and 19 persons were arrested in this connection. The arrested persons were handed over to police station and the seized goods were deposited to the customs department.

## Govt urged to arrest terrors

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) Convenor Khalequzaman Bhuiyan Monday demanded of the government to recover arms arrest the terrorists from the Dhaka University.

In a statement the leader expressing his surprise at the news publicity of the suspension of the activities of the Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at the Dhaka University said, it was an internal affair of BNP.

He said that Khaleda Zia should take initiatives to arrest the killers of the Dhaka University. "Rather the killers are freely hanging around the ministers, and Sugandha," he added.

The leader said if the government failed to answer why the murderers of the three persons were not arrested by the police, it would mean the government was not sincere in eliminating terrorism.



A procession in the city yesterday in observance of Eid-e-Miladunnabi. — Star photo

## Experts suggest revival of uranium exploration project

The prestigious uranium and thorium exploration project, which was suspended by the autocratic government in 1986, should be revived without further delay, concerned scientific circles in Dhaka said, reports BSS.

The programme was suspended at a time when a high uranium occurrence in Fooltala in Moulavibazar district was discovered, about one million dollar UNDP and IAEA assistance was assured, the geochemical laboratory was near completion and the working geologists gathered experience in uranium exploration, the scientists said.

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) started the uranium exploration work in December, 1976 with UNDP and IAEA assistance and col-

laboration of former Taita Sandhani Company in the districts of greater Chittagong, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Sylhet.

The preliminary reconnaissance survey was followed by helicopter borne aerial and ground radiometric surveys, carried out in some selected areas. This resulted in detection of uranium occurrences in over 300 spots having radiation level upto 60 times the background radiation level, according to information published in different scientific documents of BAEC.

Chemical analysis of a sample collected from one of the spots indicated presence of 1020 Parts Per Million (PPM) total uranium which is considered to be economic grade.

With the fast declining of

conventional fossil fuel deposits and increased demand of energy, the countries in the world are making search and research for new sources of infinite energy.

Major uranium deposits around the world are of secondary origin and due to favourable geological structures and geographical location Bangladesh has the potentiality to have sedimentary secondary uranium deposits.

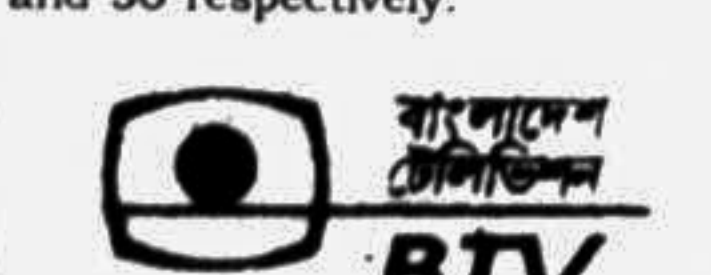
The geologists of Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB) and Petrobangla and the Geology Department of Dhaka University expressed their opinion in favour of continuing exploration of uranium to cover the entire potential areas of the country with a view to discovering economic grade uranium deposits.

## Performance of US Theatre

By Staff Correspondent

Paradise Island Express, an US theatre company will stage two performances at Dhaka Sheraton on September 29 and 30.

Jointly organised by United States Information Service and Dhaka Sheraton Hotel the company will present 'Fascinating Rhythms' and 'The Golden Age of Broadway, 1920-1940' on September 29 and 30 respectively.



**Tuesday**

5.00	Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary
5.10	News in Bangla
5.20	Recitation from the Geeta
5.25	Cartoon
6.00	Shikkhya-dikkhya
6.30	Special programme on International Literacy Day
7.05	Nazrul Songs
8.00	News in Bangla
8.50	Drama: Udayshay Kato Dur
9.00	News in English
10.30	Mini series: Fortunes of War
11.30	Khabar/The News
11.40	Wednesday's programme summary
11.45	Closing

## Weather

### Temperature may fall

By Staff Correspondent

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

The Met office forecasts, day temperature is likely to fall slightly over the country and weather is likely to improve within a week.

The maximum temperature of 34.7 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi yesterday (Monday) and the minimum of 22.8 degree from Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 6.09 am and rises tomorrow at 5.43 pm.

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	
Dhaka	32.8	28.0	79
Chittagong	32.8	25.9	76
Rajshahi	34.7	25.6	72
Khulna	31.3	26.0	97
Cox's Bazar	31.5	25.5	73
Sylhet	33.5	22.8	78
Comilla	33.3	25.5	81
Dinajpur	33.7	26.5	72



## Sub: Final Notice for Joining Duty

Memo No: BWAPDA/ESTB/1347/92 Dated: 6.6.1992

You Mr. Md. Alamgir Hossain, Godown Chowkider, Agrani Bank, BWAPDA, Dhaka, S/o. Mr. Abdul Latif of Vill. Dakhinbagh, P.O. Voual, Jamalpur, PS Kaligonj, Dist. Gazipur are hereby informed that you have been absenting from duties without any approval since 23.9.91.

Several notices were issued to you to resume duties vide our letter No. BWAPDA/ESTB/3037/91, dt. 8.10.91, letter No. H/1/ADMN/3126/91, dt. 21.10.91 and letter No. H/ESTB/429/92, Dt. 19.2.92 but you have not yet joined.

Under the circumstances stated above, you are again directed to resume to your duties within 7 (seven) days of publication of this notice. It should be mentioned that administrative action as per rules will be taken against you if you do not join work within the stipulated time limit.

DFF (BA) 8677-2/9 G-1122 Md. Anwarul Hoque Asstt. General Manager